

# *Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

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- 1460 Vanni, Andrea di

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- 1465        *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden [left panel]*
  
- 1482        *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden, the Crucifixion, and the Descent into Limbo [entire triptych]*
  
- 1499        *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Crucifixion [middle panel]*
  
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# *History of the Collection*

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The National Gallery of Art's collection of Italian paintings is considered the most important in America and among the finest and most comprehensive in the world. To provide the most authoritative scholarship on the earliest paintings in the collection, the Gallery turned to one of the leading historians of early Italian art, Miklós Boskovits. *Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* is a fitting memorial to Miklós, who did not live to see the project to completion. Miklós shared responsibility for the previous volume, on the Gallery's fifteenth-century Italian paintings, with David Alan Brown, curator of Italian painting at the Gallery, and others. Here he is the sole author of the catalog entries, while Laurence Kanter, chief curator for the Yale University Art Gallery, wrote the introduction.

Due to the Italian collection's size, scope, and quality, the decision was made early on to divide the catalog into four volumes, corresponding to the standard art historical designations of medieval, early Renaissance, high and late Renaissance, and baroque and rococo. The first of these, published in 1996, deals with the later Italian pictures, those dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The previous volume took up the fifteenth century. The present volume treats the medieval works of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The Italian panels discussed in this catalog are not nearly so numerous as those dating from the fifteenth century, and, though well known to specialists, are perhaps less familiar to the art-loving public than are the Gallery's holdings of works by Leonardo, Botticelli, Raphael, or Titian. All the same, this part of the collection holds works by artists who were some of the most important Italian painters in all of art history—Giotto and Duccio, for example, and in the case of the great Siennese master, the National Gallery of Art is the only institution in the United States to own not one but two panels from Duccio's monumental masterpiece, the *Maestà*. In addition, many of the Gallery's Italian paintings from the late medieval or Gothic period are highly important, culturally speaking, and all of them possess manifold aesthetic attractions of their own. Displayed on the main floor of the West Building, they occupy two galleries and share a third with

fifteenth-century works, while a large Duccesque altarpiece, because of its size, is kept more or less permanently in storage. The online edition of this catalog also includes a recent acquisition, Andrea di Vanni's triptych, one of many new works acquired by the Gallery from the Clark collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. (This picture was acquired after Miklós Boskovits's death.)

Many of the paintings cataloged in this volume are small works painted for private devotion; others are fragments from multipaneled altarpieces. In many cases, the larger central panel of a dismantled polyptych has remained in Italy, while the other surviving elements are scattered in museums throughout Europe and America. An effort has been made, therefore, to suggest the original context for these works through schematic reconstructions, with photographs of the other panels making up the complex in question. Such reconstructions will help users of the catalog understand the panels' original purpose and meaning. At the same time, these irregularly shaped fragments were often put into rectangular frames as if to suggest that they were small easel paintings. The Gallery's formal, balanced hanging system has not altered this approach, though in some cases new frames approximating period frames have been substituted.

Many of these panels were also cut down, shaved in the back, and cradled to prevent movement, with the unfortunate result that much technical evidence about them has been lost. That said, careful examination in the Gallery's Conservation Laboratory has produced a considerable amount of new technical information, such as the fact that Andrea di Bartolo's double-sided *Madonna of Humility* (cat. 1, 1939.1.20.a, b) was in all likelihood a reliquary, x-radiography having revealed roundels for holding relics beside the gable.

The present catalog is the first to offer a candid, thorough assessment of the condition of the Gallery's earliest Italian paintings. The staff of the Gallery's painting conservation and scientific research laboratories carried out systematic examinations and documented the results in formal technical reports. Professor Boskovits then used these reports as the basis for his remarks in the technical summaries that precede each entry. The technical summaries are therefore an integral part of the entries; they aim to inform the reader about the state of preservation of each painting, which affects any effort to determine its attribution or date.

Nearly all of the Gallery's earliest Italian paintings belonged to two collectors whose holdings complemented each other. Andrew Mellon (1855–1937), the Pittsburgh industrialist and financier who served as US Treasury Secretary, founded the Gallery in 1937 to rival the great national art collections in Europe. Not an adventurous collector, Mellon had conservative taste, running to Dutch and English portraits and landscapes. But the national gallery he envisaged for Washington had to have early Italian paintings to be representative, so in addition to masterpieces like Botticelli's *Adoration of the Magi* (1937.1.22) and Raphael's *Alba Madonna* (1937.1.24), Mellon sought out earlier Italian pictures by equally renowned masters. Clearly, he was thinking of how the museum experience should begin: the Gallery's first accessioned painting is the rare Byzantine Madonna owned by Mellon (cat. 7). The earliest painting in his collection, the Mellon Madonna, as it came to be called, demonstrates the eastern influence that informed many of the Italian painters who followed. Another painting, *Saint Peter, Christ Blessing, and Saint James Major* (cat. 21, 1937.1.2.a–c), was then believed to be by Cimabue, a major precursor of the Renaissance profiled in Giorgio Vasari's *Lives*. The three panels, grouped as a triptych, had been in the famous collection of Italian "primitives" in Paris owned by Alexis-François Artaud de Montor (1772–1849). In this catalog, Boskovits has reattributed the panel to a contemporary of Cimabue's named Grifo di Tancredi. In the case of another work, *The Nativity* (cat. 11, 1937.1.8), the great name borne by the painting has stood the test of time. The Nativity scene, accompanied by lateral panels depicting the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel, belonged to one of the most famous Italian paintings of the Middle Ages—the mammoth, double-sided *Maestà* altarpiece, which Duccio di Buoninsegna painted for Siena Cathedral in 1308–1311.

The *Nativity* came from the front side of the predella, or base, of the *Maestà*, while the other Duccio panel in the Gallery's collection, *Christ Calling the Apostles Peter and Andrew* (cat. 12, 1939.1.141), was detached from the back of the polyptych. This second predella panel was donated, with the majority of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian pictures, by the American dime-store magnate Samuel H. Kress (1863–1956). Kress also sought out masterpieces by great names, like the Duccio or Giotto's fine *Madonna and Child* (cat. 17, 1939.1.256), which is displayed in the same gallery. But, unlike Mellon, Kress seems to have been genuinely fond of Italian paintings and acquired them systematically. He aimed to build the largest and most comprehensive series of these works in private hands.[1] Kress originally intended to form his own

museum, but he was persuaded to join his holdings with those of Mellon in the newly established National Gallery of Art. By 1941, when the Gallery was opened to the public, Kress's donation consisted of 375 Italian paintings, and the Kress Foundation later added many others. Kress's decision to bring his collection to Washington led to an extensive revision of his holdings over a period of years, culling its numbers to focus on the major masters. In the 1950s it was divided up, with the most important examples being purchased for or retained by the Gallery, and others, including some that formed part of the original donation, dispersed to smaller American museums.[2]

Samuel Kress's lifelong devotion to Italian—particularly early Italian—art may be seen best, perhaps, in his seventeen-room duplex apartment located at 1020 Fifth Avenue across from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Kress displayed his collection in pseudo-Renaissance interiors, where, in a setting of period furniture and decorative arts, marble and tile floors, carved chests and tables, and lead-glass windows, they were meant to evoke the world from which they came. Photographs of the Kress apartment, dating to the 1930s, feature Duccio's predella panels, Giotto's *Madonna and Child*, and Agnolo Gaddi's *Coronation of the Virgin* next to a staircase, as well as the marvelously preserved little Nardo di Cione triptych hanging over a bed.

This catalog follows upon and effectively supersedes the pertinent entries in Fern Rusk Shapley's *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, published in 1979.[3] The Gallery's early Italian paintings have long been a focus of scholars' attention, but while the present catalog assiduously records these views, whether in agreement or contradiction, in every case it also offers a fresh examination of the works. Similarly, the bibliography provided for each painting includes virtually every significant citation. The history of ownership is also given in greater detail than heretofore, thanks in part to information available from the Getty Provenance Index and to archival research. All exhibitions in which a work appeared are included, because of the increasing importance of exhibitions for art historical investigation.

The donation of these thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian paintings to the Gallery on the part of Mellon, Kress, and others took them out of the private realm and made them accessible to a wide public, who we hope will find this catalog interesting and useful.

David Alan Brown

July 2014

## NOTES

[1] On the formation of the Kress Collection, see Marilyn Perry, “The Kress Collection,” in *A Gift to America: Masterpieces of European Painting from the Samuel H. Kress Collection*, North Carolina Museum of Art (Raleigh, 1994), 12–35; and Colin Eisler, “‘Gold-Ground Art’ and the Cold War: Solving the Great Kress Mystery,” *Partisan Review* 49, no. 1 (2002): 67–74.

[2] This process of improving the selection at the Gallery and at the same time bringing Italian art to smaller museums may be seen in the successive catalogs of the Kress holdings in Washington. See: National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941); National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection Acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951); National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection Acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1951–1956* (Washington, DC, 1956); National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959).

[3] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979).

## COMPARATIVE IMAGES



The Carpaccio Bedroom in the Samuel Kress apartment at 1020 Fifth Avenue, New York, 1938/1939, with paintings now in the National Gallery of Art. The Gallery's Nardo di Cione triptych (cat. 35, 1939.1.261.a–c) hangs over the bed. Department of Image Collections, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC



The Venetian Sitting Room in the Samuel Kress apartment at 1020 Fifth Avenue, New York, 1938/1939, with paintings now in the National Gallery of Art. The Gallery's *Madonna and Child* by Giotto (cat. 17, 1939.1.256) hangs on the wall at right. Department of Image Collections, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC



The Venetian Sitting Room in the Samuel Kress apartment at 1020 Fifth Avenue, New York, 1938/1939, with paintings now in the National Gallery of Art. Duccio's *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew* (cat. 12, 1939.1.141) is at lower left. Department of Image Collections, National Gallery of Art Library, Washington, DC



The Entrance Hall in the Samuel Kress apartment at 1020 Fifth Avenue, New York, 1938/1939, with paintings now in the National Gallery of Art. *The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels* by Agnolo Gaddi (cat. 16, 1939.1.203) hangs at left.

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## *Notes to the Reader*

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The paintings cataloged here are arranged alphabetically by artist. For each artist, there is a short biography with bibliography, followed by individual entries on paintings. Each entry begins with the National Gallery of Art's unique accession number, the title of the work, execution date, medium, dimensions, credit line, and a transcription of signatures and/or inscriptions. This heading is followed by a technical summary, provenance, exhibition history, scholarly entry, notes, and bibliography.

The following conventions are used for dates:

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 1250         | Executed in 1250                              |
| c. 1250      | Executed sometime around 1250                 |
| 1250–1265    | Begun in 1250, finished in 1265               |
| 1250/1265    | Executed sometime between 1250 and 1265       |
| c. 1250/1265 | Executed sometime around the period 1250–1265 |

Dimensions are given in centimeters, height preceding width preceding, for certain dimensions, depth, followed by dimensions in inches within parentheses. For all paintings at least two dimensions are given, first that of only the painted surface, and then that of the overall support. Sometimes depth dimensions for paintings on panel are also given; these are at times approximate, when a cradle prevents a precise measurement. Parenthetical phrases provide precise descriptions of additional measurements taken. Framed dimensions are also included when frames are integral to the panel. The measurements are so exact in order to aid scholars in making and evaluating reconstructions or the ensembles to which a number of the panels once belonged.

If present, signatures and/or inscriptions on the paintings are recorded as accurately as possible. In these transcriptions, a slash with a space on either side indicates a new line; a slash without these spaces indicates that the slash is included in the original text. All directional references to signatures and inscriptions are given from the viewer's perspective.

The Provenance section gives the names of all known owners. A semicolon between two names indicates a direct transfer of ownership of the painting, whereas a period indicates uncertainty about the chain of ownership and the whereabouts of the object between two documented owners. The names of dealers, agents, and auction house sales are given in parentheses. Notes provide sources, details of research, and discussion of outstanding questions.

About a third of the paintings cataloged here passed through the hands of Duveen Brothers, Inc., a company headed by Joseph Duveen with offices in London, New York, and Paris. The firm's records, now held by the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, are an important source of information and are referenced frequently in notes to the Provenances; copies of the referenced material are in NGA curatorial files. Approximately two-thirds of the paintings were acquired by Samuel H. Kress himself or the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in New York, which has kindly provided copies of its acquisition records to the Gallery; they are held in Gallery Archives, with copies of relevant material in NGA curatorial files. No fewer than seven paintings, including Duccio's *Nativity*, were given by Andrew Mellon. The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust has made copies of its records available to the Gallery, where they are held both in Gallery Archives and, as appropriate, in curatorial files. Every effort has been made to provide the exact location of these records. Another third of the paintings were acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation in New York, which has kindly provided copies of its acquisition records to the Gallery; they are held in Gallery Archives, with copies of relevant material in NGA curatorial files.

Exhibition histories through 2014 record the presence of the paintings in special exhibitions or as individual loans from an owner to another institution. They are as complete as possible and include exhibition catalog numbers, unless it is indicated that there was no catalog or the catalog was unnumbered, and a note if the painting was reproduced.

The references for each entry lists with full citations and in chronological order, only those texts that specifically discuss the National Gallery of Art painting in question. An exhaustive Bibliography on the general subject of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian paintings is provided at the end of this volume.

Unless otherwise indicated, all altarpiece reconstructions are by Miklós Boskovits. Comparative figures of panels that once belonged to the same altarpieces as Gallery panels use dates proposed by the author.

Each entry includes a Technical Summary, which discusses the materials and techniques used by the artists in the creation of the paintings, as well as any changes and documented treatments. They are based on the contents of the examination reports prepared by members of the National Gallery of Art department of painting conservation.

Each painting was examined unframed, in visible light, front and back. The paintings were examined with a stereomicroscope with magnifying power up to 100x and under ultraviolet light. X-radiographs were taken to answer questions regarding the paintings' construction and condition. Infrared photography and/or infrared reflectography was used for each painting to reveal underdrawing, compositional changes, and condition. The results of these examinations are discussed only when they yield information considered essential to interpretation of the painting.

The medium of the paint has not been analyzed unless stated in the Technical Summary. The medium is estimated or known to be egg tempera paint for all paintings in this catalog. For the panel supports, the type of wood is specified only if the wood has been analyzed. Any scientific analysis that was used to help understand the paintings is cited. The procedures and equipment used for this analysis are described below.

The conditions of the paintings vary. Many paintings cataloged here were originally created as components of altarpieces with engaged frames, most of which were removed when the altarpieces were dismantled in earlier centuries. Where present, the barbe, the lip of gesso remaining after an original engaged frame was removed, is noted as a measure of the painted design's original dimensions. The separate panels were often later cradled. The cradling process usually included shaving

down the sides and thinning the back of the original wood panel, marouflaging it to a backing, and attaching wood shims to the sides. Some of the panel paintings were transferred from their original supports, a process that retains the paint and ground layers but substitutes a fabric support for the original wood one.

Treatments performed by Gallery conservation staff after acquisition are described briefly in the Technical Summaries. Occasionally, records of earlier treatments are included in the Technical Summaries. Damages such as paint losses should be assumed to have been repaired and inpainted. Significant areas of inpainting are discussed in the Technical Summaries. The varnishes are all later replacements and impart no information about the artist's choice of finish.

## Instrumental Methods of Analysis

A variety of techniques and instruments were used to examine and analyze the paintings in this catalog. The equipment is described below:

*Energy dispersive spectrometry (EDS):* Small samples were examined with energy dispersive spectrometry using an Oxford Inca 300 spectrometer with a Super ATW Si(Li) detector on a JEOL 6300 SEM.

*Fourier-transform infrared (micro)spectroscopy (FTIR):* A Thermo Nicolet Nexus 670 instrument was used, fitted with a Continuum microscope. Spectra were collected in transmission mode at 4 cm<sup>-1</sup> resolution. The samples were compressed between two windows of a Diamond Cell (Spectratech).

*Gas chromatography / mass spectrometry (GC/MS):* The samples were methylated with TMTFTH (TCI America, 0.5M in MeOH) or hydrolyzed using 6N HCl for 24 hours under vacuum. After removal of the HCl, the amino acids were silylated with MTBSTFA/TBDMCS. Samples were examined by gas chromatography/mass spectrometry on a 30 meter DB-5 column, a Varian Saturn CP3900 gas chromatograph, and a Saturn 2100T ion trap mass spectrometer.

*Infrared examination:* When infrared examination is designated as "Vidicon," a Vidicon camera system was used, which included a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera fitted with an N2606-10 or N214 lead sulphide tube and a Kodak Wratten 87A filter. When infrared examination is designated by microns,

one of four cameras was used: a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera configured to 1.5–2.0 microns, a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi camera configured to 1.2–2.5 microns, an Indigo/FLIR Alpha Visible-InGaAs camera, and a Santa Barbara Focalplane SBF187 InSb camera. The latter two cameras were configured with various band filters between 1.1 and 2.5 microns. For the Kodak and Mitsubishi cameras, the images were captured using a ScionPCI framegrabber card in a Macintosh computer with Scanalytic's IP-Lab software. For the Indigo/FLIR camera, the images were captured onto a Dell computer with an IMAQ capture board housed in a Magma external PCI box, and IRVista software. For the Santa Barbara Focalplane camera, the images were captured using a Windows Empower tower computer and WinIR software. Nikon 55mm macro, 50mm macro, and 35mm lenses were used with the various cameras, as were Astronomy J, H, and K filters. The infrared reflectograms were automatically mosaicked and registered to a reference color image using a novel registration algorithm developed by George Washington University and the National Gallery of Art. For more information see Damon M. Conover, John K. Delaney, and Murray H. Loew, "Automatic Registration and Mosaicking of Conservation Images," in *Optics for Arts, Architecture, and Archaeology*, vol. 4, ed. Luca Pezzati and Piotr Targowski, Proceedings of SPIE, vol. 8790 (Bellingham, WA, 2013).

*Optical microscopy of cross-sections:* Small paint samples (c. 0.25mm<sup>2</sup>) were removed using a scalpel and were mounted in polyester-type resin blocks. The samples were cut at right angles to the layer structure and polished using silicon carbide papers and examined using a Leica DRMX microscope.

*Polarized light microscopy (PLM):* Transmitted polarized light microscopy of dispersed samples was conducted using Leitz Orthoplan and Leica DMRX microscopes. Particle identification was accomplished by comparing characteristic features—including particle size, color, refractive index and relief, birefringence, extinction characteristics, pleochroism, and anomalous polarization colors of the unknown—to those of reference materials in the Forbes Pigment Collection and other reference collections.

*Scanning electron microscopy (SEM):* Small samples were prepared for optical microscopy and examined with a JEOL 6300 scanning electron microscope at magnifications 100x–10,000x. A Tetra backscatter electron detector was used to obtain BSE images.

*X-radiography:* X-radiography was carried out with equipment consisting of a Eureka Emerald 125 MT tube, a Continental 0-110 kV control panel, and a Duocon M collimator or a Comet Technologies XRP-75MXR-75HP tube. The image was captured on Kodak X-OMAT film or digitally using a Carestream Industrex Blue Digital Imaging Plate 5537. The scanned x-ray radiograph films or digital x-radiograph captures were automatically mosaicked and registered to a reference color image using a novel registration algorithm developed by George Washington University and the National Gallery of Art. For more information see Damon M. Conover, John K. Delaney, and Murray H. Loew, “Automatic Registration and Mosaicking of Conservation Images,” in *Optics for Arts, Architecture, and Archaeology*, vol. 4, ed. Luca Pezzati and Piotr Targowski, Proceedings of SPIE, vol. 8790 (Bellingham, WA, 2013).

*X-ray diffraction (XRD):* The Philips x-ray generator XRG 3100 was used with a tube with a copper anode and nickel filter. The paint sample was mounted on a glass fiber in a Gandolfi camera. Data were collected on film, and line spacings and intensities were estimated using a calibrated rule.

*X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF):* This is a noninvasive analytical technique, which was carried out using one of two systems. The first system used a secondary emission KeveX 0750A spectrophotometer equipped with a rhodium tube with either a barium chloride secondary target or a molybdenum secondary target using a variety of excitation conditions and a silicon lithium Si(Li) detector with a resolution of approximately 155eV @Mn K $\alpha$ . For this system the range of Rh tube excitation was 40kV–60kV and 0.4mA–2mA. The second system used a Bruker ArtTAX Pro  $\mu$ XRF spectrometer, which uses primary excitation and is equipped with a helium (He) flush, a rhodium (Rh) x-ray tube, and a capillary optic lens with an analysis area of approximately 75 $\mu$ m. In this system the x-ray tube voltage was 50kV, the current was 200 $\mu$ A, and the accumulation time was 200 seconds.

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## *Credits and Acknowledgments*

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Producing the definitive catalog of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian paintings in the National Gallery of Art has been a highly complex undertaking that could not have been accomplished without the contributions of many individuals for more than a decade. We are supremely grateful to the late Miklós Boskovits, who brought a lifetime of expertise to this project and whose care and connoisseurship illuminate every page. Due to Miklós's unexpected death we do not have the list of institutions and individuals he surely would have wished to thank; we would like to express our appreciation to those with whom he collaborated and corresponded for all they have added to this monumental achievement.

After Miklós's passing, Laurence B. Kanter, chief curator of the Yale University Art Gallery and himself the author of more than one catalog of early Italian paintings, generously agreed to undertake the role of volume editor. In this capacity, he diligently ensured that Miklós's voice and precise scholarship were preserved. He was supported by Daniela Parenti, director of the department of medieval and early Renaissance art at the Uffizi, who kindly undertook the task of reviewing a late version of the text. Sonia Chiodo, director, and her associates at the Corpus of Florentine Painting were also close colleagues of Miklós, and we thank them for their efforts as well. We are particularly grateful to Miklós's widow, Serena Padovani, retired director of the Galleria Palatina and a scholar in her own right, who guided the manuscript to completion.

As always, we would like to extend our thanks to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for its continuing commitment to the Gallery, its collections, and its work. At the Kress Foundation we are especially grateful to President Max Marmor and the Kress Board for their support.

The efforts of the publishing office were vital to seeing this manuscript through to completion. From the death of the author, to the Gallery's decision to publish both online and in print, to a collection whose very nature is more unique and complex than many, the editors and designers overcame many challenges. The content

presented here is thanks to their efforts and we believe Miklós would be pleased. I extend warm thanks to Judy Metro, editor in chief, for her support and rigor; to Chris Vogel, deputy publisher; to Wendy Schleicher, design manager; John Long, print and digital production associate; and Katharine Adkins, program assistant. We are also grateful to the former senior editors responsible for the initial phases of the catalog, Mary Yakush, Gail Spiisbury and Karen Sagstetter, ably assisted by Magda Nakassis. Sally Bourrie, senior editor, and Lisa Shea, admirably carried the complex and demanding project to conclusion. Contributions by Research Associate Jason Di Resta were invaluable in confirming facts and ensuring that Miklós's scholarship was presented accurately.

David Alan Brown

August 26, 2015

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## *In Memoriam: Miklós Boskovits*

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This catalog of Italian paintings at the National Gallery of Art includes some of the earliest and most important works of art in the Gallery's collection. Smaller in the number of entries it comprises than its companion volumes covering Italian paintings of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth/eighteenth centuries, it must nevertheless be understood to occupy a more significant place than they within its own field of study. In part this is due to an organic development in the history of collecting that led the great European national and princely collections to concentrate their acquisitive efforts elsewhere—specifically in later periods of Italian art—leaving great masterpieces of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries unclaimed on the market when American collectors entered the lists in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century. It was in turn the seemingly unquenchable appetite of American collectors that led scholarship of Dugento and Trecento painting to grow beyond the dilettante and local antiquarian interests that dominated its formative stages into the rigorously disciplined approach that defines the study today. This catalog represents the fortunate confluence of these two interrelated strands: it is an encounter between the most refined and consequential assembly of early Italian paintings in this country, ranking among the greatest collections of such material anywhere outside of Italy, and the most original and influential scholar of this material, Miklós Boskovits, a man who defined many of the canonical presumptions on which the modern study of the period is based.

Miklós's association with the Gallery began nearly a quarter century ago, in 1990, when he was invited to catalog the bulk of the Gallery's extensive collection of fifteenth-century Italian paintings. Having demonstrated both his command of the field and his suitability to large, demanding projects with the publication of indispensable catalogs of the early Italian paintings in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (written between 1977 and 1980, published in 1988) and in the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection (1990), he had been recommended for the task by Sir John Pope-Hennessy, then recently retired as consultative chairman of the department of European paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Gallery's choice

proved to be an inspired one. Miklós brought to his assignment in Washington a preoccupation fundamental to the best cataloging of early Renaissance art, a preoccupation perceived at the time, and even described by the scholar himself, as “antiquated” or even “futile”:

I tried to clarify questions related to authorship and date before turning to other problems.... I am convinced that without first determining the coordinates of the position of a painting in the artistic geography of its time, it is impossible to evaluate correctly the meaning or study the background of the work.

Miklós was by no means the first scholar to express his priorities in these terms, but he was by any standard of measure the best qualified to achieve reliable results: the most wide-ranging in his experience and interests and the most gifted in his insights and judgment, a perfect match for the breadth and depth of the Gallery collections. Published in 2003, the result was a magisterial volume, coauthored with Gallery curator David Alan Brown and others, that was immediately embraced and will long stand as a standard reference source and as a model for similar efforts at other public institutions around the globe.

It was only logical, therefore, that Miklós should have been asked to continue what he had begun and turn his attention to the precedent material at the Gallery, the paintings from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the late Middle Ages, the period in which he first made his mark as a scholar. The equation between author and subject that had been so beautifully balanced in the fifteenth-century paintings volume promised to be equally so here, but with subtle rephrasing: due partly to the accidents of survival—the number of paintings from the fifteenth century known to us today, as well as their regional distribution, is astronomically greater than from the fourteenth century, whose numbers in turn dwarf those from the thirteenth century—and partly to the relatively late date at which American collectors entered the competition for their ownership, Washington’s extensive early Renaissance collection comprises numerous high-quality works that are representative of the greatest masters, yet certain of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian paintings are arguably more significant, as they constitute prime examples in the history of Trecento painting and in some cases,

in all of art history. A number of these paintings are, in fact, seminal or definitive examples of their type or even the only surviving example of a type. Furthermore, although identification of authorship and chronology are in general far more approximate and tenuous exercises in this period, only a fraction of the Gallery's collection could be said to be of controversial or unsettled attribution—reflecting the trophy-hunting proclivities of Andrew Mellon and the Wideners and the judicious process of selection from Samuel Kress's ecumenical holdings.

For paintings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, attribution and dating do not so much represent fixed geographical coordinates, speaking metaphorically, as they do in the fifteenth century. Rather, they are temporary markers of the current state of scholarship, indicators of modern trends of thought that may or may not have anything to do with the historical reality they are meant to encode. A thorough catalog of the Gallery's Dugento and Trecento paintings might well have contented itself, therefore, with summarizing the plentiful existing bibliography and explaining historiographically its meaning. Miklós has done all this, of course, and it is not surprising that for an unusually large number of entries, references to the latest or the most in-depth study of a given problem are citations of articles or books or exhibition catalogs that he himself had written. But Miklós moved far beyond the practical limitations of this approach and in so doing has created a new type of collection catalog, one that doubles as an encyclopedia of its period. Each entry is conceived as a small artist monograph, an explanatory roadmap of a painter's entire career rather than just a concise indication of the position of one work of art within that career. This catalog is a summation of forty or more years of thought dedicated by the author to a wide range of problems; it is a scholarly testament and a precious legacy. The editors have made it possible to consult the catalog for spot-checks of data or to retrieve specific items of information or opinion. The reader should be cautioned, however, not to overlook the value and indeed the pleasure of perusing the catalog, of walking slowly through its corridors of thought seeking not to answer any particular material question but to frame endless new questions on the foundations of its solid edifice of scholarship. In a very real sense, this is a highly personal achievement of Miklós Boskovits as much as it is a catalog of the collections of the National Gallery of Art.

While Miklós Boskovits's position of authority within the field of Dugento and Trecento studies is unrivaled, it is not unchallenged, and it is important to understand something of the nature of these challenges in order to extract maximum value from the arguments and discussions that he crafted. The modern study of late medieval Italian painting may be said to have taken serious form only in the early years of the twentieth century with the generalizing, often insightful but sometimes superficial researches of pioneering art historians such as Bernard Berenson and his contemporary Osvald Sirén. Their work was, by and large, scattershot rather than synthetic, generated as much in response to specific problems that came to their attention (frequently by visits to little-known collections or by the appearance of interesting or significant works of art on the market) as to an urge to create a fully articulated history of the period. It was, furthermore, handicapped by an even more severely limited pool of documented historical facts than is available to historians today, a lacuna that was addressed more or less contemporaneously with the work of exploration they themselves were undertaking. By way of example only, when Berenson wrote his scintillating analysis of Duccio's accomplishments in the first edition of his *Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (1897)—an analysis, it must be said, that has not been improved upon to this day—the artist's life dates were calculated on the basis of sixteenth-century anecdotal evidence and the range of his activity was believed to have extended a full twenty years after he is now known to have died. Berenson, in other words, had no basis for distinguishing between the work of Duccio and that of his many pupils and imitators. He was nevertheless able to extract the key elements of Duccio's style and translate them into English prose of memorable effectiveness, scarcely a word of which needed to be amended in preparation for the second edition of his book (1909) even though all the documentation of the artist's life on which we now rely had in the intervening years been discovered.

The following generation of scholarship in this field was so completely dominated by one personality, Richard Offner, that his name has come to be synonymous with a distinctive analytical approach and definitive judgments of attribution. Offner, a German-born scholar who passed nearly the entirety of his professional career in the United States as a professor at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, sought to replace the approximations and generalities of Berenson's

scholarship (which he affected to despise) with a narrow-focused precision (that has in turn come to be an object of light-hearted derision) leading to such excesses of critical finesse as the division of the stylistic penumbra dependent upon the Cione brothers' studio output of the middle decades of the fourteenth century into no fewer than fifty-six independent and fully characterized masters, a wholly improbable number of painters able to support themselves within the limited economy of post-plague Florence. Offner's scientific, taxonomic approach to studying the fourteenth century was often criticized and reformulated by his brilliant contemporary, the Italian art historian Roberto Longhi. Longhi rarely stooped to concern himself with the minor luminaries unearthed (or fantasized) by Offner, but instead, like Berenson—whom he disparaged even more than did Offner—concerned himself primarily with the peaks of accomplishment of the major masters, reorganizing their chronologies and their genealogies of influence into a new structural outline of history for fourteenth-century art throughout the Italian peninsula. Longhi's influence was immense, disseminated through the exhilarating imagery of his elegant prose style and by the army of his students fleshing out the hints and insights adumbrated in his copious, narratively complex footnotes. Offner's influence was equally far-reaching but owed little to his prose style, which can best be described as impenetrable, or to his students, who were few in number, but rather to the ambitious publishing project he initiated, the multivolume *Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, to which he devoted himself until his death in 1965.

When Miklós Boskovits emigrated from Hungary to Italy in 1968, Offner's *Corpus* had progressed only as far as the generation of the Cione brothers and two of their immediate followers, Giovanni del Biondo and Andrea Bonaiuti. Perceiving that the end of the fourteenth century remained as confused and poorly understood as had its beginnings before Offner began his magnum opus, the younger scholar appointed to himself the task of pushing this project forward, resulting in what probably remains his best-known, unquestionably his most often used publication: *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (1975). Shortly afterward he undertook, with the blessing of the Institute of Fine Arts, a comprehensive editing, revision, and completion of the entire *Corpus*, which, though it was never finished, substantially revised Offner's vision of fourteenth-century Florentine history. It is Miklos's version of

Offner's work—synthesizing Offner's and Longhi's divergent points of view and subjecting each to his own acutely revisionist approach—that represents, with few exceptions, the point of departure for all modern research in this field. It was, furthermore, the experience of editing the granular, even microscopic, and painstaking attention to detail that distinguished Offner's books that led Miklós to scrutinize with equally penetrating and judicious attention the other schools of Italian painting in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. His complete bibliography is surely greater and more original than that of any other scholar of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance in Italy, with the notable exception of Roberto Longhi, while the number and dedication of his students is comparable: together with his longtime friend and sometime rival Luciano Bellosi, Miklós trained most of the younger Italian scholars working in this field today. In a very real sense it may justifiably be said that the study of Italian thirteenth- and fourteenth-century painting belongs to Miklós Boskovits.

A key component of Miklós's approach to the study of fourteenth-century painting was his ability to extract from the infinitesimal distinctions of difference elucidated by Offner those features or aspects of style that are truly significant or consequential and recognize these same features in groups of works that Offner had considered unrelated. In this way, he combined many of the separate masters created by Offner into successive and interrelated stages within the career of a single painter. The results were not only a more credible overall view of the artistic production of any given period or place, but also a more organic vision of the artistic personality of any given painter. Miklós understood and embraced the attendant obligation of describing the maturation process of his hybrid artistic constructs, how one proceeded from the qualities characteristic of group A through those found in group B to end at the achievements of group C without once stepping outside the confines of personality X or Y. It is a testament to the acuity of his vision that very few of these newly created hybrid personalities have ever been challenged by other scholars and that students today have access to plausible, sometimes demonstrable, reconstructions of the early career of major artists of which their forebears were entirely unaware. There is, of course, a risk to this approach, that constant attention to the links between otherwise distinct categories might obscure the lengthening differences between characteristics at either extreme of the reassembled chain. It is possible to quibble in this regard

with some of Miklós's reconstructions, but these are generally quibbles of detail, not of essential principle. It is an inescapable conclusion that his research and his approach to artistic classification—to the fundamental discernment and evaluation of similitude—have brought us closer than ever before to a reliable view of the history of artistic production during these early periods of culture in pre-Renaissance Italy.

Miklós had completed all but the final revisions of his text for this catalog before his untimely death on December 20, 2011. He had shared his entries with me, we had exchanged correspondence concerning the small number of points on which we disagreed, and he had graciously incorporated his responses to my observations in the text or footnotes of the relevant entries. I am pleased to say that some of my objections were proven to be ill-founded by close physical observation of the paintings, when previously unnoticed technical considerations tended to support Miklós's original conclusions (for example, cats. 1, 8, and 38–41). In a few cases it may be said that we agreed to disagree (cats. 6, 7, 35, and 42). Only in one case, that of the incomparably beautiful Goldman Madonna by Giotto (cat. 17), has subsequent technical study undermined his carefully constructed arguments, tending to support the association of four surviving elements from a single complex as hypothesized by an earlier generation of scholars over Miklós's contention that the four works derive from two different complexes and represent two different phases of Giotto's career. It must, however, be recognized that technical evidence is just that: evidence, not proof. It remains possible that Miklós was correct; the evidence is certainly discouraging, but in no way does it fully disprove his arguments. In this as in every other case, therefore, the text of the catalog entry has been left precisely as the author wrote it, aside from minor editorial revisions to assure that the English translation adheres as closely as possible to the meaning and tone of his original Italian manuscript.

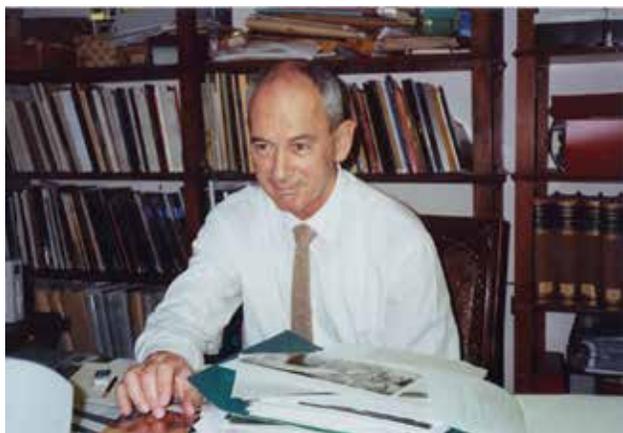
No collection catalog is meant to be the last word on its subject; at best it intends to be the most accurate summation or conclusion possible given the state of knowledge at the time it is written. Knowledge is not static. Miklós Boskovits's greatest gift to posterity was the platform he created from which knowledge could more securely advance, leading inevitably to corrections and improvement

over his own work. We are all tremendously fortunate to enjoy the fruits of his generosity, enabling our own work to be better than it could ever be on its own. This catalog is in some respects the highest platform he built, and from it we can see further across the terrain of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Italy than ever was possible before.

Thank you, Miklós.

Laurence Kanter

January 2014



Miklós Boskovits, Courtesy of Serena Padovani



Miklós Boskovits at work with students Ada Labriola and Daniela Parenti in the Corpus of Florentine Painting Room at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, 1997. Daniela Parenti, who is now director of the department of Medieval and Early Renaissance at the Uffizi, assisted Miklós with his research for this catalog and also reviewed a late version of the catalog text. Courtesy of Serena Padovani

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# Andrea di Bartolo

Sieneese, active from 1389 - died 1428

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## BIOGRAPHY

Sieneese painter and miniaturist, active in various towns in central and northern Italy, Andrea was the son of Bartolo di Fredi and father of Giorgio and Sano, also painters. His artistic career no doubt began in his father's shop; his hand can in fact be recognized in some important commissions executed by Bartolo in the 1380s, in particular the polyptychs of Montalcino and the frescoes in the Augustinian church in the same town.[1] He participated, alongside his father and Luca di Tommè, in the realization of the now lost altarpiece for the chapel of the shoemakers' guild in Siena Cathedral.[2] In 1394, by then an independent artist, Andrea began a period of activity in the Veneto, as attested by the altarpiece of five blessed nuns of the Dominican order (Museo Vetrario, Murano), a painted crucifix in the monastery of Santa Maria at Zadar in Croatia, and some frescoes in the church of San Francesco at Treviso.[3] The altarpiece of the Annunciation and saints signed by Andrea di Bartolo, now in the Museo d'Arte Sacra at Buonconvento, probably bore the date 1397. Painted after his return to Tuscany, it testifies to his gradual abandonment of some of the harshness of his father's manner, employing figures compact in profile and devoid of linear complexities, but enlivened by a brilliant palette.

A desire to espouse the figurative ideals of late-Gothic art is ever more clearly expressed in Andrea's works from the early years of the fifteenth century onwards. He thus elongated the proportions of his figures and enlivened their movements with more expansive gestures and more agitated drapery. Moreover, the example of the works of Taddeo di Bartolo, who had returned to Siena after a long absence c. 1400, led him to seek a more naturalistic rendering of skin, hair, fabrics, and surface textures in general. In other respects, however, he remained essentially faithful to the figurative formulae of his father's art. The panels of a disassembled polyptych, the larger part of which still remains in the cathedral of Tuscania (Viterbo), and the four lateral panels of a polyptych, dated 1413, in the Franciscan church of the Osservanza in Siena, illustrate well this phase in Andrea's art. The polyptych in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 220), the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, and the polyptych divided between the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan and the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino

probably document the development of his art in the following years.

Andrea di Bartolo is also known to have worked as a painter of miniatures during the last years of the fourteenth century. His most significant contributions to the genre include his participation in the decoration of the choir-books of the Eremo di Lecceto (now in part in the Biblioteca degli Intronati in Siena) and those—particularly fine in quality—commissioned by King Henry IV of England for the Franciscan Custodianship of the Holy Land in Jerusalem (now in the Museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in that city). A second period of activity in the Veneto in the last years of Andrea's life has also been inferred.[4]

[1] Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 453–467, 469–476, 485–488, 500–501. Some of the panels of the triptych from the church of San Francesco, in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena until 1997, were later reunited with the remainder of the altarpiece in the Museo Civico at Montalcino. See Alessandro Bagnoli, *Museo civico e diocesano d'arte sacra di Montalcino* (Siena, 1997), 24.

[2] The painting, commissioned in 1389, was completed in 1391; see Monica Butzek, "Chronologie," in *Die Kirchen von Siena*, vol. 3, *Der Dom S. Maria Assunta*, bk. 1, *Architektur*, pt. 1, ed. Walter Haas and Dethard von Winterfeld (Munich, 2006), 96, 97 n. 1267, 100, 101 n. 1324.

[3] Gaudenz Freuler, "Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d'Antonio Cafarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice," *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 570–586.

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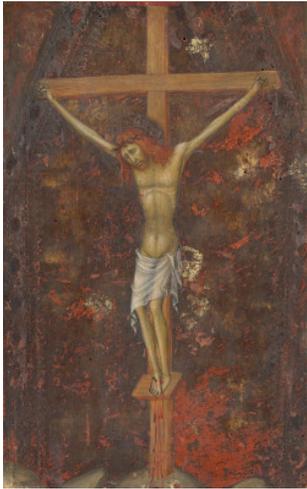
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Andrea di Bartolo  
Sienese, active from 1389 - died 1428

## *Christ on the Cross* *[reverse]*

c. 1380/1390

tempera on panel

painted surface: 30 × 18.6 cm (11 13/16 × 7 5/16 in.)

overall: 30 × 18.6 × 0.8 cm (11 13/16 × 7 5/16 × 5/16 in.)

framed: 52.7 × 34.3 × 7.9 cm (20 3/4 × 13 1/2 × 3 1/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.20.b

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### ENTRY

The painting belongs to an uncommon genre of Byzantine origin of devotional icons painted on both sides.[1] It is a simplified version of the portable diptych in which, as in the example discussed here, the Madonna and Child was usually represented on the obverse, and Christ on the Cross on the reverse.[2] The peculiarity here, however, is the presentation of the Virgin according to the iconographic type of the Madonna of Humility: Mary is humbly seated on the ground instead of on a throne. Yet at the same time she is venerated as Queen of Heaven by two angels who flank her in flight, and blessed from above by the half-length figure of Christ, who appears in a trefoil, surrounded by seraphim.[3] On the reverse of the panel is an isolated image of *Christ on the Cross*, unattended by the usual figures of mourners, soldiers, or onlookers who allude to the event of the Crucifixion. That the image was intended as a panel for private devotion is underlined by the presence of the minuscule figure of the female donor kneeling in front of the Madonna to the right; some scholars have identified her as a nun.[4]

At the time of the panel's first emergence in Florence in the 1920s, art historians expressed rather disparate views about it. Roberto Longhi, in a manuscript expertise probably dating to the years 1925–1930,[5] considered the image of the Madonna likely a work of a close follower of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344), identifiable with Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) or with Simone's brother Donato, whereas that of Christ on the Cross on the reverse seemed to him a later addition by a painter close to Paolo di Giovanni Fei (Sienese,

c. 1335/1345 - 1411) dating to the final years of the Trecento.[6] In 1934, similar expertises were sought from other leading art historians of the time. F. Mason Perkins, followed by Giuseppe Fiocco and Wilhelm Suida, attributed it to Andrea di Bartolo; Bernard Berenson also accepted this attribution. For his part Adolfo Venturi came to the conclusion that it was an autograph work of Simone Martini, while Raimond van Marle spoke of a “close follower” of Simone, probably identifiable with his brother Donato.[7] The catalogs of the National Gallery of Art (1941, 1959) accepted Longhi’s proposal.[8] In a polemical article (unpublished), Richard Offner contradicted this, preferring to leave the panel in anonymity.[9] George Martin Richter (1941) also rejected Lippo Memmi’s hand, arguing for an attribution to Andrea di Vanni (Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413) in a youthful phase, when he was still working in Lippo’s shop.[10] Charles Seymour and Hanns Swarzenski (1946) also placed the attribution to Lippo in doubt.[11] Nonetheless, Andrea di Bartolo’s responsibility for the execution of both sides of the painting was gradually recognized, beginning with Millard Meiss (1936, 1951), followed by the catalogs of the Gallery (1965, 1985) and Fern Rusk Shapley (1966).[12] All the more recent contributions to the literature accepted this attribution, with the exception of Gaudenz Freuler (2009), who considered the image of the Madonna of Humility as executed by Bartolo di Fredi, possibly assisted by his son Andrea di Bartolo.[13]

The date of the painting, however, has given rise to considerable divergence of opinion. It was thought to have been executed by Memmi as early as c. 1330–1340 in the first catalog of the Gallery (1941).[14] But in the later catalogs of 1965 and 1975 and in Shapley 1966 it was dated to c. 1415.[15] In the meantime Meiss (1951) supported a dating to c. 1400, while Hendrik W. van Os (1969, 1974) offered the view that it must have been painted before the end of the fourteenth century.[16] Shapley (1979), returning to the question, concluded that “the date may be in the 1380s.”[17] For his part Creighton E. Gilbert (1984) seems to have favored a later dating: around 1394.[18] Freuler (1987), van Os (1989, 1990), and Daniele Benati (1999) accepted this hypothesis, as well as Gilbert’s suggestion that the painting was commissioned by the Dominicans of the monastery of Corpus Domini in Venice, consecrated in 1394, and connected its execution to that year.[19] In 1994, however, van Os seemed to have abandoned this position, preferring a dating to c. 1415.[20] Bearing in mind that the connection of the panel with the Dominican nuns of Venice is purely conjectural and seems contradicted by the fact that the donor in our panel is not dressed in the habit of that order,[21] the *terminus a quo* of 1394 should now be excluded from discussion of our panel.

Some help in establishing the panel's date can, however, be derived from an analysis of its punched decoration, undertaken by Mojmir S. Frinta (1998).[22] This scholar identified the presence in our panel of some punches already used in paintings produced in the shop of Bartolo di Fredi, as well as in youthful paintings by Andrea: I refer in particular to the polyptych in the museum at Buonconvento, probably dating to 1397,[23] and various paintings that art historians have unanimously assigned to Andrea's initial phase.[24] But especially significant to me are the stylistic affinities with works by Bartolo dating to the mid-1380s or shortly after, in which signs of Andrea's assistance can, I believe, be glimpsed: *Adoration of the Magi*, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, to which the *Adoration of the Cross* now divided between the museums of Altenburg and Charlottesville formerly belonged,[25] and *Massacre of the Innocents* in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, probably part of the polyptych executed by Bartolo's shop for the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano in 1388.[26] In these paintings the harsher features of Bartolo's style are softened, the swirling calligraphy is attenuated, and the emotional tensions give way to a rather somnolent tranquility which—in conjunction with the close morphological affinities—suggests Andrea's participation. The Christ on the Cross of the reverse, though more hasty in execution, recalls the similar passage in the *Adoration of the Cross*, no. 50 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, of which it seems indeed a simplified version. The *Madonna of Humility of the obverse*, on the other hand, with its minute, exquisitely chased detailing, reveals close affinities especially with the figures of the mothers in the *Massacre* in Baltimore,[27] suggesting it was a work realized by Andrea, when he was still working in his father's shop.

It may be added that the composition of the Madonna of Humility evidently enjoyed considerable success. The artist replicated it many times.[28] The example in the Gallery is likely to be one of the earliest, together with the signed version published by Berenson, its whereabouts now unknown.[29] In the later versions the figure of Mary seems to expand to fill the painted surface, which is enclosed within an arch decorated on the inside with cusping and sometimes with figures of the Angel of the Annunciation and the Virgin Annunciate placed in medallions in the two upper corners.[30] At the same time, the gold-tooled carpet that covers the floor is replaced by a flowering meadow; the design becomes more simplified, while the line of the hem of the Virgin's cloak is wavier; and an increased number of angels surround the protagonists.[31] Such late Gothic developments, however, are characteristic of far later phases in the artist's career. Here he is still strongly influenced by the figurative formulae of his father. This is evident both in the

painting's ornamental decoration and in its stylistic features, both indebted to Trecento models.

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## NOTES

- [1] See Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Bilateral Icons," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Aleksandr Petrovich Kazhdan (New York, 1980), 2:980.
- [2] This type of panel, painted on both sides, is exemplified by no. 1062B in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, a work by Francesco di Vannuccio, though there the two sides are reversed: *Christ on the Cross Flanked by Mourners and Devotees* painted on what can be considered the obverse, while *Madonna and Child with Saints*, painted on glass, is on the reverse; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 35–37. According to Laurence Kanter's plausible hypothesis (written communication), the Washington panel was originally a reliquary, accompanied on the obverse by roundels containing relics.
- [3] While the presence of angels in adoration alludes to the theme of the *regina coeli*, the image of the *Christus Logos* probably refers to that of the Incarnation; cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 153–154; Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 120–121.
- [4] Creighton Gilbert (1984) identified the donor as a Dominican nun. From this he inferred that the painting was commissioned by a monastery of this order; various scholars accepted his argument, but Victor Schmidt (2005) refuted it, rightly pointing out the impossibility of recognizing a member of the Dominican order in a lady "wearing a long, white headdress which also functions as a cloak." The figure can more plausibly be identified as a matron or widow. See Creighton E. Gilbert, "Tuscan Observants and Painters in Venice, ca. 1400," in *Interpretazioni veneziane: Studi di storia dell'arte in onore di Michelangelo Muraro*, ed. David Rosand (Venice, 1984), 109–120; Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 265 n. 82.
- [5] Roberto Longhi, who had been a consultant of Contini at least since the early 1920s, presumably wrote his expertise, in Italian, immediately after Contini's purchase of the panel c. 1925.
- [6] Longhi, in his letter to Contini, declared that the *Madonna of Humility* "è senza dubbio una vera e propria gemma della pittura senese della prima metà del Trecento al seguito immediato di Simone Martini" ("is

without a doubt a true and proper gem of Sienese painting of the first half of the thirteenth century in the immediate following of Simone Martini”). The painting, in his view, had been painted by the same hand as the panel with a similar Madonna of Humility in the Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (no. 1072), then attributed to Lippo Memmi, or to Simone’s little-known brother, Donato Martini. According to Longhi, the image of Christ on the Cross on the back of the panel was painted by an entirely different hand, some forty years after the Madonna.

- [7] See copies of the expertises in the NGA curatorial files. Only Wilhelm Suida’s is dated, to August 1935.
- [8] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 133–134; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 34 repro.
- [9] Richard Offner’s long article, written on the occasion of the opening of the National Gallery of Art, only got as far as galley proofs (in August 1941) but was never in fact published. Copies of the proofs are kept in the archive of the Corpus of Florentine Painting, Florence. Commenting on cat. 1, Offner wrote, “The attribution to Lippo can only be accounted a piece of ingenuous wishfulness. The panel is not by Lippo simply because it shares none of his essential artistic characteristics.... It lacks...any suggestion of Lippo’s facade-like, immobilized composition.... How vague...are the bases of attribution may be judged from the wide discrepancy of opinion on the authorship... between Lippo and Donato (the latter being as shadowy a figure as is known to art history)...and Andrea di Bartolo. I should incline to agree with the tendency of the latter opinion, if it implied a later dating than Lippo’s, but one must stand resolutely against the attribution.”
- [10] George Martin Richter, “The New National Gallery in Washington,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177.
- [11] Charles Seymour and Hanns Swarzenski, “A Madonna of Humility and Quercia’s Early Style,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, ser. 6, no. 30 (1946): 139.
- [12] Millard Meiss, “The Madonna of Humility,” *The Art Bulletin* 18 (1936): 437, n. 8; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 22–23, n. 34; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 7; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 18; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 66, 67.
- [13] After the delivery of the present text to the Gallery, I realized with pleasure that Gaudenz Freuler, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:252,

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also considered *Madonna of Humility, The Blessing Christ, Two Angels, and a Donor [obverse]* a painting executed not later than the 1390s. On the other hand, I am unable to see in it any trace of Bartolo's hand, even if the young Andrea was evidently influenced by his father's style.

- [14] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 133–134.
- [15] National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 7; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1975), 10; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 67.
- [16] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 22–23, n. 34; Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 18, 120, 187; Hendrik W. van Os, “Andrea di Bartolo's Madonna of Humility,” *M: A Quarterly Review of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts* 6, no. 3 (1974): 21, 25.
- [17] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:3.
- [18] Gilbert believed that the woman represented as donor was a Dominican nun, who appeared in “an ‘undress’ costume, without the outer elements worn in public,” that is, the black mantle. “Hence it is very attractive to suggest [he continued] that the Washington panels [the images painted on obverse and reverse] are the survivors of the very set blessed by Cardinal Dominici in 1394, at the [consecration of the] new observant convent in Venice.” Creighton E. Gilbert, “Tuscan Observants and Painters in Venice, ca. 1400,” in *Interpretazioni veneziane: Studi di storia dell'arte in onore di Michelangelo Muraro*, ed. David Rosand (Venice, 1984), 114–116. Some later authors considered this hypothesis, advanced by the scholar “with caution,” almost a demonstrable fact.
- [19] Gaudenz Freuler, “Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d'Antonio Cafarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice,” *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 577; Hendrik W. van Os et al., eds., *The Early Sienese Paintings in Holland*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Florence, 1989), 29, 32; Hendrik W. van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function*, vol. 2, 1344–1460 (Groningen, 1990), 76; Daniele Benati, in *Da Bernardo Daddi a Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Maria Pia Mannini (Florence, 1999), 56.
- [20] Hendrik W. van Os et al., *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500*, trans. Michael Hoyle (London, 1994), 74.
- [21] See note 4 above.
- [22] Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and*

*Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 44, 48, 224, 230, 351, 479.

- [23] Sources mention the fragmentary polyptych now in the Museo d'arte sacra della Val d'Arbia at Buonconvento as an altarpiece signed by Andrea di Bartolo and also furnished with a fragmentary date that could still be deciphered in the second half of the nineteenth century as 1397; Serena Padovani, in Serena Padovani and Bruno Santi, *Buonconvento, museo d'arte sacra della Val d'Arbia* (Genoa, 1981), 23–25. There is now no trace of the inscription, but the proposed reading of the date is quite compatible with the stylistic features of the work.
- [24] We may cite as paintings belonging to Andrea's debut the Stories of Saint Galgano now divided between the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the National Gallery in Dublin; the altarpiece in Buonconvento (see above note 23); and the portable triptychs in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena and the National Gallery in Prague. See, respectively, Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 61–62; Homan Potterton, *Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Paintings* (Dublin, 1981), 6; Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 203; Olga Pujmanová, *Italienische Tafelbilder des Trecento in der Nationalgalerie Prag* (Berlin, 1984), pl. 20.
- [25] Wolfgang Loseries, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 66–72.
- [26] Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 260–272.
- [27] Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, no. 37.1018; Federico Zeri, *Italian Paintings in the Walters Art Gallery*, ed. Ursula E.M. Cracken, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1976), 1:48–50.
- [28] Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 187–188, figs. 62–74, cited and reproduced several versions of the composition. One of them, however, formerly belonging to the Stoclet collection in Brussels (fig. 66), is of dubious authenticity.
- [29] Bernard Berenson, “Lost Sienese Trecento Paintings, 4,” *International Studio* 98, no. 404 (1931): 30–31.
- [30] As in the panel signed by Andrea, formerly in the Ehrich Gallery in New York. See Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), fig. 67.
- [31] Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), figs. 62, 63, as well as the panel formerly with Moretti in Florence: Daniele Benati, in *Da Bernardo Daddi a Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Maria Pia Mannini (Florence, 1999), 56–61.

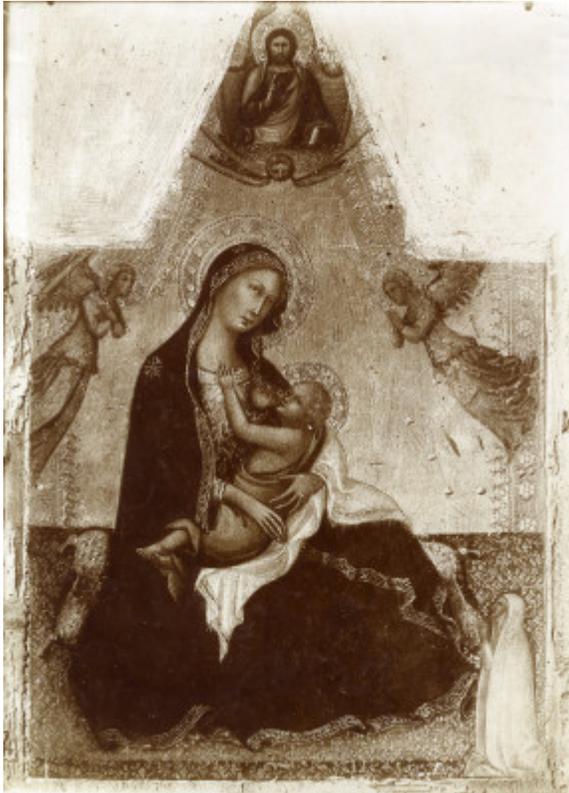
## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support (contrary to Shapley 1966, 1979) is a single piece of wood, with a vertical grain and about 1 cm thick, painted on both sides.[1] The panel has a slight convex warp relative to the obverse. It has been cut down along its upper edge. The top of the original gable is truncated, and in order to make the outer shape rectangular, triangular insets were added on both sides (approximately 1.5 cm on the top and 3 cm on the vertical edge on the left, and 1 cm along the top and 2 cm on the vertical edge on the right, as seen from the front). The original engaged frame has been lost and replaced by a modern one.

The painting was executed on the usual gesso ground, over which a thin red bole was applied in the gilded areas of the obverse. The reverse was silver gilt.[2] An old photograph [fig. 1] [3] shows that the painted surface on the obverse ended approximately 1 cm from the lateral and lower edges and that the unpainted area at the sides of the gable was at that time gessoed. A later photo, probably from c. 1940/1941, proves that in the meantime the upper corners had been regilded.[4] On the reverse the painted area extends to the edges of the panel. The x-radiograph [fig. 2] shows impressions of three roundels on each side of the gable, the upper pair cropped in half at the top of the panel. This is evidence that the panel functioned as a reliquary, containing in its now lost engaged frame seven circular cavities (allowing for one cut off at the top of the gable) to receive relics. No underdrawing was found during an infrared examination (Vidicon),[5] but incised lines mark the placement of the principal figures. A green undermodeling is visible beneath the flesh of the figures on both the obverse and the reverse. The painted surface of the obverse is fairly well preserved, with some inpainting in the donor's robe; some small, scattered paint losses; and some abrasion in the Madonna's robe. On the reverse the silver gilded area is heavily rubbed and the image itself is damaged by scratches, paint losses, and wormholes.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1927, Andrea di Bartolo, *Madonna of Humility, the Blessing Christ, Two Angels, and a Donor*, c. 1380/1390, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence



**fig. 2** X-radiograph, Andrea di Bartolo, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1415, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Stephen Pichetto examined this picture in 1940 in response to a request made to him by the Gallery's then chief curator, John Walker. Pichetto was the restorer for the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and he was specifically asked to clear up whether the *Madonna of Humility* and the *Christ on the Cross* were painted on the same panel. Pichetto's notes indicate that he determined that the support was one piece of wood, painted on both sides. (Walker's letter of October 1940 and Pichetto's documentation are in NGA

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curatorial files.) It is unclear why Fern Rusk Shapley stated that the paintings were executed on separate panels. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 66, 67; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:3–4. The painting was examined again in 1988, 2008, and 2011, and it was consistently determined to be one panel; see report dated August 31, 1988, in NGA conservation files.

- [2] Using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), the NGA scientific research department analyzed the gilding, and it was found to be silver (see forthcoming report in NGA conservation files).
- [3] This photo, probably taken sometime before the acquisition of the painting by Samuel H. Kress in 1927 (see Provenance), belonged to Roberto Longhi and is now in the archive of the Fondazione Roberto Longhi in Florence.
- [4] During his 1940 examination of the painting, Pichetto removed the modern engaged frame and made sketches of the placement of the image on its wooden support, indicating also the pieces of new wood added to the panel in the upper corners (see NGA curatorial files).
- [5] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera.

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### PROVENANCE

Private collection, Italy, c. 1920.[1] (Alessandro Contini, Rome [from 1930, Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi]); sold October 1927 to Samuel H. Kress [1863-1955], New York;[2] transferred 1929 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; gift 1939 to NGA. [1] In his expertise dated 8 August 1934, commissioned from him by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation (copy in the NGA curatorial files), F. Mason Perkins states that he had seen the painting for the first time in an Italian private collection fifteen years earlier. [2] The bill of sale for sculpture, maiolica, furniture, antique velvet, and several paintings, including a "Madonna and Child by Lippo Memmi...given to Donato Martini by some experts," is dated 5 October 1927 (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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Andrea di Bartolo  
Sieneese, active from 1389 - died 1428

## *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*

c. 1400/1405

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface: 44.1 × 32.5 cm (17 3/8 × 12 13/16 in.)

overall: 45.7 × 34 × 0.6 cm (18 × 13 3/8 × 1/4 in.)

framed: 48.3 × 36.8 × 4.1 cm (19 × 14 1/2 × 1 5/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.43

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### ENTRY

The three panels in the National Gallery of Art collection (this work, *The Nativity of the Virgin*, and *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*) form part of a larger series of scenes from the childhood of Mary, of which a fourth component is also known: *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* now in the Keresztény Múzeum at Esztergom in Hungary [fig. 1].<sup>[1]</sup> Since two of the episodes, *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple* and *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem*, are seldom found represented in art, there are good reasons to assume that the sequence would have originally comprised at least four other, more commonly illustrated scenes, namely, the Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple, the Annunciation to Joachim (and/or to Anna), the Meeting at the Golden Gate, and the Betrothal of the Virgin.<sup>[2]</sup> These (and possibly other) scenes would have accompanied a central image of the Madonna and Child,<sup>[3]</sup> or of Saint Anne with the Madonna and Child,<sup>[4]</sup> a Coronation of the Virgin,<sup>[5]</sup> or a theme such as the Annunciation or Pentecost.<sup>[6]</sup> It is difficult, therefore, to reconstruct the dismembered and dispersed altarpiece of which our three panels would have formed part, also because we do not know exactly how the surviving scenes from the life of the Virgin were related to the main image of the altarpiece. The fact that the grain of the wooden support is vertical would seem to exclude the proposition that they are fragments of a predella,<sup>[7]</sup> and the hypothesis advanced in the past, that our

panels could be fragments of a reliquary cupboard, seems to have no foundation.[8] They could have been fragments of a *vita-icon* type panel, with a whole-length figure of the Madonna and Child flanked by a vertically arranged series of scenes of her life.[9] Such an image, however, would appear decidedly old-fashioned in Siena after the mid-fourteenth century. A more likely alternative format is suggested by the cases in which Siennese painters of the late fourteenth century, such as Taddeo di Bartolo or Andrea di Bartolo himself,[10] produced paintings in a form similar to thirteenth-century dossals, with a large-scale representation at the center, flanked by narrative scenes in two superimposed orders [fig. 2] (see also *Reconstruction*). A round-arched termination, enriched on the inside with cusped moldings, would be very appropriate for this kind of altarpiece. In Siena in this period, and in Tuscany in general, the wood grain of the support in a vertical panel is invariably aligned vertically, and in a horizontal panel horizontally. It cannot be excluded, of course, that the painting was realized during the artist's stay in Venice or in the Marche and not in Siena, as Laurence Kanter, in correspondence, suggests. He points out that carpentry practice in the Venetian territories frequently aligned panels parallel to the shorter axis, so in the case of a horizontal altarpiece the wood grain would run vertically.[11] He further notes that the incised profiles of the original frame moldings on our panels argue for a Venetian provenance. In Tuscany, engaged frames were applied before the panels were gessoed or gilt. In Venice, they were added afterward, and their profiles are often found inscribed on the picture surface as a guide to the painter.

The scenes from the life of the Virgin painted by Andrea are based on an apocryphal text called *De Ortu Beatae Mariae et Infantia Salvatoris*, attributed to the evangelist Matthew. Later sources enriched this narrative with additional episodes. According to the legend, the marriage of Joachim (father of the Virgin Mary) and Anna remained childless for many years, a state that was interpreted by the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem as punishment for grave sins. Therefore, Joachim's offering of a sacrificial lamb was rejected, and he was expelled from the temple. The scene represented in this work is usually identified as Joachim and the Beggars but refers instead to a previous episode in the life of Mary's parents. A version of the legend, evidently familiar in Tuscany, recounts that Joachim and Anna lived in a particularly charitable way, dividing all their worldly goods into three parts: a third was allocated to the poor, another third to the temple, and only a third was kept for their own needs.[12] In the panel at the Gallery, we see, to the left, Joachim distributing loaves of bread to the poor, while his wife is presiding over the delivery of sacks of grain to the temple, where a priest receives them. This

episode would have been followed by the lost scene of the priest's rejection of the offering of a sacrificial animal and the Expulsion from the Temple, the premise for Joachim's Abandonment of the City, which is described in the painting now in Esztergom.

At this point in the sequence, other episodes usually illustrated in cycles of the childhood of Mary are likely to have followed: namely, the Angel's Annunciation of the Birth of Mary both to Joachim and to Anna, and the Return of Joachim to the City, linked with the Meeting of Husband and Wife at the Golden Gate. In the following scene of the Nativity of the Virgin, Andrea faithfully followed the model proposed by his father, Bartolo di Fredi, in the cycle of frescoes in the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano and elsewhere:[13] in the foreground at the center we see a young woman seated on the ground, supporting with one arm the newborn child who stands on her lap, back turned to the viewer, while another woman, also crouched on the ground, is gesturing with both hands towards the child, as if inviting the baby girl to come to her arms. Further in the background we see two standing women: one is just entering the room through a door in the rear wall, bearing a bowl of food in her hands; the other is pouring water into a basin for the child's mother to wash her hands. Anna is shown reclining on the skillfully foreshortened bed to the right, its curtain drawn back. On the other side of the scene, Joachim and another elderly man are seated in a barrel-vaulted loggia adjacent to the room of the childbirth, awaiting news of the event. The following scene, *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, also resembles the corresponding fresco by Bartolo in San Gimignano,[14] but in this case both paintings reveal the influence of a celebrated prototype frescoed by *Pietro* and Ambrogio Lorenzetti on the facade of the Ospedale della Scala in Siena.[15] The scene represents the episode of the three-year-old Mary being taken by her parents to the temple; the child spontaneously ascends the flight of steps to the temple, where she would reside until the age of fourteen. By painting the temple at an angle to the picture plane, displaced to the right side of the composition, Andrea seems, however, more faithful to his father's more dynamic and "modern" composition than to the Lorenzettian model.

After initial attempts to attribute the three panels to Bartolo di Fredi,[16] art historians in general accepted them (and also the fourth now in Esztergom) as the work of Andrea.[17] The generally accepted date for them is c. 1400 or shortly thereafter.[18] A proposal to insert them into the catalog of Giorgio di Andrea[19] has found no acceptance in the literature. G. Fattorini described the three

Washington panels as akin to the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Salini collection (Castello di Gallico, near Asciano, Siena), which he dated to the first decade of the fifteenth century.[20]

From a stylistic point of view, the scenes from the childhood of Mary can be compared with such paintings as the six stories of Saint Galgano now divided between the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the National Gallery in Dublin (these, too, most likely originated as parts of a panel in the form of a dossal);[21] various portable triptychs in the museums of Altenburg,[22] Philadelphia,[23] Prague,[24] and Siena;[25] or the paintings on a casket in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena.[26] Unfortunately, none of these paintings is securely dated. Since the only documented works of the painter have been lost, the one secure point of reference for the chronology of his career remains the fragmentary polyptych in the Church of the Osservanza at Siena, dated 1413.[27] The lack of other secure points of reference explains why the chronological reconstruction of Andrea's works remains so beset by uncertainty. For example, his signed *Assumption of the Virgin* (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond) sometimes is considered to belong to his early period, and sometimes to his full maturity.[28] Some clues for a reconstruction of the artist's career can, I believe, be deduced from the miniatures painted by Andrea for the choir-books of the Eremo di Lecceto near Siena, probably during the 1390s.[29] The strong compositional simplification and charged color of these miniatures reveal significant affinities with the scenes from the life of the Virgin being discussed here, and thus seem to confirm that they belong to a relatively precocious phase in Andrea's career.

Comparisons of the Gallery's panels with the figures of saints in the Church of the Osservanza in Siena (1413), on the other hand, show that the latter belong to a more advanced phase in the artist's career. Some lateral panels of polyptychs, such as that in Tuscania Cathedral, of which the predella has also survived, are easier to compare with the Osservanza saints. In contrast to the tall and slender saints of the Osservanza, who wear draperies furrowed by long, close-set, sharply undercut folds, those of Tuscania are more robust in physique and more placid in expression; their statuesque figures seem to indicate an earlier date of execution, somewhat closer in style to the group of miniatures Andrea probably realized in the last decade of the fourteenth century.[30] If this conclusion is correct, and if therefore the crowded scenes thronged with corpulent and largely immobile figures in the predella in Tuscania testify to Andrea's art around 1405–1410, it seems reasonable to propose a dating to the very first years of the Quattrocento

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for the Gallery's scenes from the life of the Virgin. The compositions in these panels are reduced to essentials, and no signs are yet visible either of the more spacious layout of the scenes or of the greater liveliness of the figures that can be seen in the stories of Christ in the now dispersed predella that should probably be connected with the Assumption in Richmond and in other altarpieces reasonably considered later than the Osservanza saints.[31]

The closest stylistic affinities of the Gallery's panels therefore are with works whose figures are more robust and more sedate in character. Paintings that fall into this category—apart from the polyptych in Buonconvento and the altarpiece now in the museum in Murano, both datable to the last decade of the fourteenth century—include the fragment with the Virgin Annunciate formerly in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the fragmentary Saint Michael Archangel in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 63), for both of which Laurence Kanter (1986) proposed a provenance from the same altarpiece of which the Gallery's panels originally formed a part.[32] Apparently, during these years—that is, the first fifteen years of the fifteenth century—Andrea especially painted small-scale works for private devotion, such as the abovementioned portable triptych no. 133 in the Pinacoteca of Siena; this resembles our scenes from the life of Mary not only in the proportions and physiognomic types of the figures but also in its peculiar compositional devices.[33] In another triptych datable to this period, that of the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, the cloak of the young female saint of the left leaf is closely comparable with that of the majestic Saint Anne of *The Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple*. Another comparable work [34] is the *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Salini collection, which recalls the Washington panels both in the statuesque pose of its figures and in the characteristics of its architectural backdrop.[35]

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Andrea di Bartolo, *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem*, c. 1400/1405, tempera on panel, Keresztény Múzeum, Esztergom, Hungary



**fig. 2** Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Andrea di Bartolo (color images are NGA objects): a. *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*; b. *Expulsion of Joachim (?)*, lost; c. *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* (fig. 1); d. *Annunciation of the Birth of Mary (?)*, lost; e. *Lost*; f. *Meeting at Porta Aurea (?)*, lost; g. *The Nativity of the Virgin*; h. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*; i. *Marriage of the Virgin (?)*, lost

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Andrea di Bartolo:

- a. *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*
- b. Expulsion of Joachim (?), lost
- c. *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* (Entry fig. 1)
- d. Annunciation of the Birth of Mary (?), lost
- e. Lost
- f. Meeting at Porta Aurea (?), lost
- g. *The Nativity of the Virgin*
- h. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*
- i. Marriage of the Virgin (?), lost

**NOTES**

[1] No. 55.148; 46 × 34 cm. The painting, its provenance unknown, was purchased by Cardinal János Simor, perhaps in Rome, for the museum in Esztergom between 1867 and 1878; see Miklós Boskovits et al., *Christian Art in Hungary: Collections from the Esztergom Christian Museum* (Budapest, 1965), 52. Its original gold ground was evidently removed at an early date, and it, like the Washington panels, was regilded during a nineteenth-century

restoration.

- [2] On the role of Joachim in Italian cycles of the childhood of Mary, cf. Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, 2 vols. (Bruxelles, 1964–1965), 2:154–159; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 38–54.
- [3] As an example we may cite the *vita-icon*, name piece of the Master of San Martino in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa, in which the main image at the center is flanked on either side by six superimposed stories from the life of the Virgin. See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 41–43 and fig. 48.
- [4] Cf. the retable of Bernat de Puig in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, repro. in Josep Gudiol and Santiago Alcolea i Blanch, *Pittura gotica catalana* (Barcelona, 1986), fig. 57.
- [5] As in the polyptych commissioned from Bartolo di Fredi for the church of San Francesco at Montalcino; cf. Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 188–221.
- [6] The Annunciation is placed at the center of an illuminated page with scenes from the childhood of Mary, executed by the Bedford Master, in a *Book of Hours* in the Oesterreichisches Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, cod. 1855; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: pl. 467. The scene of Pentecost occupies a central position in the cycle of frescoes by the young Bartolo di Fredi in the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano. See Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 32–45.
- [7] On the structural characteristics of the predella in late medieval altarpieces in Tuscany, see Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 9394; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55.
- [8] Cesare Brandi formulated this hypothesis, and various scholars accepted it, in Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan, 1949), 243.
- [9] Joanna Dunn of the National Gallery of Art conservation department tells me that, judging from the cracks lining up, it seems a “strong possibility” that *The Nativity of the Virgin* was placed above *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*. However, the x-radiographs do not show the wood grain clearly enough to prove this.
- [10] On the typology of *vita-icon* in Tuscany, see Victor M. Schmidt, “Tipologie e funzioni della pittura senese su tavola,” in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo,

Milan, 2003), 541–544; Rita Sauer, “‘... so be ye holy in all manner of conversation’: The Vita Retable,” in *Kult Bild: Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino* (Petersberg, 2006), 131–176. For *vita-icons* with horizontally arranged scenes, see Taddeo di Bartolo’s panel *San Geminianus Enthroned and Eight Stories of His Legend*, or Andrea di Bartolo’s panel with the Crucifixion at the center and eight scenes from the life of Christ and of saints to the sides, formerly in the Stoclet collection in Brussels. Cf. Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 354; Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315 and fig. 6.

- [11] Taddeo di Bartolo’s *San Geminianus* dossal (see note 10 above) has been transferred to a modern panel support with a vertical wood grain and so cannot be adduced for comparison.
- [12] The narrative of the Pseudo-Matthew was supplemented with other episodes by a German priest named Wernher in the mid-twelfth century. His *Driv liet von der maget (Three Books on the Virgin)* is the first source to mention the story of the division of Joachim’s worldly goods for charitable purposes; see Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 54–55; W.J. Hoffman, “Wernher,” in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:716–717.
- [13] The scene frescoed by Bartolo in Sant’Agostino at San Gimignano was repeated with small variations by the same painter in the predella fragment, part of the altarpiece commissioned from Bartolo for the church of San Francesco at Montalcino and now in the local Museo Civico. See Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), figs. 34, 37. The young Andrea probably collaborated in the execution of this part of the Montalcino altarpiece.
- [14] Reproduced in Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), fig. 27.
- [15] This lost cycle on the façade of the Ospedale della Scala is now known only from descriptions in the sources. Various scholars have proposed the involvement in it not only of the Lorenzetti brothers but also of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344); cf. Daniela Gallavotti Cavallero, “Pietro, Ambrogio e Simone, 1335, e una questione di affreschi perduti,” *Prospettiva* 48 (1987): 69–74, and for a recent summary of the status questionis, see Wolfgang Loseries, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 130 n. 17.

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- [16] In manuscript expertises (some of them dated 1934), Giuseppe Fiocco, Raimond van Marle, Osvald Sirén, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi all proposed an attribution of the three panels to Bartolo di Fredi. According to the manuscript opinion of F. Mason Perkins, however, the panels were attributable not to Bartolo himself but to an “exceptionally close and as yet unidentified pupil.” See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4, and copies of the expertises in NGA curatorial files.
- [17] Roberto Longhi made the attribution to Andrea di Bartolo in an undated expertise most likely written in 1934, like the others cited in the previous note; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4. Bernard Berenson endorsed this proposal (in an autograph annotation written on the back of a photograph of *The Nativity*), though with the specification “in great part.” Copies in NGA curatorial files.
- [18] The dating “c. 1400” already appeared in the entry relating to the three panels in the National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 3, and was confirmed in the various successive catalogs of the Gallery, as well as by Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, xiii–xv Century* (London, 1966), 65–66; Enzo Carli, *I pittori senesi* (Siena, 1971), 138; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 238; Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d’arte* (Florence, 1982), 317; Valentina Maderna, ed., *Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera restaurato* (Florence, 1986), 17; and Philippe Lorentz, “De Sienne a Strasbourg: Posterité d’une composition d’Ambrogio Lorenzetti, la Nativité de la Vierge de l’Hôpital Santa Maria della Scala à Sienne,” in *Hommage à Michel Laclotte: Etudes sur la peinture du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1994), 125 repro., 126, 127, 130–131 n. 45. Miklós Boskovits, *Early Italian Panel Paintings* (Budapest, 1966), 40; András Mucsi, *Katalog der Alten Gemaldegalerie des Christlichen Museums zu Esztergom* (Budapest, 1975), 42; Eberhard Kasten, “Andrea di Bartolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner (Munich, 1992), 3:512, 514, proposed, instead, a less specific date for the three panels in the first decade of the fifteenth century.
- [19] Laurence B. Kanter, “Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo,” *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 22. Corrado Fratini rejected this rather audacious attribution in *Pinacoteca comunale di Città di Castello*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, Catalogo regionale dei beni culturali dell’Umbria*, ed. Francesco Federico Mancini (Perugia, 1987), 143–144; see also Elisabetta Avanzati, in *La Sede storica del Monte dei Paschi di Siena: Vicende costruttive e opere d’arte*, ed. Francesco Gurrieri and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 276–280; Michel Laclotte and Esther

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Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 56; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 183–184.

- [20] According to G. Fattorini, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:238, the painting was possibly decorated with the very same punches as the Washington stories of the Virgin.
- [21] Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 61–62. Suggested dating: probably before 1400.
- [22] Francesca Pasut, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 104–106, with dating c. 1395–1400.
- [23] No. JC Cat. 99; see Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 37–41. Suggested dating: c. 1394.
- [24] Nn. O11.919–O11.921. See Olga Pujmanová, *Italienische Tafelbilder des Trecento in der Nationalgalerie Prag* (Berlin, 1984), no. 20. Suggested dating: c. 1400.
- [25] No. 133; see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 203, with dating to the early years of the fifteenth century.
- [26] Alessandro Cecchi, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 328–331, with dating to c. 1400–1410.
- [27] See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 576, and Antonio Vannini, *L'Osservanza di Siena: Guida artistica della chiesa e del convento di San Bernardino all'Osservanza* (Siena, 2004), 40–41.
- [28] Hendrik W. van Os, “Andrea di Bartolo’s Assumption of the Virgin,” *Arts in Virginia* 2 (1971): 5, dated the painting now in Richmond (no. 54.11.3; 230.2 × 85 cm) “in the seventies” of the fourteenth century. Gaudenz Freuler, “Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d’Antonio Cafarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice,” *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 584, pushed its date forward to the latter years of the century, given that Ser Palamedes, in whose memory the painting was commissioned, was still alive in 1394. Art historians in general, however, have continued to regard the panel as a youthful work of the artist. See Elisabetta Avanzati, in *La Sede storica del Monte dei Paschi di Siena: Vicende costruttive e opere d'arte*, ed. Francesco Gurrieri and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 282; Carl Brandon

Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 27. The present writer has long maintained (and still believes) that Andrea di Bartolo's stories of Christ, divided between the museums of Toledo in Ohio, Bologna, and private collections, probably belong to the Richmond Assumption. It is generally recognized as a work of the artist's full maturity; cf. Andrea De Marchi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 183–184, with a suggested dating of c. 1420. The common origin of the dispersed predella and the Richmond panel is suggested both by their stylistic character and their size. The width of the panel with the Assumption (measuring 230.2 × 85 cm) matches that of the Toledo Crucifixion (50 × 84.3 cm) that would in origin have been placed below it, at the center of the predella. See Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 21.

- [29] The miniatures of antiphony H.1.7 now in the Biblioteca Comunale of Siena are dated c. 1400; cf. Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture,oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1952), 320–321; Gaudenz Freuler, "La miniatura senese degli anni 1370–1420," in *La miniatura senese 1270–1420*, ed. Cristina De Benedictis (Milan, 2002), 182–186. The illuminations of a missal, G.III.7 in the same library, are at least in part probably attributable to Andrea in a slightly earlier phase, as Chelazzi Dini proposed in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 317–318.
- [30] On the Tuscania polyptych, cf. Luisa Mortari, in *La pittura viterbese dal xiv al xvi secolo: Catalogo delle opere*, ed. Italo Faldi and Luisa Mortari (Viterbo, 1954), 29–30, and Laurence B. Kanter, "Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo," *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 17–24. Kanter's proposed reconstruction of the altarpiece, and his addition to it of components now situated elsewhere, seems correct, but it is difficult to share his attribution of it to Giorgio d'Andrea or his dating to the 1420s. This date, formerly accepted also by the present writer, now seems to me too late and should, I believe, be modified to 1405–1410; cf. Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 21. Gabriele Fattorini came to similar conclusions concerning the date of the Tuscania polyptych in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:242–249.
- [31] Apart from polyptych no. 220 of the Pinacoteca in Siena, generally considered a late work of Andrea, I refer to the polyptych in Sant'Angelo in Vado, now divided between the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan and the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino, and the dispersed predella reconstructed

around the Crucifixion no. 12.6 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. For these paintings, see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 207; Valentina Maderna, “Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera,” in *Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera restaurato*, ed. Valentina Maderna (Florence, 1986), 9–15; Federico Zeri, in Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 1–2; and Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 16–21. In my discussion of this predella in 1990, I wrongly connected it with two lateral panels of paired saints from a dispersed triptych, now in a private collection. These panels, *Saints Louis of Toulouse and John the Baptist* and *John the Evangelist and Francis*, now seem to me relatively early works of the artist, probably datable to the first decade of the fifteenth century, whereas the predella I had placed in the period c. 1415–1420 ought to be closer in date to the latter end of this spectrum.

- [32] Laurence B. Kanter, “Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo,” *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 22–24. The Minneapolis fragment was deaccessioned, and its present whereabouts are unknown to me. For the fragment no. 63 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 205.
- [33] The somewhat naive compositional device proposed by the painter in the Nativity of the central panel of the triptych in Siena, namely that of displacing sharply to the left the little tree in the background to avoid its branches being concealed by the cusped border of the frame, recalls the improbable displacement—for the same reason—of the dome to the left margin of the temple in *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple* in the National Gallery of Art.
- [34] We may further recall as works exemplifying Andrea’s phase at the turn of the century a portable triptych in the Brooklyn Museum in New York, no. 34. 839; see Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 41, and the little panels with saints, formerly belonging to the museums in Altenburg, Oslo, Oxford, and in private collections; see Francesca Pasut, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 107–111.
- [35] *Gold Backs: 1250–1480* (Turin, 1996), 122, 124; Gabriele Fattorini, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:236–249. The painting, cut on all sides, measures 25.5 × 21 cm. The fragment at first sight might also seem

the companion panel of these in the Gallery, but its original size must have been slightly smaller than that of the Washington panels.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting, along with its companions *The Nativity of the Virgin* and *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, was executed on a single-member poplar panel with vertical grain.[1] The edges of the three panels probably were cropped slightly. Wooden strips measuring 0.6–0.8 cm wide have been attached to the edges along all four sides of each painting. The x-radiographs show three round marks along the bottom of *The Presentation* and *The Nativity*, which may be the sites of old holes from nails that attached a horizontal batten.

The paintings most likely were executed on a gesso ground. The x-radiographs of *The Presentation* suggest the presence of a fabric interlayer beneath the ground, but such a layer is not evident in the x-radiographs of the other two paintings. Infrared reflectography (Vidicon)[2] proves the presence of extensive underdrawing, particularly in the draperies of the figures and the placement of the architectural forms. Incised lines were used, on the other hand, to delineate the main contours of the figures, of architectural details, and of the original frame, now lost, against the gold.

Stephen Pichetto thinned and cradled the panels shortly after their acquisition by Samuel H. Kress in 1930.[3] X-radiographs made prior to the attachment of the cradles show extensive worm damage, as well as structural damage in the form of a large crack in the central area of each panel. A large knot may have caused the vertical split in *The Presentation*. The cracks of *The Presentation* and *The Nativity* line up, if the latter is positioned above the former. However, this could be purely coincidental and may not relate to the original positions of the panels. The painted surface contains only very small losses, but all panels have been generously retouched and partially regilded. The inpainting is disturbing, especially in the faces of the three figures at the center of *The Nativity*. The frames are modern. Photographs made at the time of the paintings' donation to the National Gallery of Art show the panels unframed. A note in the Gallery's curatorial files mentions their reframing in 1944. Before this intervention the spandrels originally covered by the frame had been regilded and appear as such in the photos published in the 1941 catalog of the Gallery.[4] The cusped inner molding of the present frames follows

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approximately the incised lines for the original framing. Pichetto removed discolored varnish and inpaint during his 1930 treatment of the paintings. In 1955 Mario Modestini again treated *The Nativity* and *Joachim and Anna*.<sup>[5]</sup>

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified the wood using optical microscopy (see report dated September 15, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
  - [2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera.
  - [3] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4.
  - [4] Reproduced still unframed in Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan, 1949), pl. 9; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 36. However, *The Presentation* and *The Nativity* are reproduced with their modern frame in George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1955), pl. 21.
  - [5] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4. Kress Foundation records (copies in NGA curatorial files) mention only that Modestini “revived color under white stains...and applied protective coat.”
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### PROVENANCE

This panel, along with NGA 1939.1.41 and 1939.1.42, are stated to have come from the collection of a contessa Giustiniani, Genoa;<sup>[1]</sup> (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Rome); sold July 1930 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[2]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> See the bill of sale described in note 2. No documented collection of the conti Giustiniani at Genoa seems to have existed, at least in the early years of the twentieth century. The works that Elisabeth Gardner ( *A Bibliographical Repertory of Italian Private Collections*, ed. Chiara Ceschi and Katharine Baetjer, 4 vols., Vicenza, 1998-2011: 2(2002):183) cites as formerly the property of the contessa Giustiniani almost all seem to have been purchased on

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the art market shortly before 1930, when Contini Bonacossi sold them to Samuel H. Kress. The contessa is thus more likely to have been a dealer, or agent, than a collector. See also Miklós Boskovits and David Alan Brown, *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century*, National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue, Washington and New York, 2003: 616 n. 3. [2] The painting is included on a bill of sale dated 15 July 1930 that included eight paintings from the Giustiniani collection (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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Andrea di Bartolo  
Sienese, active from 1389 - died 1428

## *Madonna of Humility, The Blessing Christ, Two Angels, and a Donor [obverse]*

c. 1380/1390

tempera on panel

painted surface: 28.4 × 17 cm (11 3/16 × 6 11/16 in.)

overall: 30 × 18.6 × 0.8 cm (11 13/16 × 7 5/16 × 5/16 in.)

framed: 52.1 × 34.3 × 7.6 cm (20 1/2 × 13 1/2 × 3 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.20.a

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### ENTRY

The painting belongs to an uncommon genre of Byzantine origin of devotional icons painted on both sides.[1] It is a simplified version of the portable diptych in which, as in the example discussed here, the Madonna and Child was usually represented on the obverse, and Christ on the Cross on the reverse.[2] The peculiarity here, however, is the presentation of the Virgin according to the iconographic type of the Madonna of Humility: Mary is humbly seated on the ground instead of on a throne. Yet at the same time she is venerated as Queen of Heaven by two angels who flank her in flight, and blessed from above by the half-length figure of Christ, who appears in a trefoil, surrounded by seraphim.[3] On the reverse of the panel is an isolated image of *Christ on the Cross*, unattended by the usual figures of mourners, soldiers, or onlookers who allude to the event of the Crucifixion. That the image was intended as a panel for private devotion is underlined by the presence of the minuscule figure of the female donor kneeling in front of the Madonna to the right; some scholars have identified her as a nun.[4]

At the time of the panel's first emergence in Florence in the 1920s, art historians expressed rather disparate views about it. Roberto Longhi, in a manuscript expertise probably dating to the years 1925–1930,[5] considered the image of the

Madonna likely a work of a close follower of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344), identifiable with Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) or with Simone's brother Donato, whereas that of Christ on the Cross on the reverse seemed to him a later addition by a painter close to Paolo di Giovanni Fei (Sienese, c. 1335/1345 - 1411) dating to the final years of the Trecento.[6] In 1934, similar expertises were sought from other leading art historians of the time. F. Mason Perkins, followed by Giuseppe Fiocco and Wilhelm Suida, attributed it to Andrea di Bartolo; Bernard Berenson also accepted this attribution. For his part Adolfo Venturi came to the conclusion that it was an autograph work of Simone Martini, while Raimond van Marle spoke of a "close follower" of Simone, probably identifiable with his brother Donato.[7] The catalogs of the National Gallery of Art (1941, 1959) accepted Longhi's proposal.[8] In a polemical article (unpublished), Richard Offner contradicted this, preferring to leave the panel in anonymity.[9] George Martin Richter (1941) also rejected Lippo Memmi's hand, arguing for an attribution to Andrea di Vanni (Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413) in a youthful phase, when he was still working in Lippo's shop.[10] Charles Seymour and Hanns Swarzenski (1946) also placed the attribution to Lippo in doubt.[11] Nonetheless, Andrea di Bartolo's responsibility for the execution of both sides of the painting was gradually recognized, beginning with Millard Meiss (1936, 1951), followed by the catalogs of the Gallery (1965, 1985) and Fern Rusk Shapley (1966).[12] All the more recent contributions to the literature accepted this attribution, with the exception of Gaudenz Freuler (2009), who considered the image of the Madonna of Humility as executed by Bartolo di Fredi, possibly assisted by his son Andrea di Bartolo.[13]

The date of the painting, however, has given rise to considerable divergence of opinion. It was thought to have been executed by Memmi as early as c. 1330–1340 in the first catalog of the Gallery (1941).[14] But in the later catalogs of 1965 and 1975 and in Shapley 1966 it was dated to c. 1415.[15] In the meantime Meiss (1951) supported a dating to c. 1400, while Hendrik W. van Os (1969, 1974) offered the view that it must have been painted before the end of the fourteenth century.[16] Shapley (1979), returning to the question, concluded that "the date may be in the 1380s." [17] For his part Creighton E. Gilbert (1984) seems to have favored a later dating: around 1394.[18] Freuler (1987), van Os (1989, 1990), and Daniele Benati (1999) accepted this hypothesis, as well as Gilbert's suggestion that the painting was commissioned by the Dominicans of the monastery of Corpus Domini in Venice, consecrated in 1394, and connected its execution to that year.[19] In 1994, however, van Os seemed to have abandoned this position, preferring a dating to c. 1415.[20] Bearing in mind that the connection of the panel with the Dominican

nuns of Venice is purely conjectural and seems contradicted by the fact that the donor in our panel is not dressed in the habit of that order,[21] the *terminus a quo* of 1394 should now be excluded from discussion of our panel.

Some help in establishing the panel's date can, however, be derived from an analysis of its punched decoration, undertaken by Mojmir S. Frinta (1998).[22] This scholar identified the presence in our panel of some punches already used in paintings produced in the shop of Bartolo di Fredi, as well as in youthful paintings by Andrea: I refer in particular to the polyptych in the museum at Buonconvento, probably dating to 1397,[23] and various paintings that art historians have unanimously assigned to Andrea's initial phase.[24] But especially significant to me are the stylistic affinities with works by Bartolo dating to the mid-1380s or shortly after, in which signs of Andrea's assistance can, I believe, be glimpsed: *Adoration of the Magi*, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, to which the *Adoration of the Cross* now divided between the museums of Altenburg and Charlottesville formerly belonged,[25] and *Massacre of the Innocents* in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, probably part of the polyptych executed by Bartolo's shop for the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano in 1388.[26] In these paintings the harsher features of Bartolo's style are softened, the swirling calligraphy is attenuated, and the emotional tensions give way to a rather somnolent tranquility which—in conjunction with the close morphological affinities—suggests Andrea's participation. The Christ on the Cross of the reverse, though more hasty in execution, recalls the similar passage in the *Adoration of the Cross*, no. 50 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, of which it seems indeed a simplified version. The Madonna of Humility of the obverse, on the other hand, with its minute, exquisitely chased detailing, reveals close affinities especially with the figures of the mothers in the *Massacre* in Baltimore,[27] suggesting it was a work realized by Andrea, when he was still working in his father's shop.

It may be added that the composition of the *Madonna of Humility* evidently enjoyed considerable success. The artist replicated it many times.[28] The example in the Gallery is likely to be one of the earliest, together with the signed version published by Berenson, its whereabouts now unknown.[29] In the later versions the figure of Mary seems to expand to fill the painted surface, which is enclosed within an arch decorated on the inside with cusping and sometimes with figures of the Angel of the Annunciation and the Virgin Annunciate placed in medallions in the two upper corners.[30] At the same time, the gold-tooled carpet that covers the floor is replaced by a flowering meadow; the design becomes more simplified,

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while the line of the hem of the Virgin's cloak is wavier; and an increased number of angels surround the protagonists.[31] Such late Gothic developments, however, are characteristic of far later phases in the artist's career. Here he is still strongly influenced by the figurative formulae of his father. This is evident both in the painting's ornamental decoration and in its stylistic features, both indebted to Trecento models.

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### NOTES

- [1] See Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Bilateral Icons," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Aleksandr Petrovich Kazhdan (New York, 1980), 2:980.
- [2] This type of panel, painted on both sides, is exemplified by no. 1062B in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, a work by Francesco di Vannuccio, though there the two sides are reversed: *Christ on the Cross Flanked by Mourners and Devotees* is painted on what can be considered the obverse, while *Madonna and Child with Saints*, painted on glass, is on the reverse; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 35–37. According to Laurence Kanter's plausible hypothesis (written communication), the Washington panel was originally a reliquary, accompanied on the obverse by roundels containing relics.
- [3] While the presence of angels in adoration alludes to the theme of the *regina coeli*, the image of the *Christus Logos* probably refers to that of the Incarnation; cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 153–154; Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 120–121.
- [4] Creighton Gilbert (1984) identified the donor as a Dominican nun. From this he inferred that the painting was commissioned by a monastery of this order; various scholars accepted his argument, but Victor Schmidt (2005) refuted it, rightly pointing out the impossibility of recognizing a member of the Dominican order in a lady "wearing a long, white headdress which also functions as a cloak." The figure can more plausibly be identified as a matron or widow. See Creighton E. Gilbert, "Tuscan Observants and Painters in Venice, ca. 1400," in *Interpretazioni veneziane: Studi di storia dell'arte in onore di Michelangelo Muraro*, ed. David Rosand (Venice, 1984), 109–120; Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 265 n. 82.
- [5] Roberto Longhi, who had been a consultant of Contini at least since the early 1920s, presumably wrote his expertise, in Italian, immediately after

Contini's purchase of the panel c. 1925.

- [6] Longhi, in his letter to Contini, declared that the *Madonna of Humility* "è senza dubbio una vera e propria gemma della pittura senese della prima metà del Trecento al seguito immediato di Simone Martini" ("is without a doubt a true and proper gem of Sienese painting of the first half of the thirteenth century in the immediate following of Simone Martini"). The painting, in his view, had been painted by the same hand as the panel with a similar *Madonna of Humility* in the Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (no. 1072), then attributed to Lippo Memmi, or to Simone's little-known brother, Donato Martini. According to Longhi, the image of Christ on the Cross on the back of the panel was painted by an entirely different hand, some forty years after the *Madonna*.
- [7] See copies of the expertises in the NGA curatorial files. Only Wilhelm Suida's is dated, to August 1935.
- [8] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 133–134; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 34 repro.
- [9] Richard Offner's long article, written on the occasion of the opening of the National Gallery of Art, only got as far as galley proofs (in August 1941) but was never in fact published. Copies of the proofs are kept in the archive of the Corpus of Florentine Painting, Florence. Commenting on cat. 1, Offner wrote, "The attribution to Lippo can only be accounted a piece of ingenuous wishfulness. The panel is not by Lippo simply because it shares none of his essential artistic characteristics.... It lacks...any suggestion of Lippo's facade-like, immobilized composition.... How vague...are the bases of attribution may be judged from the wide discrepancy of opinion on the authorship... between Lippo and Donato (the latter being as shadowy a figure as is known to art history)...and Andrea di Bartolo. I should incline to agree with the tendency of the latter opinion, if it implied a later dating than Lippo's, but one must stand resolutely against the attribution."
- [10] George Martin Richter, "The New National Gallery in Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177.
- [11] Charles Seymour and Hanns Swarzenski, "A *Madonna of Humility* and Quercia's Early Style," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, ser. 6, no. 30 (1946): 139.
- [12] Millard Meiss, "The *Madonna of Humility*," *The Art Bulletin* 18 (1936): 437, n. 8; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 22–23, n. 34; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 7; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 18; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 66, 67.

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- [13] After the delivery of the present text to the Gallery, I realized with pleasure that Gaudenz Freuler, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:252, also considered *Madonna of Humility, The Blessing Christ, Two Angels, and a Donor [obverse]* a painting executed not later than the 1390s. On the other hand, I am unable to see in it any trace of Bartolo's hand, even if the young Andrea was evidently influenced by his father's style.
- [14] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 133–134.
- [15] National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 7; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1975), 10; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 67.
- [16] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 22–23, n. 34; Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 18, 120, 187; Hendrik W. van Os, “Andrea di Bartolo's Madonna of Humility,” *M: A Quarterly Review of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts* 6, no. 3 (1974): 21, 25.
- [17] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:3.
- [18] Gilbert believed that the woman represented as donor was a Dominican nun, who appeared in “an ‘undress’ costume, without the outer elements worn in public,” that is, the black mantle. “Hence it is very attractive to suggest [he continued] that the Washington panels [the images painted on obverse and reverse] are the survivors of the very set blessed by Cardinal Dominici in 1394, at the [consecration of the] new observant convent in Venice.” Creighton E. Gilbert, “Tuscan Observants and Painters in Venice, ca. 1400,” in *Interpretazioni veneziane: Studi di storia dell'arte in onore di Michelangelo Muraro*, ed. David Rosand (Venice, 1984), 114–116. Some later authors considered this hypothesis, advanced by the scholar “with caution,” almost a demonstrable fact.
- [19] Gaudenz Freuler, “Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d'Antonio Cafarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice,” *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 577; Hendrik W. van Os et al., eds., *The Early Sienese Paintings in Holland*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Florence, 1989), 29, 32; Hendrik W. van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function*, vol. 2, 1344–1460 (Groningen, 1990), 76; Daniele Benati, in *Da Bernardo Daddi a Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Maria Pia Mannini (Florence, 1999), 56.
- [20] Hendrik W. van Os et al., *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500*, trans. Michael Hoyle (London, 1994), 74.

- [21] See note 4 above.
- [22] Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 44, 48, 224, 230, 351, 479.
- [23] Sources mention the fragmentary polyptych now in the Museo d'arte sacra della Val d'Arbia at Buonconvento as an altarpiece signed by Andrea di Bartolo and also furnished with a fragmentary date that could still be deciphered in the second half of the nineteenth century as 1397; Serena Padovani, in Serena Padovani and Bruno Santi, *Buonconvento, museo d'arte sacra della Val d'Arbia* (Genoa, 1981), 23–25. There is now no trace of the inscription, but the proposed reading of the date is quite compatible with the stylistic features of the work.
- [24] We may cite as paintings belonging to Andrea's debut the Stories of Saint Galgano now divided between the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the National Gallery in Dublin; the altarpiece in Buonconvento (see above note 23); and the portable triptychs in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena and the National Gallery in Prague. See, respectively, Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 61–62; Homan Potterton, *Illustrated Summary Catalogue of Paintings* (Dublin, 1981), 6; Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 203; Olga Pujmanová, *Italienische Tafelbilder des Trecento in der Nationalgalerie Prag* (Berlin, 1984), pl. 20.
- [25] Wolfgang Loseries, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 66–72.
- [26] Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 260–272.
- [27] Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, no. 37.1018; Federico Zeri, *Italian Paintings in the Walters Art Gallery*, ed. Ursula E.M. Cracken, 2 vols. (Baltimore, 1976), 1:48–50.
- [28] Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 187–188, figs. 62–74, cited and reproduced several versions of the composition. One of them, however, formerly belonging to the Stoclet collection in Brussels (fig. 66), is of dubious authenticity.
- [29] Bernard Berenson, “Lost Sienese Trecento Paintings, 4,” *International Studio* 98, no. 404 (1931): 30–31.
- [30] As in the panel signed by Andrea, formerly in the Ehrich Gallery in New York. See Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), fig. 67.
- [31] Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), figs. 62, 63, as well as the panel

formerly with Moretti in Florence: Daniele Benati, in *Da Bernardo Daddi a Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Maria Pia Mannini (Florence, 1999), 56–61.

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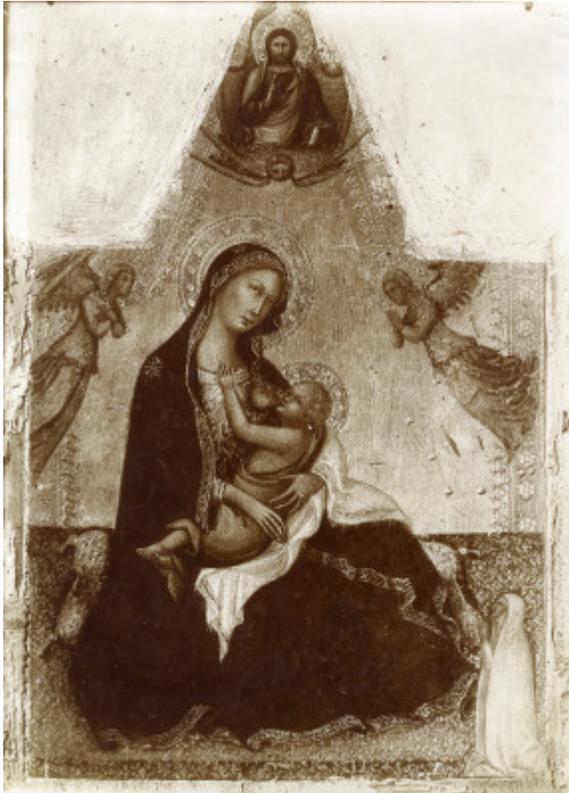
## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support (contrary to Shapley 1966, 1979) is a single piece of wood, with a vertical grain and about 1 cm thick, painted on both sides.[1] The panel has a slight convex warp relative to the obverse. It has been cut down along its upper edge. The top of the original gable is truncated, and in order to make the outer shape rectangular, triangular insets were added on both sides (approximately 1.5 cm on the top and 3 cm on the vertical edge on the left, and 1 cm along the top and 2 cm on the vertical edge on the right, as seen from the front). The original engaged frame has been lost and replaced by a modern one.

The painting was executed on the usual gesso ground, over which a thin red bole was applied in the gilded areas of the obverse. The reverse was silver gilt.[2] An old photograph [fig. 1] [3] shows that the painted surface on the obverse ended approximately 1 cm from the lateral and lower edges and that the unpainted area at the sides of the gable was at that time gessoed. A later photo, probably from c. 1940/1941, proves that in the meantime the upper corners had been regilded.[4] On the reverse the painted area extends to the edges of the panel. The x-radiograph [fig. 2] shows impressions of three roundels on each side of the gable, the upper pair cropped in half at the top of the panel. This is evidence that the panel functioned as a reliquary, containing in its now lost engaged frame seven circular cavities (allowing for one cut off at the top of the gable) to receive relics. No underdrawing was found during an infrared examination (Vidicon),[5] but incised lines mark the placement of the principal figures. A green undermodeling is visible beneath the flesh of the figures on both the obverse and the reverse. The painted surface of the obverse is fairly well preserved, with some inpainting in the donor's robe; some small, scattered paint losses; and some abrasion in the Madonna's robe. On the reverse the silver gilded area is heavily rubbed and the image itself is damaged by scratches, paint losses, and wormholes.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1927, Andrea di Bartolo, *Madonna of Humility, the Blessing Christ, Two Angels, and a Donor*, c. 1380/1390, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Fondazione Roberto Longhi, Florence



**fig. 2** X-radiograph, Andrea di Bartolo, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1415, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Stephen Pichetto examined this picture in 1940 in response to a request made to him by the Gallery's then chief curator, John Walker. Pichetto was the restorer for the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and he was specifically asked to clear up whether the *Madonna of Humility* and the *Christ on the Cross* were painted on the same panel. Pichetto's notes indicate that he determined that the support was one piece of wood, painted on both sides. (Walker's letter of October 1940 and Pichetto's documentation are in NGA

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curatorial files.) It is unclear why Fern Rusk Shapley stated that the paintings were executed on separate panels. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 66, 67; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:3–4. The painting was examined again in 1988, 2008, and 2011, and it was consistently determined to be one panel; see report dated August 31, 1988, in NGA conservation files.

- [2] Using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), the NGA scientific research department analyzed the gilding, and it was found to be silver (see forthcoming report in NGA conservation files).
- [3] This photo, probably taken sometime before the acquisition of the painting by Samuel H. Kress in 1927 (see Provenance), belonged to Roberto Longhi and is now in the archive of the Fondazione Roberto Longhi in Florence.
- [4] During his 1940 examination of the painting, Pichetto removed the modern engaged frame and made sketches of the placement of the image on its wooden support, indicating also the pieces of new wood added to the panel in the upper corners (see NGA curatorial files).
- [5] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera.

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## PROVENANCE

Private collection, Italy, c. 1920.[1] (Alessandro Contini, Rome [from 1930, Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi]); sold October 1927 to Samuel H. Kress [1863-1955], New York;[2] transferred 1929 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; gift 1939 to NGA. [1] In his expertise dated 8 August 1934, commissioned from him by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation (copy in the NGA curatorial files), F. Mason Perkins states that he had seen the painting for the first time in an Italian private collection fifteen years earlier. [2] The bill of sale for sculpture, maiolica, furniture, antique velvet, and several paintings, including a "Madonna and Child by Lippo Memmi...given to Donato Martini by some experts," is dated 5 October 1927 (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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Andrea di Bartolo  
Sienese, active from 1389 - died 1428

## *The Nativity of the Virgin*

c. 1400/1405

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface: 44.2 × 32.5 cm (17 3/8 × 12 13/16 in.)

overall: 46.7 × 33.9 × 0.6 cm (18 3/8 × 13 3/8 × 1/4 in.)

framed: 48.3 × 36.8 × 4.1 cm (19 × 14 1/2 × 1 5/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.42

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### ENTRY

The three panels in the National Gallery of Art collection (this work, *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*, and *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*) form part of a larger series of scenes from the childhood of Mary, of which a fourth component is also known: *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* now in the Keresztény Múzeum at Esztergom in Hungary [fig. 1].<sup>[1]</sup> Since two of the episodes, *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple* and *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem*, are seldom found represented in art, there are good reasons to assume that the sequence would have originally comprised at least four other, more commonly illustrated scenes, namely, the Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple, the Annunciation to Joachim (and/or to Anna), the Meeting at the Golden Gate, and the Betrothal of the Virgin.<sup>[2]</sup> These (and possibly other) scenes would have accompanied a central image of the Madonna and Child,<sup>[3]</sup> or of Saint Anne with the Madonna and Child,<sup>[4]</sup> a Coronation of the Virgin,<sup>[5]</sup> or a theme such as the Annunciation or Pentecost.<sup>[6]</sup> It is difficult, therefore, to reconstruct the dismembered and dispersed altarpiece of which our three panels would have formed part, also because we do not know exactly how the surviving scenes from the life of the Virgin were related to the main image of the altarpiece. The fact that the grain of the wooden support is vertical would seem to exclude the proposition that they are fragments of a predella,<sup>[7]</sup> and the hypothesis advanced in the past, that our panels could be fragments of a reliquary cupboard, seems to have no foundation.<sup>[8]</sup> They could have been fragments of a *vita-icon* type panel, with a whole-length figure of the Madonna and Child flanked by a vertically arranged series of scenes of her life.<sup>[9]</sup>

Such an image, however, would appear decidedly old-fashioned in Siena after the mid-fourteenth century. A more likely alternative format is suggested by the cases in which Siennese painters of the late fourteenth century, such as Taddeo di Bartolo or Andrea di Bartolo himself,[10] produced paintings in a form similar to thirteenth-century dossals, with a large-scale representation at the center, flanked by narrative scenes in two superimposed orders [fig. 2] (see also *Reconstruction*). A round-arched termination, enriched on the inside with cusped moldings, would be very appropriate for this kind of altarpiece. In Siena in this period, and in Tuscany in general, the wood grain of the support in a vertical panel is invariably aligned vertically, and in a horizontal panel horizontally. It cannot be excluded, of course, that the painting was realized during the artist's stay in Venice or in the Marche and not in Siena, as Laurence Kanter, in correspondence, suggests. He points out that carpentry practice in the Venetian territories frequently aligned panels parallel to the shorter axis, so in the case of a horizontal altarpiece the wood grain would run vertically.[11] He further notes that the incised profiles of the original frame moldings on our panels argue for a Venetian provenance. In Tuscany, engaged frames were applied before the panels were gessoed or gilt. In Venice, they were added afterward, and their profiles are often found inscribed on the picture surface as a guide to the painter.

The scenes from the life of the Virgin painted by Andrea are based on an apocryphal text called *De Ortu Beatae Mariae et Infantia Salvatoris*, attributed to the evangelist Matthew. Later sources enriched this narrative with additional episodes. According to the legend, the marriage of Joachim (father of the Virgin Mary) and Anna remained childless for many years, a state that was interpreted by the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem as punishment for grave sins. Therefore, Joachim's offering of a sacrificial lamb was rejected, and he was expelled from the temple. The scene represented in this work is usually identified as Joachim and the Beggars but refers instead to a previous episode in the life of Mary's parents. A version of the legend, evidently familiar in Tuscany, recounts that Joachim and Anna lived in a particularly charitable way, dividing all their worldly goods into three parts: a third was allocated to the poor, another third to the temple, and only a third was kept for their own needs.[12] In the panel at the Gallery, we see, to the left, Joachim distributing loaves of bread to the poor, while his wife is presiding over the delivery of sacks of grain to the temple, where a priest receives them. This episode would have been followed by the lost scene of the priest's rejection of the offering of a sacrificial animal and the Expulsion from the Temple, the premise for Joachim's Abandonment of the City, which is described in the painting now in

Esztergom.

At this point in the sequence, other episodes usually illustrated in cycles of the childhood of Mary are likely to have followed: namely, the Angel's Annunciation of the Birth of Mary both to Joachim and to Anna, and the Return of Joachim to the City, linked with the Meeting of Husband and Wife at the Golden Gate. In the following scene of the Nativity of the Virgin, Andrea faithfully followed the model proposed by his father, Bartolo di Fredi, in the cycle of frescoes in the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano and elsewhere:[13] in the foreground at the center we see a young woman seated on the ground, supporting with one arm the newborn child who stands on her lap, back turned to the viewer, while another woman, also crouched on the ground, is gesturing with both hands towards the child, as if inviting the baby girl to come to her arms. Further in the background we see two standing women: one is just entering the room through a door in the rear wall, bearing a bowl of food in her hands; the other is pouring water into a basin for the child's mother to wash her hands. Anna is shown reclining on the skillfully foreshortened bed to the right, its curtain drawn back. On the other side of the scene, Joachim and another elderly man are seated in a barrel-vaulted loggia adjacent to the room of the childbirth, awaiting news of the event. The following scene, *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, also resembles the corresponding fresco by Bartolo in San Gimignano,[14] but in this case both paintings reveal the influence of a celebrated prototype frescoed by *Pietro* and Ambrogio Lorenzetti on the facade of the Ospedale della Scala in Siena.[15] The scene represents the episode of the three-year-old Mary being taken by her parents to the temple; the child spontaneously ascends the flight of steps to the temple, where she would reside until the age of fourteen. By painting the temple at an angle to the picture plane, displaced to the right side of the composition, Andrea seems, however, more faithful to his father's more dynamic and "modern" composition than to the Lorenzettian model.

After initial attempts to attribute the three panels to Bartolo di Fredi,[16] art historians in general accepted them (and also the fourth now in Esztergom) as the work of Andrea.[17] The generally accepted date for them is c. 1400 or shortly thereafter.[18] A proposal to insert them into the catalog of Giorgio di Andrea[19] has found no acceptance in the literature. G. Fattorini described the three Washington panels as akin to the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Salini collection (Castello di Gallico, near Asciano, Siena), which he dated to the first decade of the fifteenth century.[20]

From a stylistic point of view, the scenes from the childhood of Mary can be compared with such paintings as the six stories of Saint Galgano now divided between the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the National Gallery in Dublin (these, too, most likely originated as parts of a panel in the form of a dossal);<sup>[21]</sup> various portable triptychs in the museums of Altenburg,<sup>[22]</sup> Philadelphia,<sup>[23]</sup> Prague,<sup>[24]</sup> and Siena;<sup>[25]</sup> or the paintings on a casket in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena.<sup>[26]</sup> Unfortunately, none of these paintings is securely dated. Since the only documented works of the painter have been lost, the one secure point of reference for the chronology of his career remains the fragmentary polyptych in the Church of the Osservanza at Siena, dated 1413.<sup>[27]</sup> The lack of other secure points of reference explains why the chronological reconstruction of Andrea's works remains so beset by uncertainty. For example, his signed *Assumption of the Virgin* (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond) sometimes is considered to belong to his early period, and sometimes to his full maturity.<sup>[28]</sup> Some clues for a reconstruction of the artist's career can, I believe, be deduced from the miniatures painted by Andrea for the choir-books of the Eremo di Lecceto near Siena, probably during the 1390s.<sup>[29]</sup> The strong compositional simplification and charged color of these miniatures reveal significant affinities with the scenes from the life of the Virgin being discussed here, and thus seem to confirm that they belong to a relatively precocious phase in Andrea's career.

Comparisons of the Gallery's panels with the figures of saints in the Church of the Osservanza in Siena (1413), on the other hand, show that the latter belong to a more advanced phase in the artist's career. Some lateral panels of polyptychs, such as that in Tuscania Cathedral, of which the predella has also survived, are easier to compare with the Osservanza saints. In contrast to the tall and slender saints of the Osservanza, who wear draperies furrowed by long, close-set, sharply undercut folds, those of Tuscania are more robust in physique and more placid in expression; their statuesque figures seem to indicate an earlier date of execution, somewhat closer in style to the group of miniatures Andrea probably realized in the last decade of the fourteenth century.<sup>[30]</sup> If this conclusion is correct, and if therefore the crowded scenes thronged with corpulent and largely immobile figures in the predella in Tuscania testify to Andrea's art around 1405–1410, it seems reasonable to propose a dating to the very first years of the Quattrocento for the Gallery's scenes from the life of the Virgin. The compositions in these panels are reduced to essentials, and no signs are yet visible either of the more spacious layout of the scenes or of the greater liveliness of the figures that can be

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seen in the stories of Christ in the now dispersed predella that should probably be connected with the Assumption in Richmond and in other altarpieces reasonably considered later than the Osservanza saints.[31]

The closest stylistic affinities of the Gallery's panels therefore are with works whose figures are more robust and more sedate in character. Paintings that fall into this category—apart from the polyptych in Buonconvento and the altarpiece now in the museum in Murano, both datable to the last decade of the fourteenth century—include the fragment with the Virgin Annunciate formerly in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the fragmentary Saint Michael Archangel in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 63), for both of which Laurence Kanter (1986) proposed a provenance from the same altarpiece of which the Gallery's panels originally formed a part.[32] Apparently, during these years—that is, the first fifteen years of the fifteenth century—Andrea especially painted small-scale works for private devotion, such as the abovementioned portable triptych no. 133 in the Pinacoteca of Siena; this resembles our scenes from the life of Mary not only in the proportions and physiognomic types of the figures but also in its peculiar compositional devices.[33] In another triptych datable to this period, that of the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, the cloak of the young female saint of the left leaf is closely comparable with that of the majestic Saint Anne of *The Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple*. Another comparable work [34] is the *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Salini collection, which recalls the Washington panels both in the statuesque pose of its figures and in the characteristics of its architectural backdrop.[35]

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Andrea di Bartolo, *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem*, c. 1400/1405, tempera on panel, Keresztény Múzeum, Esztergom, Hungary



**fig. 2** Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Andrea di Bartolo (color images are NGA objects): a. *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*; b. *Expulsion of Joachim* (?), lost; c. *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* (fig. 1); d. *Annunciation of the Birth of Mary* (?), lost; e. Lost; f. *Meeting at Porta Aurea* (?), lost; g. *The Nativity of the Virgin*; h. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*; i. *Marriage of the Virgin* (?), lost

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Andrea di Bartolo:

- a. *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*
- b. *Expulsion of Joachim (?)*, lost
- c. *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem (Entry fig. 1)*
- d. *Annunciation of the Birth of Mary (?)*, lost
- e. Lost
- f. *Meeting at Porta Aurea (?)*, lost
- g. *The Nativity of the Virgin*
- h. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*
- i. *Marriage of the Virgin (?)*, lost

**NOTES**

[1] No. 55.148; 46 × 34 cm. The painting, its provenance unknown, was purchased by Cardinal János Simor, perhaps in Rome, for the museum in Esztergom between 1867 and 1878; see Miklós Boskovits et al., *Christian Art in Hungary: Collections from the Esztergom Christian Museum* (Budapest, 1965), 52. Its original gold ground was evidently removed at an early date, and it, like the Washington panels, was regilded during a nineteenth-century

restoration.

- [2] On the role of Joachim in Italian cycles of the childhood of Mary, cf. Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, 2 vols. (Bruxelles, 1964–1965), 2:154–159; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 38–54.
- [3] As an example we may cite the *vita-icon*, name piece of the Master of San Martino in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa, in which the main image at the center is flanked on either side by six superimposed stories from the life of the Virgin. See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 41–43 and fig. 48.
- [4] Cf. the retable of Bernat de Puig in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, repro. in Josep Gudiol and Santiago Alcolea i Blanch, *Pittura gotica catalana* (Barcelona, 1986), fig. 57.
- [5] As in the polyptych commissioned from Bartolo di Fredi for the church of San Francesco at Montalcino; cf. Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 188–221.
- [6] The Annunciation is placed at the center of an illuminated page with scenes from the childhood of Mary, executed by the Bedford Master, in a *Book of Hours* in the Oesterreichisches Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, cod. 1855; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: pl. 467. The scene of Pentecost occupies a central position in the cycle of frescoes by the young Bartolo di Fredi in the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano. See Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 32–45.
- [7] On the structural characteristics of the predella in late medieval altarpieces in Tuscany, see Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 9394; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55.
- [8] Cesare Brandi formulated this hypothesis, and various scholars accepted it, in Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan, 1949), 243.
- [9] Joanna Dunn of the National Gallery of Art conservation department tells me that, judging from the cracks lining up, it seems a “strong possibility” that *The Nativity of the Virgin* was placed above *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*. However, the x-radiographs do not show the wood grain clearly enough to prove this.
- [10] On the typology of *vita-icon* in Tuscany, see Victor M. Schmidt, “Tipologie e funzioni della pittura senese su tavola,” in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo,

Milan, 2003), 541–544; Rita Sauer, “‘... so be ye holy in all manner of conversation’: The Vita Retable,” in *Kult Bild: Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino* (Petersberg, 2006), 131–176. For *vita-icons* with horizontally arranged scenes, see Taddeo di Bartolo’s panel *San Geminianus Enthroned and Eight Stories of His Legend*, or Andrea di Bartolo’s panel with the Crucifixion at the center and eight scenes from the life of Christ and of saints to the sides, formerly in the Stoclet collection in Brussels. Cf. Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 354; Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315 and fig. 6.

- [11] Taddeo di Bartolo’s San Geminianus dossal (see note 10 above) has been transferred to a modern panel support with a vertical wood grain and so cannot be adduced for comparison.
- [12] The narrative of the Pseudo-Matthew was supplemented with other episodes by a German priest named Wernher in the mid-twelfth century. His *Driv liet von der maget (Three Books on the Virgin)* is the first source to mention the story of the division of Joachim’s worldly goods for charitable purposes; see Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 54–55; W.J. Hoffman, “Wernher,” in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:716–717.
- [13] The scene frescoed by Bartolo in Sant’Agostino at San Gimignano was repeated with small variations by the same painter in the predella fragment, part of the altarpiece commissioned from Bartolo for the church of San Francesco at Montalcino and now in the local Museo Civico. See Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), figs. 34, 37. The young Andrea probably collaborated in the execution of this part of the Montalcino altarpiece.
- [14] Reproduced in Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), fig. 27.
- [15] This lost cycle on the façade of the Ospedale della Scala is now known only from descriptions in the sources. Various scholars have proposed the involvement in it not only of the Lorenzetti brothers but also of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344); cf. Daniela Gallavotti Cavallero, “Pietro, Ambrogio e Simone, 1335, e una questione di affreschi perduti,” *Prospettiva* 48 (1987): 69–74, and for a recent summary of the status questionis, see Wolfgang Loseries, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 130 n. 17.

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- [16] In manuscript expertises (some of them dated 1934), Giuseppe Fiocco, Raimond van Marle, Osvald Sirén, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi all proposed an attribution of the three panels to Bartolo di Fredi. According to the manuscript opinion of F. Mason Perkins, however, the panels were attributable not to Bartolo himself but to an “exceptionally close and as yet unidentified pupil.” See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4, and copies of the expertises in NGA curatorial files.
- [17] Roberto Longhi made the attribution to Andrea di Bartolo in an undated expertise most likely written in 1934, like the others cited in the previous note; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4. Bernard Berenson endorsed this proposal (in an autograph annotation written on the back of a photograph of *The Nativity*), though with the specification “in great part.” Copies in NGA curatorial files.
- [18] The dating “c. 1400” already appeared in the entry relating to the three panels in the National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 3, and was confirmed in the various successive catalogs of the Gallery, as well as by Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, xiii–xv Century* (London, 1966), 65–66; Enzo Carli, *I pittori senesi* (Siena, 1971), 138; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 238; Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d’arte* (Florence, 1982), 317; Valentina Maderna, ed., *Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera restaurato* (Florence, 1986), 17; and Philippe Lorentz, “De Sienne a Strasbourg: Posterité d’une composition d’Ambrogio Lorenzetti, la Nativité de la Vierge de l’Hôpital Santa Maria della Scala à Sienne,” in *Hommage à Michel Laclotte: Etudes sur la peinture du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1994), 125 repro., 126, 127, 130–131 n. 45. Miklós Boskovits, *Early Italian Panel Paintings* (Budapest, 1966), 40; András Mucsi, *Katalog der Alten Gemaldegalerie des Christlichen Museums zu Esztergom* (Budapest, 1975), 42; Eberhard Kasten, “Andrea di Bartolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner (Munich, 1992), 3:512, 514, proposed, instead, a less specific date for the three panels in the first decade of the fifteenth century.
- [19] Laurence B. Kanter, “Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo,” *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 22. Corrado Fratini rejected this rather audacious attribution in *Pinacoteca comunale di Città di Castello*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, Catalogo regionale dei beni culturali dell’Umbria*, ed. Francesco Federico Mancini (Perugia, 1987), 143–144; see also Elisabetta Avanzati, in *La Sede storica del Monte dei Paschi di Siena: Vicende costruttive e opere d’arte*, ed. Francesco Gurrieri and Luciano Belloso (Florence, 1988), 276–280; Michel Laclotte and Esther

Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 56; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 183–184.

- [20] According to G. Fattorini, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:238, the painting was possibly decorated with the very same punches as the Washington stories of the Virgin.
- [21] Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 61–62. Suggested dating: probably before 1400.
- [22] Francesca Pasut, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 104–106, with dating c. 1395–1400.
- [23] No. JC Cat. 99; see Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 37–41. Suggested dating: c. 1394.
- [24] Nn. O11.919–O11.921. See Olga Pujmanová, *Italienische Tafelbilder des Trecento in der Nationalgalerie Prag* (Berlin, 1984), no. 20. Suggested dating: c. 1400.
- [25] No. 133; see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 203, with dating to the early years of the fifteenth century.
- [26] Alessandro Cecchi, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 328–331, with dating to c. 1400–1410.
- [27] See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 576, and Antonio Vannini, *L'Osservanza di Siena: Guida artistica della chiesa e del convento di San Bernardino all'Osservanza* (Siena, 2004), 40–41.
- [28] Hendrik W. van Os, “Andrea di Bartolo’s Assumption of the Virgin,” *Arts in Virginia* 2 (1971): 5, dated the painting now in Richmond (no. 54.11.3; 230.2 × 85 cm) “in the seventies” of the fourteenth century. Gaudenz Freuler, “Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d’Antonio Cafarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice,” *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 584, pushed its date forward to the latter years of the century, given that Ser Palamedes, in whose memory the painting was commissioned, was still alive in 1394. Art historians in general, however, have continued to regard the panel as a youthful work of the artist. See Elisabetta Avanzati, in *La Sede storica del Monte dei Paschi di Siena: Vicende costruttive e opere d'arte*, ed. Francesco Gurrieri and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 282; Carl Brandon

Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 27. The present writer has long maintained (and still believes) that Andrea di Bartolo's stories of Christ, divided between the museums of Toledo in Ohio, Bologna, and private collections, probably belong to the Richmond Assumption. It is generally recognized as a work of the artist's full maturity; cf. Andrea De Marchi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 183–184, with a suggested dating of c. 1420. The common origin of the dispersed predella and the Richmond panel is suggested both by their stylistic character and their size. The width of the panel with the Assumption (measuring 230.2 × 85 cm) matches that of the Toledo Crucifixion (50 × 84.3 cm) that would in origin have been placed below it, at the center of the predella. See Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 21.

- [29] The miniatures of antiphony H.1.7 now in the Biblioteca Comunale of Siena are dated c. 1400; cf. Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1952), 320–321; Gaudenz Freuler, "La miniatura senese degli anni 1370–1420," in *La miniatura senese 1270–1420*, ed. Cristina De Benedictis (Milan, 2002), 182–186. The illuminations of a missal, G.III.7 in the same library, are at least in part probably attributable to Andrea in a slightly earlier phase, as Chelazzi Dini proposed in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 317–318.
- [30] On the Tuscania polyptych, cf. Luisa Mortari, in *La pittura viterbese dal xiv al xvi secolo: Catalogo delle opere*, ed. Italo Faldi and Luisa Mortari (Viterbo, 1954), 29–30, and Laurence B. Kanter, "Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo," *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 17–24. Kanter's proposed reconstruction of the altarpiece, and his addition to it of components now situated elsewhere, seems correct, but it is difficult to share his attribution of it to Giorgio d'Andrea or his dating to the 1420s. This date, formerly accepted also by the present writer, now seems to me too late and should, I believe, be modified to 1405–1410; cf. Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 21. Gabriele Fattorini came to similar conclusions concerning the date of the Tuscania polyptych in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:242–249.
- [31] Apart from polyptych no. 220 of the Pinacoteca in Siena, generally considered a late work of Andrea, I refer to the polyptych in Sant'Angelo in Vado, now divided between the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan and the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino, and the dispersed predella reconstructed

around the Crucifixion no. 12.6 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. For these paintings, see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 207; Valentina Maderna, “Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera,” in *Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera restaurato*, ed. Valentina Maderna (Florence, 1986), 9–15; Federico Zeri, in Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 1–2; and Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 16–21. In my discussion of this predella in 1990, I wrongly connected it with two lateral panels of paired saints from a dispersed triptych, now in a private collection. These panels, *Saints Louis of Toulouse and John the Baptist* and *John the Evangelist and Francis*, now seem to me relatively early works of the artist, probably datable to the first decade of the fifteenth century, whereas the predella I had placed in the period c. 1415–1420 ought to be closer in date to the latter end of this spectrum.

- [32] Laurence B. Kanter, “Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo,” *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 22–24. The Minneapolis fragment was deaccessioned, and its present whereabouts are unknown to me. For the fragment no. 63 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 205.
- [33] The somewhat naive compositional device proposed by the painter in the Nativity of the central panel of the triptych in Siena, namely that of displacing sharply to the left the little tree in the background to avoid its branches being concealed by the cusped border of the frame, recalls the improbable displacement—for the same reason—of the dome to the left margin of the temple in *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple* in the National Gallery of Art.
- [34] We may further recall as works exemplifying Andrea’s phase at the turn of the century a portable triptych in the Brooklyn Museum in New York, no. 34. 839; see Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 41, and the little panels with saints, formerly belonging to the museums in Altenburg, Oslo, Oxford, and in private collections; see Francesca Pasut, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 107–111.
- [35] *Gold Backs: 1250–1480* (Turin, 1996), 122, 124; Gabriele Fattorini, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:236–249. The painting, cut on all sides, measures 25.5 × 21 cm. The fragment at first sight might also seem

the companion panel of these in the Gallery, but its original size must have been slightly smaller than that of the Washington panels.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting, along with its companions *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*, was executed on a single-member poplar panel with vertical grain.[1] The edges of the three panels probably were cropped slightly. Wooden strips measuring 0.6–0.8 cm wide have been attached to the edges along all four sides of each painting. The x-radiographs show three round marks along the bottom of *The Presentation* and *The Nativity*, which may be the sites of old holes from nails that attached a horizontal batten.

The paintings most likely were executed on a gesso ground. The x-radiographs of *The Presentation* suggest the presence of a fabric interlayer beneath the ground, but such a layer is not evident in the x-radiographs of the other two paintings. Infrared reflectography (Vidicon)[2] proves the presence of extensive underdrawing, particularly in the draperies of the figures and the placement of the architectural forms. Incised lines were used, on the other hand, to delineate the main contours of the figures, of architectural details, and of the original frame, now lost, against the gold.

Stephen Pichetto thinned and cradled the panels shortly after their acquisition by Samuel H. Kress in 1930.[3] X-radiographs made prior to the attachment of the cradles show extensive worm damage, as well as structural damage in the form of a large crack in the central area of each panel. A large knot may have caused the vertical split in *The Presentation*. The cracks of *The Presentation* and *The Nativity* line up, if the latter is positioned above the former. However, this could be purely coincidental and may not relate to the original positions of the panels. The painted surface contains only very small losses, but all panels have been generously retouched and partially regilded. The inpainting is disturbing, especially in the faces of the three figures at the center of *The Nativity*. The frames are modern. Photographs made at the time of the paintings' donation to the National Gallery of Art show the panels unframed. A note in the Gallery's curatorial files mentions their reframing in 1944. Before this intervention the spandrels originally covered by the frame had been regilded and appear as such in the photos published in the 1941

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catalog of the Gallery.[4] The cusped inner molding of the present frames follows approximately the incised lines for the original framing. Pichetto removed discolored varnish and inpaint during his 1930 treatment of the paintings. In 1955 Mario Modestini again treated *The Nativity* and *Joachim and Anna*.<sup>[5]</sup>

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified the wood using optical microscopy (see report dated September 15, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera.
- [3] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4.
- [4] Reproduced still unframed in Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan, 1949), pl. 9; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 36. However, *The Presentation* and *The Nativity* are reproduced with their modern frame in George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1955), pl. 21.
- [5] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4. Kress Foundation records (copies in NGA curatorial files) mention only that Modestini “revived color under white stains...and applied protective coat.”
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### PROVENANCE

This panel, along with NGA 1939.1.41 and 1939.1.43, are stated to have come from the collection of a contessa Giustiniani, Genoa;<sup>[1]</sup> (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Rome); sold July 1930 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[2]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] See the bill of sale described in note 2. No documented collection of the conti Giustiniani at Genoa seems to have existed, at least in the early years of the twentieth century. The works that Elisabeth Gardner ( *A Bibliographical Repertory of Italian Private Collections*, ed. Chiara Ceschi and Katharine Baetjer, 4 vols., Vicenza, 1998-2011: 2(2002):183) cites as formerly the

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property of the contessa Giustiniani almost all seem to have been purchased on the art market shortly before 1930, when Contini Bonacossi sold them to Samuel H. Kress. The contessa is thus more likely to have been a dealer, or agent, than a collector. See also Miklós Boskovits and David Alan Brown, *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century*, National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue, Washington and New York, 2003: 616 n. 3. [2] The painting is included on a bill of sale dated 15 July 1930 that included eight paintings from the Giustiniani collection (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

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Andrea di Bartolo  
Sienese, active from 1389 - died 1428

## *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*

c. 1400/1405

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface: 44 × 32.3 cm (17 5/16 × 12 11/16 in.)

overall: 45.7 × 33.8 × 0.6 cm (18 × 13 5/16 × 1/4 in.)

framed: 48.2 × 36.8 × 4.1 cm (19 × 14 1/2 × 1 5/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.41

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### ENTRY

The three panels in the National Gallery of Art collection (this work, *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*, and *The Nativity of the Virgin*) form part of a larger series of scenes from the childhood of Mary, of which a fourth component is also known: *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* now in the Keresztény Múzeum at Esztergom in Hungary [fig. 1],[1] Since two of the episodes, *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple* and *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem*, are seldom found represented in art, there are good reasons to assume that the sequence would have originally comprised at least four other, more commonly illustrated scenes, namely, the Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple, the Annunciation to Joachim (and/or to Anna), the Meeting at the Golden Gate, and the Betrothal of the Virgin.[2] These (and possibly other) scenes would have accompanied a central image of the Madonna and Child,[3] or of Saint Anne with the Madonna and Child,[4] a Coronation of the Virgin,[5] or a theme such as the Annunciation or Pentecost.[6] It is difficult, therefore, to reconstruct the dismembered and dispersed altarpiece of which our three panels would have formed part, also because we do not know exactly how the surviving scenes from the life of the Virgin were related to the main image of the altarpiece. The fact that the grain of the wooden support is vertical would seem to exclude the proposition that they are fragments of a predella,[7] and the hypothesis advanced in the past, that our panels could be fragments of a reliquary cupboard, seems to have no foundation.[8] They could have been fragments of a *vita-icon* type panel, with a

whole-length figure of the Madonna and Child flanked by a vertically arranged series of scenes of her life.[9] Such an image, however, would appear decidedly old-fashioned in Siena after the mid-fourteenth century. A more likely alternative format is suggested by the cases in which Siennese painters of the late fourteenth century, such as Taddeo di Bartolo or Andrea di Bartolo himself,[10] produced paintings in a form similar to thirteenth-century dossals, with a large-scale representation at the center, flanked by narrative scenes in two superimposed orders [fig. 2] (see also *Reconstruction*). A round-arched termination, enriched on the inside with cusped moldings, would be very appropriate for this kind of altarpiece. In Siena in this period, and in Tuscany in general, the wood grain of the support in a vertical panel is invariably aligned vertically, and in a horizontal panel horizontally. It cannot be excluded, of course, that the painting was realized during the artist's stay in Venice or in the Marche and not in Siena, as Laurence Kanter, in correspondence, suggests. He points out that carpentry practice in the Venetian territories frequently aligned panels parallel to the shorter axis, so in the case of a horizontal altarpiece the wood grain would run vertically.[11] He further notes that the incised profiles of the original frame moldings on our panels argue for a Venetian provenance. In Tuscany, engaged frames were applied before the panels were gessoed or gilt. In Venice, they were added afterward, and their profiles are often found inscribed on the picture surface as a guide to the painter.

The scenes from the life of the Virgin painted by Andrea are based on an apocryphal text called *De Ortu Beatae Mariae et Infantia Salvatoris*, attributed to the evangelist Matthew. Later sources enriched this narrative with additional episodes. According to the legend, the marriage of Joachim (father of the Virgin Mary) and Anna remained childless for many years, a state that was interpreted by the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem as punishment for grave sins. Therefore, Joachim's offering of a sacrificial lamb was rejected, and he was expelled from the temple. The scene represented in this work is usually identified as Joachim and the Beggars but refers instead to a previous episode in the life of Mary's parents. A version of the legend, evidently familiar in Tuscany, recounts that Joachim and Anna lived in a particularly charitable way, dividing all their worldly goods into three parts: a third was allocated to the poor, another third to the temple, and only a third was kept for their own needs.[12] In the panel at the Gallery, we see, to the left, Joachim distributing loaves of bread to the poor, while his wife is presiding over the delivery of sacks of grain to the temple, where a priest receives them. This episode would have been followed by the lost scene of the priest's rejection of the offering of a sacrificial animal and the Expulsion from the Temple, the premise for

Joachim's Abandonment of the City, which is described in the painting now in Esztergom.

At this point in the sequence, other episodes usually illustrated in cycles of the childhood of Mary are likely to have followed: namely, the Angel's Annunciation of the Birth of Mary both to Joachim and to Anna, and the Return of Joachim to the City, linked with the Meeting of Husband and Wife at the Golden Gate. In the following scene of the Nativity of the Virgin, Andrea faithfully followed the model proposed by his father, Bartolo di Fredi, in the cycle of frescoes in the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano and elsewhere:[13] in the foreground at the center we see a young woman seated on the ground, supporting with one arm the newborn child who stands on her lap, back turned to the viewer, while another woman, also crouched on the ground, is gesturing with both hands towards the child, as if inviting the baby girl to come to her arms. Further in the background we see two standing women: one is just entering the room through a door in the rear wall, bearing a bowl of food in her hands; the other is pouring water into a basin for the child's mother to wash her hands. Anna is shown reclining on the skillfully foreshortened bed to the right, its curtain drawn back. On the other side of the scene, Joachim and another elderly man are seated in a barrel-vaulted loggia adjacent to the room of the childbirth, awaiting news of the event. The following scene, The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, also resembles the corresponding fresco by Bartolo in San Gimignano,[14] but in this case both paintings reveal the influence of a celebrated prototype frescoed by *Pietro* and Ambrogio Lorenzetti on the facade of the Ospedale della Scala in Siena.[15] The scene represents the episode of the three-year-old Mary being taken by her parents to the temple; the child spontaneously ascends the flight of steps to the temple, where she would reside until the age of fourteen. By painting the temple at an angle to the picture plane, displaced to the right side of the composition, Andrea seems, however, more faithful to his father's more dynamic and "modern" composition than to the Lorenzettian model.

After initial attempts to attribute the three panels to Bartolo di Fredi,[16] art historians in general accepted them (and also the fourth now in Esztergom) as the work of Andrea.[17] The generally accepted date for them is c. 1400 or shortly thereafter.[18] A proposal to insert them into the catalog of Giorgio di Andrea[19] has found no acceptance in the literature. G. Fattorini described the three Washington panels as akin to the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Salini collection (Castello di Gallico, near Asciano, Siena), which he dated to the first decade of the

fifteenth century.[20]

From a stylistic point of view, the scenes from the childhood of Mary can be compared with such paintings as the six stories of Saint Galgano now divided between the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the National Gallery in Dublin (these, too, most likely originated as parts of a panel in the form of a dossal);[21] various portable triptychs in the museums of Altenburg,[22] Philadelphia,[23] Prague,[24] and Siena,[25] or the paintings on a casket in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena.[26] Unfortunately, none of these paintings is securely dated. Since the only documented works of the painter have been lost, the one secure point of reference for the chronology of his career remains the fragmentary polyptych in the Church of the Osservanza at Siena, dated 1413.[27] The lack of other secure points of reference explains why the chronological reconstruction of Andrea's works remains so beset by uncertainty. For example, his signed *Assumption of the Virgin* (Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond) sometimes is considered to belong to his early period, and sometimes to his full maturity.[28] Some clues for a reconstruction of the artist's career can, I believe, be deduced from the miniatures painted by Andrea for the choir-books of the Eremo di Lecceto near Siena, probably during the 1390s.[29] The strong compositional simplification and charged color of these miniatures reveal significant affinities with the scenes from the life of the Virgin being discussed here, and thus seem to confirm that they belong to a relatively precocious phase in Andrea's career.

Comparisons of the Gallery's panels with the figures of saints in the Church of the Osservanza in Siena (1413), on the other hand, show that the latter belong to a more advanced phase in the artist's career. Some lateral panels of polyptychs, such as that in Tuscania Cathedral, of which the predella has also survived, are easier to compare with the Osservanza saints. In contrast to the tall and slender saints of the Osservanza, who wear draperies furrowed by long, close-set, sharply undercut folds, those of Tuscania are more robust in physique and more placid in expression; their statuesque figures seem to indicate an earlier date of execution, somewhat closer in style to the group of miniatures Andrea probably realized in the last decade of the fourteenth century.[30] If this conclusion is correct, and if therefore the crowded scenes thronged with corpulent and largely immobile figures in the predella in Tuscania testify to Andrea's art around 1405–1410, it seems reasonable to propose a dating to the very first years of the Quattrocento for the Gallery's scenes from the life of the Virgin. The compositions in these panels are reduced to essentials, and no signs are yet visible either of the more

spacious layout of the scenes or of the greater liveliness of the figures that can be seen in the stories of Christ in the now dispersed predella that should probably be connected with the Assumption in Richmond and in other altarpieces reasonably considered later than the Osservanza saints.[31]

The closest stylistic affinities of the Gallery's panels therefore are with works whose figures are more robust and more sedate in character. Paintings that fall into this category—apart from the polyptych in Buonconvento and the altarpiece now in the museum in Murano, both datable to the last decade of the fourteenth century—include the fragment with the Virgin Annunciate formerly in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the fragmentary Saint Michael Archangel in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 63), for both of which Laurence Kanter (1986) proposed a provenance from the same altarpiece of which the Gallery's panels originally formed a part.[32] Apparently, during these years—that is, the first fifteen years of the fifteenth century—Andrea especially painted small-scale works for private devotion, such as the abovementioned portable triptych no. 133 in the Pinacoteca of Siena; this resembles our scenes from the life of Mary not only in the proportions and physiognomic types of the figures but also in its peculiar compositional devices.[33] In another triptych datable to this period, that of the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg, the cloak of the young female saint of the left leaf is closely comparable with that of the majestic Saint Anne of *The Presentation of the Virgin to the Temple*. Another comparable work[34] is the *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Salini collection, which recalls the Washington panels both in the statuesque pose of its figures and in the characteristics of its architectural backdrop.[35]

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Andrea di Bartolo, *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem*, c. 1400/1405, tempera on panel, Keresztény Múzeum, Esztergom, Hungary



**fig. 2** Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Andrea di Bartolo (color images are NGA objects): a. *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*; b. *Expulsion of Joachim (?), lost*; c. *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem* (fig. 1); d. *Annunciation of the Birth of Mary (?), lost*; e. *Lost*; f. *Meeting at Porta Aurea (?), lost*; g. *The Nativity of the Virgin*; h. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*; i. *Marriage of the Virgin (?), lost*

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Andrea di Bartolo:

- a. *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*
- b. *Expulsion of Joachim (?)*, lost
- c. *Joachim Leaving Jerusalem (fig. 1)*
- d. *Annunciation of the Birth of Mary (?)*, lost
- e. Lost
- f. *Meeting at Porta Aurea (?)*, lost
- g. *The Nativity of the Virgin*
- h. *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*
- i. *Marriage of the Virgin (?)*, lost

**NOTES**

[1] No. 55.148; 46 × 34 cm. The painting, its provenance unknown, was purchased by Cardinal János Simor, perhaps in Rome, for the museum in Esztergom between 1867 and 1878; see Miklós Boskovits et al., *Christian Art in Hungary: Collections from the Esztergom Christian Museum* (Budapest, 1965), 52. Its original gold ground was evidently removed at an early date, and it, like the Washington panels, was regilded during a nineteenth-century

restoration.

- [2] On the role of Joachim in Italian cycles of the childhood of Mary, cf. Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, 2 vols. (Bruxelles, 1964–1965), 2:154–159; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 38–54.
- [3] As an example we may cite the *vita-icon*, name piece of the Master of San Martino in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa, in which the main image at the center is flanked on either side by six superimposed stories from the life of the Virgin. See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 41–43 and fig. 48.
- [4] Cf. the retable of Bernat de Puig in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona, repro. in Josep Gudiol and Santiago Alcolea i Blanch, *Pittura gotica catalana* (Barcelona, 1986), fig. 57.
- [5] As in the polyptych commissioned from Bartolo di Fredi for the church of San Francesco at Montalcino; cf. Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 188–221.
- [6] The Annunciation is placed at the center of an illuminated page with scenes from the childhood of Mary, executed by the Bedford Master, in a *Book of Hours* in the Oesterreichisches Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, cod. 1855; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: pl. 467. The scene of Pentecost occupies a central position in the cycle of frescoes by the young Bartolo di Fredi in the church of Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano. See Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 32–45.
- [7] On the structural characteristics of the predella in late medieval altarpieces in Tuscany, see Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 9394; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55.
- [8] Cesare Brandi formulated this hypothesis, and various scholars accepted it, in Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan, 1949), 243.
- [9] Joanna Dunn of the National Gallery of Art conservation department tells me that, judging from the cracks lining up, it seems a “strong possibility” that *The Nativity of the Virgin* was placed above *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*. However, the x-radiographs do not show the wood grain clearly enough to prove this.
- [10] On the typology of *vita-icon* in Tuscany, see Victor M. Schmidt, “Tipologie e funzioni della pittura senese su tavola,” in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo,

Milan, 2003), 541–544; Rita Sauer, “... so be ye holy in all manner of conversation’: The Vita Retable,” in *Kult Bild: Das Altar- und Andachtsbild von Duccio bis Perugino* (Petersberg, 2006), 131–176. For *vita-icons* with horizontally arranged scenes, see Taddeo di Bartolo’s panel *San Geminianus Enthroned and Eight Stories of His Legend*, or Andrea di Bartolo’s panel with the Crucifixion at the center and eight scenes from the life of Christ and of saints to the sides, formerly in the Stoclet collection in Brussels. Cf. Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 354; Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315 and fig. 6.

- [11] Taddeo di Bartolo’s San Geminianus dossal (see note 10 above) has been transferred to a modern panel support with a vertical wood grain and so cannot be adduced for comparison.
- [12] The narrative of the Pseudo-Matthew was supplemented with other episodes by a German priest named Wernher in the mid-twelfth century. His *Driv liet von der maget* (*Three Books on the Virgin*) is the first source to mention the story of the division of Joachim’s worldly goods for charitable purposes; see Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 54–55; W.J. Hoffman, “Wernher,” in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:716–717.
- [13] The scene frescoed by Bartolo in Sant’Agostino at San Gimignano was repeated with small variations by the same painter in the predella fragment, part of the altarpiece commissioned from Bartolo for the church of San Francesco at Montalcino and now in the local Museo Civico. See Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), figs. 34, 37. The young Andrea probably collaborated in the execution of this part of the Montalcino altarpiece.
- [14] Reproduced in Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), fig. 27.
- [15] This lost cycle on the façade of the Ospedale della Scala is now known only from descriptions in the sources. Various scholars have proposed the involvement in it not only of the Lorenzetti brothers but also of ; cf. Daniela Gallavotti Cavallero, “Pietro, Ambrogio e Simone, 1335, e una questione di affreschi perduti,” *Prospettiva* 48 (1987): 69–74, and for a recent summary of the status questionis, see Wolfgang Loseries, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Trippis (Siena, 2008), 130 n. 17.
- [16] In manuscript expertises (some of them dated 1934), Giuseppe Fiocco,

Raimond van Marle, Osvald Sirén, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi all proposed an attribution of the three panels to Bartolo di Fredi. According to the manuscript opinion of F. Mason Perkins, however, the panels were attributable not to Bartolo himself but to an “exceptionally close and as yet unidentified pupil.” See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4, and copies of the expertises in NGA curatorial files.

- [17] Roberto Longhi made the attribution to Andrea di Bartolo in an undated expertise most likely written in 1934, like the others cited in the previous note; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4. Bernard Berenson endorsed this proposal (in an autograph annotation written on the back of a photograph of *The Nativity*), though with the specification “in great part.” Copies in NGA curatorial files.
- [18] The dating “c. 1400” already appeared in the entry relating to the three panels in the National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 3, and was confirmed in the various successive catalogs of the Gallery, as well as by Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, xiii–xv Century* (London, 1966), 65–66; Enzo Carli, *I pittori senesi* (Siena, 1971), 138; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 238; Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d’arte* (Florence, 1982), 317; Valentina Maderna, ed., *Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera restaurato* (Florence, 1986), 17; and Philippe Lorentz, “De Sienne a Strasbourg: Posterité d’une composition d’Ambrogio Lorenzetti, la Nativité de la Vierge de l’Hôpital Santa Maria della Scala à Sienne,” in *Hommage à Michel Laclotte: Etudes sur la peinture du Moyen Age et de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1994), 125 repro., 126, 127, 130–131 n. 45. Miklós Boskovits, *Early Italian Panel Paintings* (Budapest, 1966), 40; András Mucsi, *Katalog der Alten Gemaldegalerie des Christlichen Museums zu Esztergom* (Budapest, 1975), 42; Eberhard Kasten, “Andrea di Bartolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner (Munich, 1992), 3:512, 514, proposed, instead, a less specific date for the three panels in the first decade of the fifteenth century.
- [19] Laurence B. Kanter, “Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo,” *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 22. Corrado Fratini rejected this rather audacious attribution in *Pinacoteca comunale di Città di Castello*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, Catalogo regionale dei beni culturali dell’Umbria*, ed. Francesco Federico Mancini (Perugia, 1987), 143–144; see also Elisabetta Avanzati, in *La Sede storica del Monte dei Paschi di Siena: Vicende costruttive e opere d’arte*, ed. Francesco Gurrieri and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 276–280; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005),

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- 56; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 183–184.
- [20] According to G. Fattorini, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:238, the painting was possibly decorated with the very same punches as the Washington stories of the Virgin.
- [21] Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 61–62. Suggested dating: probably before 1400.
- [22] Francesca Pasut, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 104–106, with dating c. 1395–1400.
- [23] No. JC Cat. 99; see Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 37–41. Suggested dating: c. 1394.
- [24] Nn. O11.919–O11.921. See Olga Pujmanová, *Italienische Tafelbilder des Trecento in der Nationalgalerie Prag* (Berlin, 1984), no. 20. Suggested dating: c. 1400.
- [25] No. 133; see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena, vol. 1, I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 203, with dating to the early years of the fifteenth century.
- [26] Alessandro Cecchi, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 328–331, with dating to c. 1400–1410.
- [27] See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 576, and Antonio Vannini, *L'Osservanza di Siena: Guida artistica della chiesa e del convento di San Bernardino all'Osservanza* (Siena, 2004), 40–41.
- [28] Hendrik W. van Os, “Andrea di Bartolo’s Assumption of the Virgin,” *Arts in Virginia* 2 (1971): 5, dated the painting now in Richmond (no. 54.11.3; 230.2 × 85 cm) “in the seventies” of the fourteenth century. Gaudenz Freuler, “Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d’Antonio Cafarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice,” *The Art Bulletin* 69 (1987): 584, pushed its date forward to the latter years of the century, given that Ser Palamedes, in whose memory the painting was commissioned, was still alive in 1394. Art historians in general, however, have continued to regard the panel as a youthful work of the artist. See Elisabetta Avanzati, in *La Sede storica del Monte dei Paschi di Siena: Vicende costruttive e opere d'arte*, ed. Francesco Gurrieri and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 282; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection*

and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Philadelphia, 2004), 27. The present writer has long maintained (and still believes) that Andrea di Bartolo's stories of Christ, divided between the museums of Toledo in Ohio, Bologna, and private collections, probably belong to the Richmond Assumption. It is generally recognized as a work of the artist's full maturity; cf. Andrea De Marchi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 183–184, with a suggested dating of c. 1420. The common origin of the dispersed predella and the Richmond panel is suggested both by their stylistic character and their size. The width of the panel with the Assumption (measuring 230.2 × 85 cm) matches that of the Toledo Crucifixion (50 × 84.3 cm) that would in origin have been placed below it, at the center of the predella. See Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 21.

- [29] The miniatures of antiphony H.1.7 now in the Biblioteca Comunale of Siena are dated c. 1400; cf. Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture,oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1952), 320–321; Gaudenz Freuler, "La miniatura senese degli anni 1370–1420," in *La miniatura senese 1270–1420*, ed. Cristina De Benedictis (Milan, 2002), 182–186. The illuminations of a missal, G.III.7 in the same library, are at least in part probably attributable to Andrea in a slightly earlier phase, as Chelazzi Dini proposed in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 317–318.
- [30] On the Tuscania polyptych, cf. Luisa Mortari, in *La pittura viterbese dal xiv al xvi secolo: Catalogo delle opere*, ed. Italo Faldi and Luisa Mortari (Viterbo, 1954), 29–30, and Laurence B. Kanter, "Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo," *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 17–24. Kanter's proposed reconstruction of the altarpiece, and his addition to it of components now situated elsewhere, seems correct, but it is difficult to share his attribution of it to Giorgio d'Andrea or his dating to the 1420s. This date, formerly accepted also by the present writer, now seems to me too late and should, I believe, be modified to 1405–1410; cf. Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 21. Gabriele Fattorini came to similar conclusions concerning the date of the Tuscania polyptych in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:242–249.
- [31] Apart from polyptych no. 220 of the Pinacoteca in Siena, generally considered a late work of Andrea, I refer to the polyptych in Sant'Angelo in Vado, now divided between the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan and the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino, and the dispersed predella reconstructed around the Crucifixion no. 12.6 in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New

York. For these paintings, see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 207; Valentina Maderna, “Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera,” in *Il polittico di Andrea di Bartolo a Brera restaurato*, ed. Valentina Maderna (Florence, 1986), 9–15; Federico Zeri, in Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 1–2; and Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 16–21. In my discussion of this predella in 1990, I wrongly connected it with two lateral panels of paired saints from a dispersed triptych, now in a private collection. These panels, *Saints Louis of Toulouse and John the Baptist* and *John the Evangelist and Francis*, now seem to me relatively early works of the artist, probably datable to the first decade of the fifteenth century, whereas the predella I had placed in the period c. 1415–1420 ought to be closer in date to the latter end of this spectrum.

- [32] Laurence B. Kanter, “Giorgio di Andrea di Bartolo,” *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 22–24. The Minneapolis fragment was deaccessioned, and its present whereabouts are unknown to me. For the fragment no. 63 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 205.
- [33] The somewhat naive compositional device proposed by the painter in the Nativity of the central panel of the triptych in Siena, namely that of displacing sharply to the left the little tree in the background to avoid its branches being concealed by the cusped border of the frame, recalls the improbable displacement—for the same reason—of the dome to the left margin of the temple in *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple* in the National Gallery of Art.
- [34] We may further recall as works exemplifying Andrea’s phase at the turn of the century a portable triptych in the Brooklyn Museum in New York, no. 34. 839; see Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 41, and the little panels with saints, formerly belonging to the museums in Altenburg, Oslo, Oxford, and in private collections; see Francesca Pasut, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 107–111.
- [35] *Gold Backs: 1250–1480* (Turin, 1996), 122, 124; Gabriele Fattorini, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:236–249. The painting, cut on all sides, measures 25.5 × 21 cm. The fragment at first sight might also seem the companion panel of these in the Gallery, but its original size must have

been slightly smaller than that of the Washington panels.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting, along with its companions *The Nativity of the Virgin* and *Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the Poor and Offerings to the Temple*, was executed on a single-member poplar panel with vertical grain.[1] The edges of the three panels probably were cropped slightly. Wooden strips measuring 0.6–0.8 cm wide have been attached to the edges along all four sides of each painting. The x-radiographs show three round marks along the bottom of *The Presentation* and *The Nativity*, which may be the sites of old holes from nails that attached a horizontal batten.

The paintings most likely were executed on a gesso ground. The x-radiographs of *The Presentation* suggest the presence of a fabric interlayer beneath the ground, but such a layer is not evident in the x-radiographs of the other two paintings. Infrared reflectography (Vidicon)[2] proves the presence of extensive underdrawing, particularly in the draperies of the figures and the placement of the architectural forms. Incised lines were used, on the other hand, to delineate the main contours of the figures, of architectural details, and of the original frame, now lost, against the gold.

Stephen Pichetto thinned and cradled the panels shortly after their acquisition by Samuel H. Kress in 1930.[3] X-radiographs made prior to the attachment of the cradles show extensive worm damage, as well as structural damage in the form of a large crack in the central area of each panel. A large knot may have caused the vertical split in *The Presentation*. The cracks of *The Presentation* and *The Nativity* line up, if the latter is positioned above the former. However, this could be purely coincidental and may not relate to the original positions of the panels. The painted surface contains only very small losses, but all panels have been generously retouched and partially regilded. The inpainting is disturbing, especially in the faces of the three figures at the center of *The Nativity*. The frames are modern. Photographs made at the time of the paintings' donation to the National Gallery of Art show the panels unframed. A note in the Gallery's curatorial files mentions their reframing in 1944. Before this intervention the spandrels originally covered by the frame had been regilded and appear as such in the photos published in the 1941 catalog of the Gallery.[4] The cusped inner molding of the present frames follows

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approximately the incised lines for the original framing. Pichetto removed discolored varnish and inpaint during his 1930 treatment of the paintings. In 1955 Mario Modestini again treated *The Nativity* and *Joachim and Anna*.<sup>[5]</sup>

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified the wood using optical microscopy (see report dated September 15, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
  - [2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera.
  - [3] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4.
  - [4] Reproduced still unframed in Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan, 1949), pl. 9; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 36. However, *The Presentation* and *The Nativity* are reproduced with their modern frame in George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1955), pl. 21.
  - [5] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:4. Kress Foundation records (copies in NGA curatorial files) mention only that Modestini “revived color under white stains...and applied protective coat.”
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### PROVENANCE

This panel, along with NGA 1939.1.42 and 1939.1.43, are stated to have come from the collection of a contessa Giustiniani, Genoa;<sup>[1]</sup> (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Rome); sold July 1930 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[2]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> See the bill of sale described in note 2. No documented collection of the conti Giustiniani at Genoa seems to have existed, at least in the early years of the twentieth century. The works that Elisabeth Gardner ( *A Bibliographical Repertory of Italian Private Collections*, ed. Chiara Ceschi and Katharine Baetjer, 4 vols., Vicenza, 1998-2011: 2(2002):183) cites as formerly the property of the contessa Giustiniani almost all seem to have been purchased on

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the art market shortly before 1930, when Contini Bonacossi sold them to Samuel H. Kress. The contessa is thus more likely to have been a dealer, or agent, than a collector. See also Miklós Boskovits and David Alan Brown, *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century*, National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue, Washington and New York, 2003: 616 n. 3. [2] The painting is included on a bill of sale dated 15 July 1930 that included eight paintings from the Giustiniani collection (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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# *Bulgarini, Bartolomeo*

Also known as

Bulgarino, Bartolomeo di

Italian, c. 1300 - 1378

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Bartolomeo Bulgarini was one of the most renowned Siennese painters in the decades spanning the mid-fourteenth century. According to Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574) (though he wrongly transcribed his name), he was a disciple of Pietro Lorenzetti (Siennese, active 1306 - 1345), “who wrought many panels in Siena and other places in Italy.”<sup>[1]</sup> Documents mentioning Bartolomeo appear no earlier than 1338 when, as in various succeeding years, he received payments for having painted the wooden covers of the account books of the office of the *Biccherna*, or Treasury, in Siena (so-called *tavolette di Biccherna*). A Pistoian document of c. 1348–1349 cites him among the best Tuscan painters of the period.<sup>[2]</sup> Various commissions (*pictura unius tovaglie*) for the Palazzo Pubblico, seat of communal power in Siena, in 1345, the painting of a Madonna for a city gate, the Porta Camollia, in the same city in 1349, and appointment to official posts (including an advisory role, in 1362, together with two other painters, in supervising the moving of Duccio’s *Maestà* to another site within the cathedral) confirm the prestige he must have enjoyed in Siena. In 1370, Bartolomeo became an oblate (lay member) of the Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala, for which he executed and signed an altarpiece in 1373. Another altarpiece, which had remained unfinished at the time of the artist’s death, was delivered to another painter to complete in 1379.

Since none of his documented works have survived, the identification and reconstruction of Bartolomeo’s oeuvre has posed particular difficulty. The first attempts to do so, in the early twentieth century, identified him with the Bartolomeus de Senis who signed a modest triptych dated 1373 in the church of San Francesco at Tivoli, but the proposal was soon shown to be untenable.<sup>[3]</sup> Only in 1917 did the essential features of his profile as an artist begin to emerge. Bernard Berenson assembled a group of paintings characterized by a peculiar amalgam of influences of Ugolino di Nerio and Pietro Lorenzetti, and baptized the artist to whom he attributed them with the invented name of “Ugolino Lorenzetti.”<sup>[4]</sup> Some years later Ernest De Wald (1923) regrouped other paintings, later recognized to be

by Bartolomeo, around a Madonna in the church of San Pietro Ovale (now in the Museo Diocesano, Siena) under the name “Ovale Master.”[5] Millard Meiss (1931) showed that the two groups document various aspects of the art of the same painter; Meiss later (1936) identified the hand of “Ugolino Lorenzetti” in a *tavoletta di Biccherna* for which Bartolomeo was paid in 1353, and proposed his identification with the master of the two anonymous groups.[6] In fact, various important works of this master, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (nos. 61, 76, and 80), come from the Ospedale della Scala, with which we know that Bartolomeo had close relations. We also know that the painter resided in the parish of San Pietro Ovale. Several art historians, however, were reluctant to accept the proposed identification, until documentary proof was adduced in 1986 that the central panel of the San Vittore altarpiece in Siena Cathedral (of which the Nativity now in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, is a fragment), long attributed to the Ovale Master, was in fact painted by Bartolomeo Bulgarini.[7]

An artist of great accomplishment though of archaizing tendency, Bartolomeo revealed deep nostalgia for the figurative tradition stemming from Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319), which had now been rendered obsolete by the innovations in Sienese painting contributed by Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and the Lorenzetti brothers. It is possible, therefore, that Bartolomeo may have begun his career as a painter by an apprenticeship in Duccio’s atelier. To his earliest phase we can ascribe such works as the *tavoletta di Biccherna* dated 1329 (Gemäldegalerie, Berlin); the polyptych in the Gallerie Fiorentine, Florence, formerly in the Museo di Santa Croce, Florence; and the triptych from Fogliano, now divided between the Pinacoteca Nazionale and the Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, both in Siena. In these works Duccio’s stylistic formulae are restated with a nervously accentuated linearism. A more massive and voluminous figural style, now firmly Lorenzettian in character, and also a greater rhythmic complexity can be recognized in such works as the triptych from Sestano now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and the polyptych divided among the Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi in Lucca, the Pinoteca Capitolina in Rome, and the National Gallery of Art in Washington. A more decorative style, greater softness in modeling, and closer affinity with the figurative ideal pursued by the disciples of Simone Martini thus can be distinguished in such works as the Nativity from Siena Cathedral now in the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts (c. 1350). Similar tendencies also distinguish the artist’s later works, including the polyptych now in the Salini collection in Siena (formerly in Sant’Agostino at San Gimignano); a further polyptych, now dismantled and divided

between Museo Nazionale di San Matteo in Pisa (*Four Saints*) and Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven (*Madonna and Child*, no. 1943.244); and some panels now in the Pinacoteca in Siena (nos. 61 and 80).

[1] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence, 1966–1987), 2(1967):147: “Fu discepolo di Pietro Bartolomeo Bologhini sanese . . . in Fiorenza è di sua mano quella che è in sull'altare della capella di San Salvestro in Santa Croce” (A disciple of Pietro was Bartolomeo Bologhini of Siena . . . in Florence there is by his hand that [a panel] which is on the altar of the chapel of San Silvestro in Santa Croce). This quotation is taken from the second edition of Vasari's *Vite* (1568); in the first, he had indicated the name of the artist as “Bartolomeo Bolghini.” In both cases, evidently, the cognomen was an erroneous reading of a signature, perhaps that of the Santa Croce polyptych that Vasari cited. Art historians, beginning with Berenson, have generally recognized that the polyptych displayed in the Museo di Santa Croce, Florence, until 1966 and now in the storerooms of the Gallerie Fiorentine can be given to the master whom Berenson named “Ugolino Lorenzetti,” that is, the painter whose oeuvre is now incorporated in the catalog of Bartolomeo. However, as Daniela Parenti of the Uffizi in Florence has kindly explained to me, the painting in question apparently did not belong to this church originally. See Bernard Berenson, *Essays in the Study of Sienese Painting* (New York, 1918), 15–18.

[2] The document, undated, is from the archive of the Pistoian church of San Giovanni Fuor Civitas (Archivio di Stato, Pistoia, Patrimonio Ecclesiastico C 449). It lists the best painters available in Florence, Siena, and Lucca, potential candidates for the execution of the polyptych that Alesso d'Andrea had begun to paint in 1348 but had then abandoned, probably as a result of his premature death in the great plague epidemic in that year. So the list of painters was probably drawn up in 1349 or shortly thereafter. For the relevant documentation, cf. Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 255–258.

[3] The triptych, signed and dated, was published by Attilio Rossi (1905), who identified the artist as Bartolomeo Bulgarini: the hypothesis, accepted by various scholars in the following years, was rejected by Millard Meiss (1936) and then definitively abandoned. See Attilio Rossi, *Santa Maria in Vulturella (Tivoli): Ricerche di storia e d'arte* (Rome, 1905), 19, 22; and Millard Meiss, “Bartolommeo Bulgarini altrimenti detto ‘Ugolino Lorenzetti?’” *Rivista d'arte* 18 (1936): 124–125.

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[5] Ernest T. DeWald, "The Master of the Ovile Madonna," *Art Studies* 1 (1923): 45–54.

[6] Millard Meiss, "Ugolino Lorenzetti," *The Art Bulletin* 13 (1931): 376–397; Millard Meiss, "Bartolommeo Bulgarini altrimenti detto 'Ugolino Lorenzetti?'" *Rivista d'arte* 18 (1936): 113–136.

[7] No. 1917.89, Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA. Hendrik W. van Os, *Sieneese Altarpieces 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function*, vol. 1, 1215–1344 (Groningen, 1984), 85–87, recognized the painting as the central panel of the San Vittore altarpiece in Siena Cathedral. Van Os identified its laterals in two panels, one representing Saint Victor and the other a young female saint, in the Royal Museum of Fine Art in Copenhagen. Shortly thereafter, definitive confirmation of Meiss's attribution to Bartolomeo was published by the discovery in the inventory of the cathedral dated 1594 of the description of an altarpiece that was explicitly cited as "tavola della *Natività* dipinta da Bartolomeo Bulgarini da Siena." See Elisabeth H. Beatson, Norman E. Muller, and Judith B. Steinhoff, "The St. Victor Altarpiece in Siena Cathedral: A Reconstruction," *The Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 610–631.

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Bartolomeo Bulgarini  
Italian, c. 1300 - 1378

## *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*

c. 1335/1340

tempera on panel

painted surface (edge of gilding to edge of gilding): 73.5 × 40.5 cm (28 15/16 × 15 15/16 in.)

painted surface (edge of paint to edge of paint): 73.5 × 41 cm (28 15/16 × 16 1/8 in.)

overall: 73.5 × 42 × 1 cm (28 15/16 × 16 9/16 × 3/8 in.)

framed: 95.3 × 47.3 × 6 cm (37 1/2 × 18 5/8 × 2 3/8 in.)

Inscription: on the gilded brooch of the saint's mantle: S.K.A.T.E.R.I.N.A

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1943.4.20

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### ENTRY

The painting represents the martyr saint of Alexandria according to the usual iconographic canons of the early fourteenth century in Tuscany: with a crown placed on her blond hair, which is parted over the top of her head and gathered over the nape of her neck, the palm of martyrdom in her left hand and a book that she supports with both hands against the wheel, her instrument of martyrdom, with sharp, denticulated metal spikes along its rim.[1] The image is not self-sufficient. It belonged to a polyptych, more particularly a five-part altarpiece, known as the San Cerbone altarpiece [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*), of which the other components are the *Madonna and Child* [fig. 2] and the *Saint John the Evangelist* [fig. 3] now in the Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi in Lucca (nos. 160 and 162),[2] and the panels of Saint Bartholomew [fig. 4] and Mary Magdalene [fig. 5], nos. 345 and 346 in the Pinacoteca Capitolina in Rome.[3] In 1706 Antonio de Brandeglio described the paintings in question, together with the panel now in the National Gallery of Art, as extant in the chapel of the Madonna in the church of San Cerbone in Lucca. But when Michele Ridolfi visited the church in 1845, he found only the central image of the Madonna in the chapel and that of Saint John in the sacristy, while all trace of the other panels had already been lost. They had perhaps been separated and dispersed presumably after 1806, following the Napoleonic suppression of the religious orders.

The five-part San Cerbone polyptych had a rather archaic structure, formed of five rectangular panels [fig. 1]. The painted surface of each of these panels terminated in an ogival arch, apparently without any figurative decoration in the spandrels to the side of the arch. This type of altarpiece makes it probable that the surviving panels were surmounted by another series of images: perhaps with two above each panel, as in some polyptychs produced in the shops of Pietro Lorenzetti (Sienese, active 1306 - 1345)[4] and of Ugolino di Nerio[5] in the late 1320s and during the following decade, or more probably with a single image above each panel, as in some works of the earliest phase in the career of Bulgarini himself.[6]

As for the attribution of the panel now in the Gallery, it was formerly considered a work by Deodato Orlandi, a leading painter of Lucca in the later thirteenth century, who is known to have painted a Crucifixion dated 1288, formerly in the same church of San Cerbone from which our Saint Catherine came.[7] Adolfo Venturi (1905, 1906, 1907) discarded this attribution and instead gave it, together with the other two components from the same complex with a provenance from the Sterbini collection, to Pietro.[8] The proposal met acceptance from F. Mason Perkins (1905 and 1931), Raimond van Marle (1924), Emilio Cecchi (1930), and George Harold Edgell (1932), and in the volume *Duveen Pictures* (1941) and various catalogs of the Gallery (NGA 1941, Shoolman and Slatkin 1942, Kress 1945).[9] Emil Jacobsen (1907) and Edward Hutton (1909) reported, but without expressing their own opinion about, the attribution to Pietro, while Ernest DeWald (1929) gave the three former Sterbini panels to a “follower of Segna di Bonaventura.”[10] In 1931, Andrea Péter and Millard Meiss independently recognized the common origin of these paintings with the other two now in the Museo Nazionale in Lucca.[11] Péter, however, detected the collaboration of two different hands in the polyptych; he assigned the two panels now in Lucca to “Ugolino Lorenzetti” (the master to whom he attributed works now generally recognized as belonging to Bulgarini’s initial phase), whereas he saw the intervention of the Ovile Master in the former Sterbini collection panels. For his part Meiss attributed the whole polyptych to “Ugolino Lorenzetti,” into whose catalog he incorporated the works that other art historians label with the conventional name of the Ovile Master. Meiss thought that the altarpiece belonged to a relatively early phase in the master’s output, dating it to c. 1330–1340. Van Marle (1934) accepted his proposal, calling the San Cerbone polyptych an example of an intermediate phase between the artist’s early period influenced by Duccio’s art and his later phase, reflecting the influence of Pietro Lorenzetti.[12] Yet Meiss’s subsequent (1936) identification of the anonymous master, Ugolino Lorenzetti, with

Bulgarini initially encountered resistance; only after the further clarification of the question, accompanied by the publication of new documentary evidence by Elisabeth H. Beatson, Norman E. Muller, and Judith B. Steinhoff (1986), did the attribution to Bulgarini gain general acceptance.[13]

What still remains problematic is the chronological sequence of Bulgarini's oeuvre, which is devoid of dated works, apart from the *tavole di biccherna*.<sup>[14]</sup> The *biccherna* panels are difficult to compare with the static figures of far larger dimensions in the polyptychs, and among these the only secure point of reference is the dating to c. 1350 of the San Vittore altarpiece formerly in Siena Cathedral.<sup>[15]</sup> It may be asserted with some confidence that the San Cerbone polyptych should date to an earlier phase than this, on grounds of style, panel type, decoration, and iconography. It still lacks the softness of modeling and delicate chiaroscuro passages that distinguish the master's later altarpieces. It also lacks the trefoil-arched moldings of the upper arch and the *pastiglia* ornament that characterize Bulgarini's polyptychs around or after the midcentury. The particular motif of the child and the Madonna now in the Museo Nazionale di Villa Giunigi in Lucca, who devotes his undivided attention to his mother, twisting towards her with his whole body, is probably a Lorenzettian invention of the 1330s;<sup>[16]</sup> it also appears in Bulgarini's Madonna now in the Museo Diocesano in Pienza.<sup>[17]</sup> Other paintings associated with this stylistic phase, as already observed in the past, include the fragment of a polyptych with a provenance from Radicondoli (no. 54 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena), where we also find iconographic formulae that are closely related to the figures of Saint Catherine and Mary Magdalene.<sup>[18]</sup> A similar image of the latter saint is also found in the polyptych of the Berenson Library at the Villa I Tatti near Florence.<sup>[19]</sup> while a variant of the figure of Saint John in the museum in Lucca recurs in the left lateral of the triptych from San Bartolomeo at Sestano, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena.<sup>[20]</sup>

This group of works can be safely assumed to have been executed in the same span of years, presumably still in the course of the first half of the century, but after an initial phase in which Bulgarini had produced the nervous, tormented figures of the polyptych formerly in the Museo di Santa Croce in Florence,<sup>[21]</sup> the triptych from the church of San Giovanni Battista in Fogliano near Siena,<sup>[22]</sup> or the two apostles of the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne,<sup>[23]</sup> just to cite components of altarpieces. In the works of his intermediate period, those to which our Saint Catherine belongs, by contrast, Bulgarini based himself on models developed by Sienese artists in the wake of Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 -

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1318/1319), and adopted the type of polyptych that had emerged in the third and fourth decade of the fourteenth century.[24] These are all features that differentiate our polyptych both from the artist's initial phase and from his works dating to the years around and after the midcentury. Consequently a dating to c. 1340 would seem to me most likely for the Saint Catherine in the Gallery and for its companion panels.[25] What these panels have in common is a quest for grandeur, simplification of form, and the expression of powerful emotion, in the spirit of works painted by Pietro Lorenzetti in his early maturity.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of the San Cerbone Altarpiece by Bartolomeo Bulgarini (color images are NGA objects): a. *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*; b. *Saint Bartholomew* (fig. 4); c. *Madonna and Child* (fig. 2); d. *Saint John the Evangelist* (fig. 3); e. *Saint Mary Magdalene* (fig. 5)



**fig. 2** Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1335/1340, tempera on panel, Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi, Lucca. Image: Mondadori Portfolio/Electa/Luca Carrà/Bridgeman Images



**fig. 3** Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Saint John the Evangelist*, c. 1335/1340, tempera on panel, Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi, Lucca



**fig. 4** Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1335/1340, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Capitolina, Rome. Image: Mondadori Portfolio/Electa/Art Resource, NY

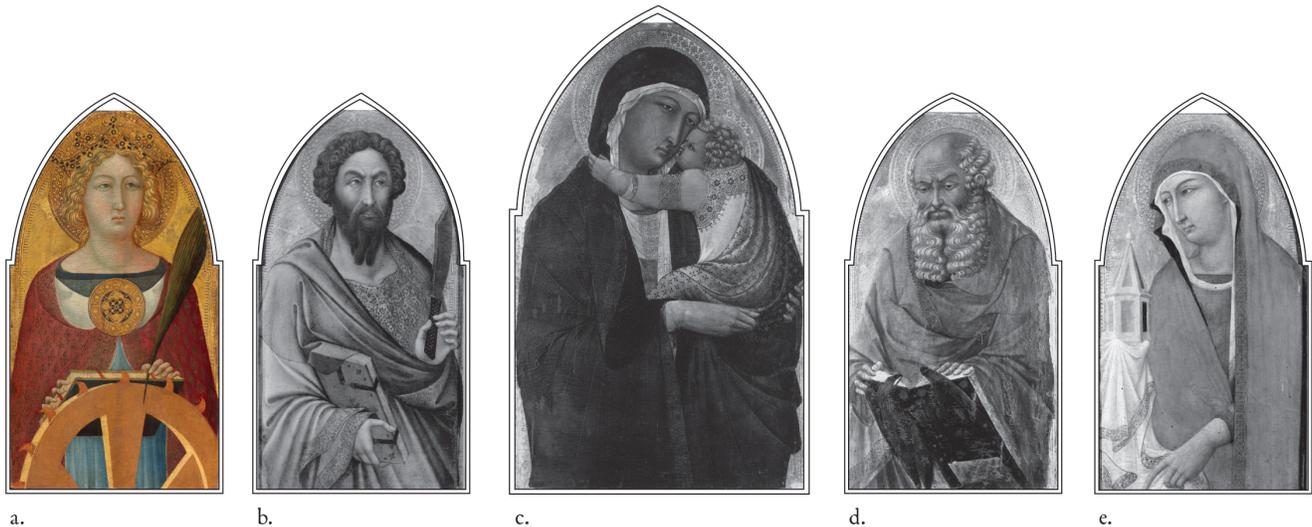


**fig. 5** Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Saint Mary Magdalene*, c. 1335/1340, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Capitolina, Rome. Image: Mondadori Portfolio/Electa/Art Resource, NY

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of the San Cerbone Altarpiece by Bartolomeo Bulgarini:

- a. *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*
- b. *Saint Bartholomew* (Entry fig. 4)
- c. *Madonna and Child* (Entry fig. 2)
- d. *Saint John the Evangelist* (Entry fig. 3)
- e. *Saint Mary Magdalene* (Entry fig. 5)

**NOTES**

- [1] George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art, vol. 1, Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234.
- [2] Licia Bertolini Campetti and Silvia Meloni Trkulja, eds., *Museo di Villa Guinigi, Lucca: La villa e le collezioni* (Lucca, 1968), 141–142. The Madonna measures 91 × 56 cm and the panel of Saint John the Evangelist 72.5 × 42.2 cm. According to Placido Campetti (1932), the monastery sold the two panels in the early years of the twentieth century. Placido Campetti, “Annuari,” *Bollettino storico lucchese* 4 (1932): 159.
- [3] Raffaele Bruno, *Roma: Pinacoteca capitolina* (Bologna, 1978), 3. The panel of Saint Bartholomew (inv. no. 345) measures 75 × 42 cm, and that of Mary Magdalene (inv. no. 346) 73 × 41 cm. The two paintings entered the Capitoline collection, Rome, in 1936.
- [4] I refer to such panels as the dispersed polyptych from the church of the

Carmine in Siena, dated 1329, in which the laterals (representing full-length figures of saints) were each surmounted by an image of a pair of saints, or polyptych no. 50 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, probably dating to c. 1335–1340, in which the saints of the main register are represented half-length, though again with paired saints in the upper tier. Cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 97–99, 105–106. In contrast to the Carmine polyptych, the spandrels in polyptych no. 50 are decorated not with figures of angels but with ornamental motifs.

- [5] One may recall the polyptych formerly in the church of Santa Croce in Florence, probably executed in c. 1330 and now divided among various museums in the world. Here the saints in the main register, portrayed just over half-length (and the angels filling the spandrels), are surmounted by a frieze of medallions with images of the ancestors of Christ and above that by paired saints; cf. Stefan Weppelmann, “Geschichten auf Gold in neuem Licht: Das Hochaltarretabel aus der Franziskanerkirche Santa Croce,” in *Geschichten auf Gold: Bilderzählungen in der frühen italienischen Malerei*, ed. Stefan Weppelmann (Berlin, 2005), 26–50.
- [6] Bulgarini, in his triptych representing the Crucifixion at the center and half-length figures of female saints in the laterals (no. 54 in the Pinacoteca of Siena), surmounted the panels of the main register (with a pointed arch defining the painted area and ornamental decoration in the spandrels) with triangular-shaped gable panels filled with half-length figures of saints. Cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 136. It should be said, however, that, as may be observed from the pose of the saints in the lateral panels, this complex must originally have been a five-part altarpiece. Since it has been truncated below, the main register likely consisted of full-length figures. A complex very similar to the San Cerbone polyptych, apart from that now in the Berenson Library at Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence, must have been that of which only the centerpiece now survives, namely the Madonna and Child in the Museo Diocesano at Pienza. See Franco Russoli and Nicky Mariano, *The Berenson Collection*, trans. Frances Alexander and Sidney Alexander, Edizioni Beatrice d’Este (Milan, 1964), xvii; and Laura Martini, ed., *Museo diocesano di Pienza, Musei senesi* (Siena, 1998), 29–31. Only in his late phase, it seems, did Bartolomeo adopt the solution of paired saints in the upper register of altarpieces: an example of this type is the fragment now in the Lehman collection in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Cf. John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 16–17.
- [7] Now in the Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi in Lucca; cf. Licia Bertolini Campetti and Silvia Meloni Trkulja, eds., *Museo di Villa Guinigi, Lucca: La*

*villa e le collezioni* (Lucca, 1968), 139–140.

- [8] Adolfo Venturi, “La quadreria Sterbini in Roma,” *L’Arte* 8 (1905): 427, 428 fig. 5; Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906), 33–35; Adolfo Venturi, *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 5, *La pittura del Trecento e le sue origini* (Milan, 1907), 696 n. 1.
- [9] F. Mason Perkins, “Arte senese nella Quadreria Sterbini a Roma,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 1, no. 4 (1905): 148–149; F. Mason Perkins, “Pitture senesi poco conosciute,” *La Diana* 6 (1931): 28; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 326; Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), 7, pl. 8; George Harold Edgell, *A History of Sienese Painting* (New York, 1932), 114; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 14; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 111; Regina Shoolman and Charles E. Slatkin, *The Enjoyment of Art in America* (Philadelphia, 1942), 284, pl. 253; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1945), 20.
- [10] Emil Jacobsen, *Sienesische Meister des Trecento in der Gemäldegalerie zu Siena* (Strasbourg, 1907), 41 n. 7; Edward Hutton, in Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 2, *Siene School of the Fourteenth Century; Florentine School of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Edward Hutton (London and New York, 1909), 90 n. 7; Ernest T. DeWald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): 160 n. 2.
- [11] Andrea Péter, “Ugolino Lorenzetti e il Maestro di Ovile,” *Rivista d’arte* 13 (1931): 22–33; Millard Meiss, “Ugolino Lorenzetti,” *The Art Bulletin* 13 (1931): 380–384, 393, 397.
- [12] Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 155, 160.
- [13] See Millard Meiss, “Bartolommeo Bulgarini altrimenti detto ‘Ugolino Lorenzetti?’,” *Rivista d’arte* 18 (1936): 113–136; and Elisabeth H. Beatson, Norman E. Muller, and Judith B. Steinhoff, “The St. Victor Altarpiece in Siena Cathedral: A Reconstruction,” *The Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 610–631, where for the first time a painting attributed to both “Ugolini Lorenzetti” and to the Ovile Master—the Nativity in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts—was identified as a documented work by Bartolomeo Bulgarini.
- [14] The following *biccherna* panels can be attributed to Bulgarini: that in the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin (K. 9222), dated 1329–1330; those in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (nos. 1669–1670), dated respectively 1339–1340 and 1345–1346; that in a private collection in Geneva, dated 1349–1350; and that in the Archivio di Stato in Siena (no. Bicch. 28), dated 1352–

1353. See, respectively, Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 180–181; *L'Art gothique siennois: Enluminure, peinture, orfèvrerie, sculpture* (Florence, 1983), 198–200; *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture,oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 251–252.

- [15] On the altarpiece, apart from the publication cited in note 12 above, cf. also Rudolf Hiller von Gaertringen, *Italienische Gemälde im Städel 1300–1550: Toskana und Umbrien, Kataloge der Gemälde im Städelischen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main* (Mainz, 2004), 82–96. Since in May 1351 a carpenter received payments for “fattura civori e cercini e colonine di legname per la tavola di Santo Vittorio” (making awnings, curtains, and wooden columns for the altarpiece of San Vittorio), that is, for the embellishments to the polyptych’s wooden frame, it may be assumed that the work had already been completed by this date.
- [16] Ever since his earliest works, such as the Madonna of Montichiello and the great Marian polyptych in the Pieve di Santa Maria at Arezzo (1320), Pietro Lorenzetti (Sienese, active 1306 - 1345) had proposed a more intimate and self-absorbed version of the group of the Madonna and Child, caught in affectionate rapport, turned towards each other and largely ignoring the spectator. Subsequently, Pietro took this tendency one step further in such works as the Madonna formerly in the Serristori collection in Florence or that in the Museo d’arte sacra in Buonconvento where the child, in embracing his mother, even turns his back on the spectator. See Anna Maria Guiducci, *Museo d’arte sacra della Val d’Arbia, Buonconvento* (Siena, 1998), 28–29. Neither these paintings nor comparable examples by Ambrogio Lorenzetti (e.g., the Madonna no. 39.546 in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston or that in San Pietro di Castelvecchio in Siena), are securely datable, but their execution would seem to fall within the period c. 1335–1345; cf. Luciano Cateni, “Un polittico ‘too remote from Ambrogio’ firmato da Ambrogio Lorenzetti,” *Prospettiva* 40 (1985): 62–67. Although no exact Lorenzettian prototype is known for the composition proposed by Bulgarini in his altarpiece now in Lucca, the circumstance that Lippo Vanni (Sienese, active 1344 - 1376) adopted a very similar version of it in one of his youthful works (no. 1470, Städelisches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt) probably implies the dependence of both paintings on a lost model of Pietro; cf. Rudolf Hiller von Gaertringen, *Italienische Gemälde im Städel 1300–1550: Toskana und Umbrien, Kataloge der Gemälde im Städelischen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main* (Mainz, 2004), 98–106.
- [17] Cf. Laura Martini, ed., *Museo diocesano di Pienza, Musei senesi* (Siena, 1998), 23–31.
- [18] Andrea Péter, “Ugolino Lorenzetti e il Maestro di Ovile,” *Rivista d’arte* 13 (1931): 32; and Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti*

*dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 136–137 had already noted these similarities in pose and physiognomic types.

- [19] Cf. note 6 above. The greater linearity and expansive volume of the figure in the panel now in the Pinacoteca Capitolina suggest an earlier date for the Berenson Magdalene.
- [20] Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 134–135 (without inventory number).
- [21] Millard Meiss, “Ugolino Lorenzetti,” *The Art Bulletin* 13 (1931): figs. 18, 19; Andrea Péter, “Ugolino Lorenzetti e il Maestro di Ovile,” *Rivista d’arte* 13 (1931): fig. 1.
- [22] Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal xii al xv secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 134–135. This is the painting that is likely closest stylistically to the San Cerbone polyptych. However, the daring invention in the latter, of presenting Saint John immersed in reading and with his face slightly foreshortened, though anticipated in the polyptych by Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) at Casciana Alta near Pisa, should probably be considered an indication of a slightly later date for the Lucca panel. See Antonino Caleca, “Tre politici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1,” *Critica d’arte* 41 (1976): 49–50.
- [23] Brigitte Klesse, *Katalog der italienischen, französischen und spanischen Gemälde bis 1800 im Wallraf-Richartz-Museum* (Cologne, 1973), 65–66 (nos. 610–611).
- [24] I refer to panels with trapezoidal termination and inner pointed arch with trefoil moldings, such as the Madonna by Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) at the center of the Orvieto polyptych (Museo Civico) or the panels of the dispersed polyptych by Lippo Memmi (on which cf. *Saint John the Baptist*). The panel by Niccolò di Segna dated 1336 formerly in the Pieve of Montesiepi must have been of similar type. See James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: fig. 477.
- [25] In his first attempt to reconstruct the chronology of the artist’s catalog, Millard Meiss (1931) placed the San Cerbone polyptych among the master’s earliest works, close to 1330. Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979) proposed a slightly later date of c. 1335, a dating that Antonio Caleca accepted (1981, 1986). Judith De Botton (1983) proposed 1340–1350, Miklós Boskovits (1990) c. 1340, Judith Steinhoff-Morrison (1990, 1993, 1996) the mid-1340s, Erling Skaug (1994) c. 1339–1348, and Angelo Tartuferi (1998) c. 1340. See Millard Meiss, “Ugolino Lorenzetti,” *The Art Bulletin* 13 (1931): 376–397; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 54; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:270–271; Antonio Caleca, in *Il secolo di Castruccio: Fonti e documenti di storia lucchese*, ed. Clara

Baracchini (Lucca, 1983), 199; Antonio Caleca, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento a Pisa e a Lucca,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:254; Judith De Botton, in *L’Art gothique siennois: Enluminure, peinture, orfèvrerie, sculpture* (Florence, 1983), 242; Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 36, 37 n.13; Judith Steinhoff-Morrison, *Bartolomeo Bulgarini and Sienese Painting of the Mid-Fourteenth Century*, 2 vols. (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1990), 1:192; Judith Steinhoff, “A Trecento Altarpiece Rediscovered: Bartolommeo Bulgarini’s Polyptych for San Gimignano,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56 (1993): 107; Judith Steinhoff-Morrison, “Bulgarini, Bartolomeo,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 5:164; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994) 1:250; and Angelo Tartuferi, in *Sumptuosa tabula picta: Pittori a Lucca tra gotico e rinascimento*, ed. Maria Teresa Filieri (Livorno, 1998), 45. The most elaborate motivation for the dating is undoubtedly the one Steinhoff-Morrison (1990) proposed, though her reasoning was based (in my view) on partially mistaken premises. We may agree with her when she declared that the San Cerbone polyptych was later than that formerly in the Museo di Santa Croce in Florence and the triptych from Fogliano now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena. But her proposal to link this latter altarpiece with a payment made in 1339 for a painting of similar subject executed for the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena was mere conjecture, nor does it seem to me that there are sufficient grounds to affirm, as did Steinhoff-Morrison, that the *biccherna* panel of 1339 now in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris is earlier in date than the Fogliano triptych. Moreover, her observation, however subtle, that Bulgarini in the San Cerbone polyptych (and more precisely in the figures of Saint John and Saint Catherine) adopted “attributes [of the saints] as podia for their books” (Steinhoff-Morrison, “Bulgarini, Bartolomeo,” 192) cannot lead to the conclusion that the motif derived from Pietro Lorenzetti. In particular, her claim that “the earliest known instance of this device is in the altarpiece of the Beata Umiltà in the Uffizi,” which was executed “by a pupil of Pietro Lorenzetti...probably.. .ca. 1340” (both, 192), is open to question. Apart from the fact that various reputable scholars recognize this important though unfortunately dismembered altarpiece (nos. 6120–6126, 6129–6131, and 8437 of the Uffizi in Florence, and nos. 1077 and 1077A of the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin) as a fully autograph work by Pietro Lorenzetti, Boskovits’s argument (1988) placing its date c. 1330–1335 has not so far been repudiated. See Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 87–89. It also should not be forgotten that Simone Martini, in his figure of Saint Mark in the Pisa

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polyptych (1319), had already used the motif in question by letting the lion support the Evangelist's book. For a reproduction, see Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), fig. on 176. So there is no terminus post quem of 1340 for the saints of the San Cerbone polyptych.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting is on a single-plank wooden support with the grain running vertically. In 1940–1941, Stephen Pichetto cradled and probably thinned it (the present thickness is 1.2 cm). In addition, the top corners of the panel were cut during this treatment to form the arched shape the panel bears today. However, the top edge of the panel had already been cut down prior to Pichetto's treatment, truncating the arch of the design.[1] A vertical split runs through the entire painting, passing through the saint's left eye. The panel was prepared with a layer of gesso, in which the larger outlines of the figure were incised; the gilding, as usual, has a red bole layer underneath. The green underpainting is visible in the shadows of the flesh tones. The paint was thinly applied, with long strokes that follow the contours of the form.

There are a number of paint losses, especially along the abovementioned split. Apparently, the hooked spikes embedded in the rim of the wheel also were damaged: they were probably covered by silver leaf originally;[2] this was later lost or removed, making inpainting necessary in this area. The painting was cropped along its upper edge and taken out of its original frame probably in the seventeenth century.[3] Photographs made before 1905 [fig. 1] show it with the vertical split clearly visible and some small paint losses along the edges.[4] Another photo, made around 1930 [fig. 2], illustrates the painting already cleaned and restored and in a state apparently not very dissimilar to the one following Pichetto's treatment, during which the painting was cleaned again and varnished.[5]

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1905, before restoration, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, c. 1335/1340, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906), 35



**fig. 2** Archival photograph, c. 1930, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, *Saint Catherine of Alexandria*, c. 1335/1340, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

- [1] Photographs made during Pichetto's treatment (in NGA conservation files) show the painting still in its rectangular shape, but with the top edge cut down.
- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the spokes using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Traces of silver were found in all but one spectra (analysis completed March 3, 2014, report forthcoming).
- [3] Antonio di Brandeglio, *Vita di S. Cerbone vescovo di Popolonia e confessore* (Lucca, 1706), 221–222, 300, reported a renovation of the chapel of the Virgin in the church of San Cerbone in 1669, during which the Washington panel and its companions (see below) were given a “more decent framing.” Evidently the reframing entailed the truncation of the upper part of the arched termination in all panels.
- [4] Venturi published a photograph by the Danesi studio (Rome) in 1905 and 1906; here the panel is shown virtually in the same state as in photo no. E–3562 of the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione in Rome. This latter was probably made in the same year. See Adolfo Venturi, “La quadreria Sterbini in Roma,” *L'Arte* 8 (1905): 427, 428 fig. 5; Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906) 33–34, 35 repro.
- [5] The photograph in question, of which a copy is preserved in the photographic archive of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, was taken (according to a handwritten annotation) when the painting was with the dealer Julius Böhler in Munich.

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## PROVENANCE

Monastery of San Cerbone, near Lucca, by 1706 until no later than 1845;<sup>[1]</sup> possibly Carlo Lasinio [1759–1838] or his son, Giovanni Paolo Lasinio [c. 1796–1855], Pisa; probably Monsignor Gabriele Laureani [d. 1849], Rome;<sup>[2]</sup> Giulio Sterbini [d. 1911], Rome, by 1905; (Pasini, Rome).<sup>[3]</sup> (Godfroy [sometimes spelled Godefroy] Brauer, Paris and Nice), by 1921;<sup>[4]</sup> his estate; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 5 July 1929, no. 29); half shares purchased by (Kunsthandel A.G., Lucerne) and (antique dealer, Amsterdam); sold 18 October 1932 to (Julius Böhler, Munich);<sup>[5]</sup> sold 4 September 1937 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[6]</sup> sold 1940 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; gift 1943 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> The church of San Cerbone near Lucca is mentioned for the first time in a document of 1059. Another document, of 1140, also records the Benedictine monastery annexed to the church. In 1234 the community of nuns assumed the Cistercian rule. They

abandoned the monastery in 1442, when a community of Franciscan Observants was established in its place. See Enrico Lombardi, *San Cerbone nella leggenda, nel culto e nell'arte*, Massa Marittima, n.d. [c. 1970-1975]: 34-35. Antonio da Brandeglio (*Vita di S. Cerbone Vescovo di Populonia e confessore*, Lucca, 1706: 214-218) described the painting as extant in the chapel of the Madonna. Michele Ridolfi ("Sopra i tre più antichi dipintori lucchesi dei quali si conoscono le opere: cenni storici e critici," *Atti dell'Accademia lucchese di scienze, lettere ed arti* 13 [1845]: 349-393) does not find the NGA painting; it was probably dispersed after the 1806 Napoleonic suppression of religious orders. [2] David Farabulini (*La pittura antica e moderna e la Galleria del cav. Giulio Sterbini*, Rome, 1874), who does not cite the painting now in Washington, states that the central nucleus of the Sterbini collection was formed of paintings collected by Monsignor Gabriele Laureani, custodian of the Biblioteca Vaticana from 1838 to 1849. Laureani is known for having acquired a large number of "primitives" for what is now the Pinacoteca Vaticana. Probably this prelate also collected paintings for himself and, following his death, his collection passed into that of Sterbini. It is also known that Laureani purchased Tuscan paintings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries from Carlo Lasinio, keeper/curator of the Camposanto in Pisa from 1807, whose collection was swollen in large part by paintings amassed at the time of the suppression of the convents in the early nineteenth century. It seems plausible to assume, therefore, that the panel now in the National Gallery of Art reached Rome through the intermediary of Carlo Lasinio (who in addition to being an engraver, is known to have been an art dealer as well as a collector) or his son Giovanni Paolo Lasinio (see Christopher Lloyd, "A note on Carlo Lasinio and Giovanni Paolo Lasinio," *The Bodleian Library Record* 10 [1978-1982]: 51-57; Donata Levi, "Carlo Lasinio, curator, collector and dealer," *The Burlington Magazine* 135 [1993]: 133-148). For the paintings in the Biblioteca Vaticana with a provenance from the collection of Lasinio or his son through that of Laureani, see Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana. Vol. 2. Il Trecento. Firenze e Siena*, Vatican City, 1987: 23, 24, 40; Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana. Vol. 3. Il Trecento. Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord*, Vatican City, 1994: 139, 142. [3] Adolfo Venturi ("La quadreria Sterbini," *L'Arte* 8 (1905): 422-440; *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma*, Rome, 1906: no. 6) first mentions the panel, together with two companion pieces now in the collection of the Pinacoteca Capitolina in Rome, as belonging to the Sterbini collection, but it had probably been there for several decades by then. After the collector's death, at least part of the works formerly belonging to him passed to the Pasini collection in Rome (Raimond van Marle, *The Development of*

*the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols., The Hague, 1923-1938: 4[1924]:288, 378; 13[1931]:454 n. 1) and, possibly, to other collectors as well. Federico Zeri wrote to Robert O. Parks that Pasini was the dealer who sold the entire Sterbini collection; Parks in turn passed this information on to John Walker (letter, Parks to Walker, 27 December 1949, in NGA curatorial files). [4] The painting was in Brauer's collection at least by 20 May 1921, when the Paris office of Duveen Brothers describes it in a letter to their New York office: "A picture of 'Saint Catherine,' about 18 inches by 14, which he attributes to Ambrogio Lorenzetti." The dimensions are more accurate in their description two years later (31 March 1923): "1 picture 'St-Catherine of Alexandria.' Pointed top. Gold background. Red cloak. Large gold plaque on breast. School of LORENZETTI. About 28 inches high." Brauer died in December 1923, and Duveen Brothers remained in contact with his widow, Lina Haas Brauer (1868-1936), although they made no purchases from her. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 82, box 227, folders 26–28, and reel 115, box 260, folder 24 (copies in NGA curatorial files). [5] Newspaper coverage of the 1929 sale, as well as an annotated copy of the sale catalogue (copies in NGA curatorial files), record Böhler as purchaser of the painting. Inventory card no. 164-32, in the Records of Julius Böhler Munich, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (copy in NGA curatorial files), documents instead the 1932 purchase by Böhler and the half shares owned by the other dealers. The Lucerne and Munich firms, however, were intimately connected, as the Lucerne firm had been founded in 1920 by a son of the founder of the Munich firm. In 1930, Emilio Cecchi (*Pietro Lorenzetti*, Milan, 1930: 7) stated that the panel of Saint Catherine "è ora passata alla raccolta Ringling in Monaco." Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:271), as well as the prospectus assembled by Duveen Brothers (in NGA curatorial files), also speak of an otherwise unspecified Ringling collection in Munich. However, in view of the fact that the painting had been publicized as having been purchased by Böhler's in Munich, the possible new owner was presumably the circus tycoon John Ringling (1866-1936), who is known to have used Böhler's services in building up his art collection (now the Ringling Museum) in Sarasota, Florida, since the late 1920s. By 1930-1931, however, Ringling's collecting had come to a rather abrupt halt as a consequence of the economic crisis (Peter Tomory, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings before 1800. The John Ringling Museum of Art*, Sarasota, 1976: ix–xiii). Possibly for this reason the painting never in fact joined the rest of the Ringling collection. Instead, it must have remained in Europe, and Andrea Péter ("Ugolino Lorenzetti e il Maestro d'Ovile,"

*Rivista d'Arte* 13 (1931): 2-44) also cites it as being with Böhler's, whereas its two companion pieces were still in a private collection, presumably one of Sterbini's heirs. It is noted in the 1929 newspaper coverage that Ringling was a purchaser at the sale, and perhaps because of this his name was linked with the painting by mistake. [6] See the Böhler inventory card cited in note 5. The card also notes that the painting was first sold to Carl Hamilton in May 1937, but was then returned. Hamilton (1886-1967) was a client of Duveen Brothers; the dealer had offered him a large collection of Italian paintings on approval by 1920, but Hamilton did not purchase them and returned the paintings to Duveen the following year. .

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# *Byzantine 13th Century*

Also known as

Anonymous Byzantine 13th Century

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Unsigned works of art, especially those which are hundreds of years old, are difficult to assign to a particular artist. Works attributed to “Byzantine 13th Century” are characterized by Byzantine stylistic elements, such as an emphasis on mysticism and decoration rather than on naturalistic representation. The Byzantine Empire dates from the founding of Constantinople in AD 330 to its conquest by the Turks in AD 1453.

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Byzantine 13th Century

## *Enthroned Madonna and Child*

c. 1250/1275

tempera on poplar panel

painting surface: 124.8 x 70.8 cm (49 1/8 x 27 7/8 in.)

overall: 130.7 x 77.1 cm (51 7/16 x 30 3/8 in.)

framed: 130.5 x 77 x 6 cm (51 3/8 x 30 5/16 x 2 3/8 in.)

Gift of Mrs. Otto H. Kahn 1949.7.1

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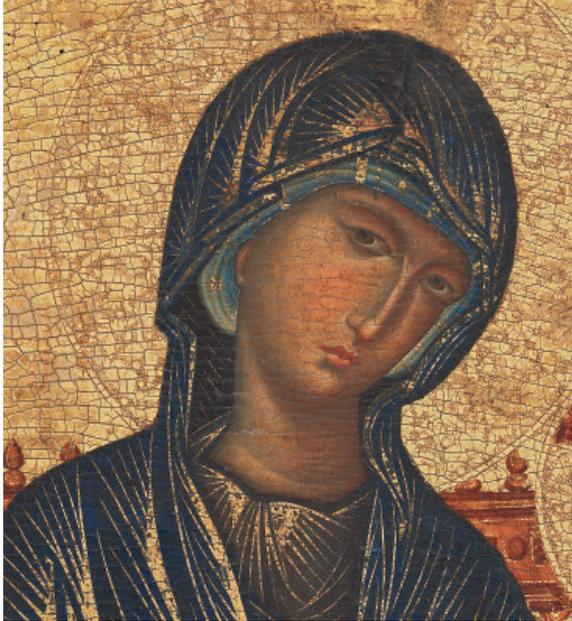
### ENTRY

The painting shows the Virgin seated on an elaborate wooden throne with openwork decoration. She supports the blessing Christ child on her left arm, according to the iconographic tradition of the *Hodegetria*.<sup>[1]</sup> Mary [fig. 1] is wearing a purple dress and a deep blue mantle highlighted with brilliant chrysography. Bearing a scroll in his left hand, the child [fig. 2] is wearing a red tunic fastened around his waist with a blue fabric belt supported by straps that encircle his shoulders. This motif perhaps alludes to his sacerdotal dignity.<sup>[2]</sup> In the upper corners of the panel, at the level of the Virgin's head, are two circular medallions containing busts of archangels [fig. 3], each wearing a garment decorated with a *loros* and with scepter and sphere in hand.<sup>[3]</sup>

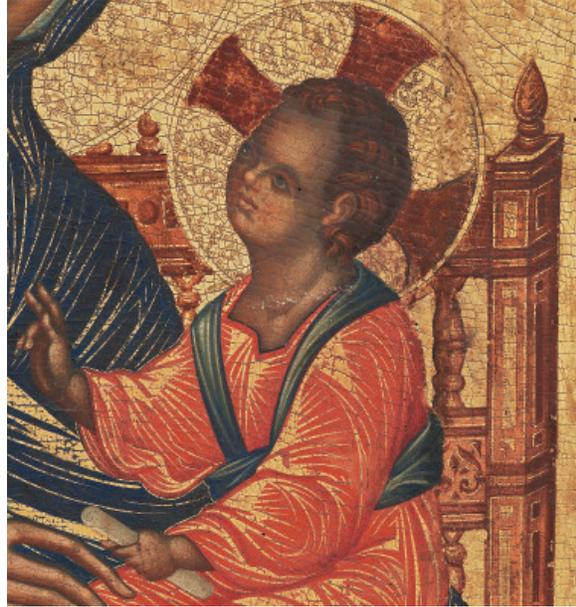
Art historians have held sharply different views on not only the attribution of the painting but also its origin and even its function. Apart from Osvald Sirén's attribution to Pietro Cavallini (1918),<sup>[4]</sup> the critical debate that developed after its first appearance at a sale in New York in 1915 (where it was cataloged under the name of Cimabue) almost always considered the painting together with *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*. For a discussion of the problems surrounding both panels and some further proposals, see the catalog entry for the latter painting.

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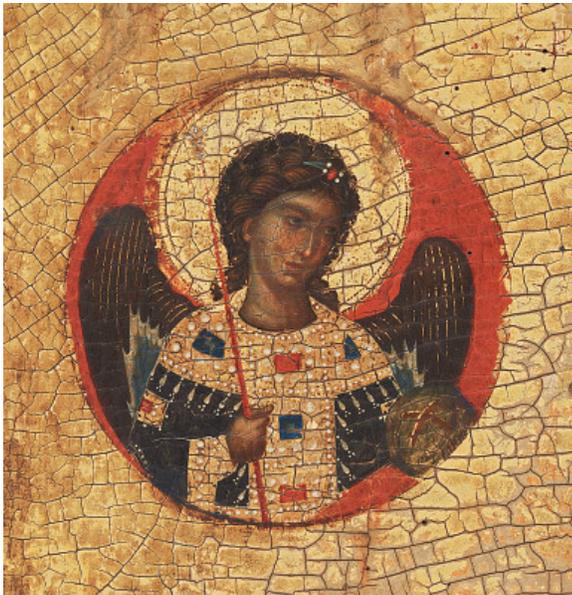
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Enthroned Madonna and Child*, c. 1250/1275, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Otto H. Kahn



**fig. 2** Detail of Christ, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Enthroned Madonna and Child*, c. 1250/1275, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Otto H. Kahn



**fig. 3** Detail of archangel, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Enthroned Madonna and Child*, c. 1250/1275, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Otto H. Kahn

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## NOTES

- [1] On the iconography of the Hodegetria, cf. Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wesse, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:59–71. On the cult of the image, see also Christine Angelidi and Titos Papamastorakis, “The Veneration of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Hodegon Monastery,” in *The Mother of God: The Representation of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 373–387.
- [2] While the motif of the scroll alluding to Christ as the Word of God (Jn 1:1) appears frequently, that of the Christ child with a belted waist is less common; cf. Klaus Wessel, “Buchrolle,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1966), 1:784–795. The belt could possibly allude to the liturgical dress of the oriental church; cf. Athanasios Papas, “Liturgische Gewänder,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1995), 5:750–752. Hans Belting, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some

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Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 10, interpreted the motif more functionally as the “belt for carrying the Child.”

[3] These are among the symbols of the power of the Byzantine emperor, which subsequently became attributes in the representation of angels; cf. D. I. Pallas, “Himmelsmächte, Erzengel und Engel,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1978), 3:26–32, 35–40.

[4] Osvald Sirén, “A Picture by Pietro Cavallini,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 32 (1918): 44–47.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a three-member poplar panel [1] with the grain running vertically. Thinned and cradled during an undocumented treatment,[2] the panel is still set in part of its original engaged frame, which has probably been reduced from its original width. The studs decorating the frame molding are original, although they have been overpainted. The white gesso ground [3] is applied over a fabric that covers not only the painted surface but also the engaged frame.[4] The gold leaf was laid over an orange bole. Incised lines were used to outline the figures, and a green underpainting is visible in the flesh tones. The incised decoration of the halos apparently was executed freehand, and the additional decoration of the halos was created by dripping a resinous material onto the gold, as opposed to punchwork. The panel has a convex warp. A vertical crack runs from the top of the painting to the Virgin’s nose. Two additional cracks appear on the left side of the panel, running through the bust of the angel on the left. The join of the two boards on the right side, passing through the face of the angel, has opened from the top to the bottom. Worm tunneling is evident both on the surface of the panel and in the x-radiographs. The painting is in a generally fair state, although there is inpainting in the various small losses in the gilding overlaying the damages of the wooden support, as well as some lacunae in the Virgin’s cloak. The head and dress of the angel to the right and the area of gold ground above the Virgin’s head are also inpainted. In addition, the inpainting extends to the cloak covering the Madonna’s head.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed a cross-section of the wood from the panel and found it to be poplar (report in NGA conservation files dated December 24, 1985).
- [2] The state of the painting in 1915 is illustrated in the sale catalog published in that year, which shows it unrestored, except for the loss in the gold ground above the Virgin's head. Sometime between 1915 and 1917, before it was sold to Otto Kahn, New York, the work evidently was restored. The various reproductions published from 1917 on show it much darkened by dust and opacified varnishes but without paint color losses and presumably already cradled. Judging from the reproduction given by Walter Felicetti-Liebenfels in 1956, the picture may have been cleaned again sometime later; Walter Felicetti-Liebenfels, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Ikonenmalerei* (Olten, Lausanne, 1956), 61, pl. 64. Unfortunately, no documentation of these operations is available.
- [3] The NGA painting and scientific research departments analyzed the ground using polarized light microscopy (PLM) and found it to be calcium sulfate. At the same time, the pigments were also analyzed using PLM, x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and microchemical tests. The results of this analysis were published in Ann Hoenigswald, "The 'Byzantine' Madonnas: Technical Investigation," *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 25–31.
- [4] The NGA scientific research department analyzed a cross-section of the wood from the frame and found it to be fir (report in NGA conservation files dated December 24, 1985).

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## PROVENANCE

Said to have come from a church, or convent, in Calahorra (province of La Rioja, Spain);<sup>[1]</sup> (art market, Madrid), in 1912. (Herbert P. Weissberger, Madrid).<sup>[2]</sup> (Emile Pares, Madrid, Paris, and New York); (his sale, Anderson Galleries, New York, 18-19 February 1915, 2nd day, no. 306, as by Giovanni Cimabue); (Emile Pares, Madrid, Paris, and New York);<sup>[3]</sup> sold 26 November 1915 to (F. Kleinberger & Co., New York).<sup>[4]</sup> Otto Kahn [1867-1934], New York, by 1917;<sup>[5]</sup> by inheritance to his widow, Addie Wolff Kahn [d. 1949], New York;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1949 to NGA. [1] The provenance was first published as "from the Cathedral of Calahara, Spain" in the 1915 sale catalog of the Emile Pares collection, and it is repeated with various modifications in the subsequent literature. Although the Spanish provenance has sometimes been

doubted, NGA Systematic Catalogue author, the late Miklòs Boskovits, did not see any firm basis for such an allegation. He asked why should such an apparently unlikely provenance be fabricated for a painting considered to be, as was the Kahn *Madonna*, the work of an Italian artist, Cimabue or Cavallini. Boskovits considered speculations like those put forward by August Mayer (“Correspondence,” *Art in America* 12 [1924]: 234-235) and James Stubblebine (“Two Byzantine Madonnas from Calahorra Spain,” *The Art Bulletin* 48 [1966]: 379-381), linking the arrival of NGA 1949.7.1 and its companion-piece (NGA 1937.1.1) to Spain with the story of Anna Constance, widow of the emperor John III Ducas Vatatzes (who lived in Valencia since 1269 and died there in 1313), to be, for the time being, idle. There could be various other ways to explain the presence of the two paintings at Calahorra (see Otto Demus, “Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 [1958]: 93-94); the provenance should, according to Boskovits, be considered valid until demonstrated otherwise. As Rolf Bagemihl wrote to David Alan Brown (letter of July 1992, in NGA curatorial files): “There has been a confusion and deprecation of the Calahorra provenance, but Parès[sic] was a serious collector and it might be profitable to have some research done on his collection, and right in Calahorra.” [2] In 1949 Edward B. Garrison (*Italian Romanesque Panel Painting*, Florence, 1949: 44, no. 23) included Madrid and Weissberger (Garrison spelled the name Weissburger) in his provenance of the painting, without including any dates. In 1982 Hans Belting (“The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about their Italian Origins and Some Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 7, 21 n. 2) wrote that the painting had come on the art market in Madrid in 1912, and that it was Weissberger who claimed the painting had come from Calahorra. However, according to Belting, Robin Cormack found in Edward B. Garrison’s papers (at the Courtauld Institute, London) the information that Weissberger had fabricated the Calahorra provenance, information that Cormack referred to in a lecture given at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington in 1979. [3] The purchaser at the Pares sale is recorded as G.W. Arnold in an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA Library, as well as in a report on the sale in *American Art News* (27 February 1915): 7. Arnold is also given as the purchaser of other lots. However, there is a Pares invoice for the sale of the painting to Kleinberger later in the year (see note 4), so perhaps Arnold was buying for Pares, and the painting was actually bought in. Indeed, Osvald Sirén writes about the sale: “Somehow none of the New York collectors or dealers at that time seems to have grasped the artistic and historical importance of the work; the bidding was very slow, and the original

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purchaser retained his treasure. When I came to New York about a year later [early 1916] the picture was in the hands of a well known dealer..." ("A Picture by Pietro Cavallini," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 32, no. 179 [February 1918]: 45). [4] The Pares invoice for the sale to Kleinberger describes the painting as "Vierge[sic] sur paureau garanti du 13th siecle. provenant de la Cathédrale de Calahorra" (Kleinberger files in the Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 251, box 396, folder 5; copy in NGA curatorial files). [5] Kahn owned the painting by the time he lent it to an exhibition at Kleinberger Galleries that was on view in November 1917. It has not yet been determined when and from whom Kahn purchased the painting, although it was possibly from Kleinberger. [6] Although Duveen Brothers asked at least in 1941 what price Mrs. Kahn would accept for the painting, she specifically told them it was not for sale and that it was not to be shown to anyone (the dealer was storing the painting for her); Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 328, box 473, folder 2; copies in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1917 Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives, F. Kleinberger Galleries, New York, 1917, no. 69, repro., as The Madonna and Child by Pietro Cavallini.

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Byzantine 13th Century

## *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*

c. 1260/1280

tempera on linden panel

painted surface: 82.4 x 50.1 cm (32 7/16 x 19 3/4 in.)

overall: 84 x 53.5 cm (33 1/16 x 21 1/16 in.)

framed: 90.8 x 58.3 x 7.6 cm (35 3/4 x 22 15/16 x 3 in.)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.1

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### ENTRY

The painting shows the Madonna seated frontally on an elaborate, curved, two-tier, wooden throne of circular plan.[1] She is supporting the blessing Christ child on her left arm according to the iconographic tradition of the *Hodegetria*.<sup>[2]</sup> Mary is wearing a red mantle over an azure dress. The child is dressed in a salmon-colored tunic and blue mantle; he holds a red scroll in his left hand, supporting it on his lap.<sup>[3]</sup> In the upper corners of the panel, at the height of the Virgin's head, two medallions contain busts of two archangels [fig. 1] [fig. 2], with their garments surmounted by *loroi* and with scepters and spheres in their hands.<sup>[4]</sup>

It was Bernard Berenson (1921) who recognized the common authorship of this work and *Enthroned Madonna and Child* and who concluded—though admitting he had no specialized knowledge of art of this cultural area—that they were probably works executed in Constantinople around 1200.<sup>[5]</sup> These conclusions retain their authority and continue to stir debate. Of the various alternative proposals expressed thus far, only those that have considered them the products of a thirteenth-century Roman or Venetian painter have been definitively abandoned.<sup>[6]</sup> Berenson's opinion of the purely Byzantine figurative culture of the two panels still commands wide support,<sup>[7]</sup> even though the dating of the paintings is in general placed slightly later, c. 1250 or within the second half of the thirteenth century.<sup>[8]</sup> George Martin Richter's view that the master who painted them was a Greek active at the time of the Norman kings in Sicily remains isolated.<sup>[9]</sup> But a Sicilian origin is

still supported by those scholars who follow the opinion of Viktor Lazarev that the Kahn and Mellon Madonnas were painted in Sicily during the last quarter of the thirteenth century, by artists who had come from Byzantium or by their local disciples.[10] Some authorities on Byzantine art doubt, however, that the two Madonnas in the National Gallery of Art could have been executed by masters of Byzantine origin.[11] In their view, also endorsed by some experts of Italian medieval painting, the characteristics of the two panels presuppose patrons with liturgical needs, iconographic precedents, and cultural traditions consistent with those of the Latin West. Further, they have asserted that the two paintings probably were executed in Tuscany.[12] Other scholars have supported the thesis that the two panels were painted in Cyprus or in Thessaloniki.[13]

Opinions thus vary widely regarding the cultural origin of this painting and the *Enthroned Madonna and Child*, but significant convergences can be ascertained on some points. It seems generally recognized, for example, that the Kahn Madonna is the earlier of the two images and that it was painted by an artist trained in Byzantium, although possibly at work far from his homeland, and for patrons of Western culture. The close stylistic affinities between the two panels are also commonly recognized, even if the Mellon Madonna is often indicated as the work of a different hand. In more recent years, however, various scholars have again proposed their common authorship.[14]

The sudden appearance of the two panels in tandem and their common provenance from a small Spanish town have been considered strange;[15] indeed, their alleged provenance from a church in Calahorra is authenticated, as far as I know, by no document. On the other hand, the fact that at least in 1912 the two paintings were reported together on the Madrid art market supports a Spanish provenance or at least makes it probable that they were purchased in Spain, perhaps even from the same owner. It would seem strange, in any case, to invent a provenance from Calahorra for paintings allegedly executed by Cimabue or by Cavallini. Various reasons have been adduced to cast doubt on whether both panels could have been executed by the same artist. Roger Fry was the first to emphasize the different structure and pictorial treatment of the two thrones.[16] Many years later, Hans Belting cited the results of technical examinations by Ann Hoeningwald in support of his thesis that “most of the analogies which link the Mellon Madonna to the Kahn Madonna must...be interpreted as a deliberate attempt by the artist of the former to imitate the latter or a similar work.”[17] Several scholars have accepted Belting’s conclusions, although it is fair to say that, in order

to exclude the use of different technical procedures by the same painter, one would first need the evidence of systematic analyses—hitherto unavailable—of the pictorial technique of a particular painter in various phases of his career. How can we exclude a priori the possibility of an artist having developed, or having experimented with, new solutions, or different technical procedures, in the course of his career?[18] While we may freely admit that there are some technical differences in the execution of the two Madonnas in the Gallery, we cannot infer from this that they are the work of different hands. Still less can any such conviction dispense us from a careful stylistic analysis of the two images.

The claim is made occasionally that modern restoration drastically altered the Mellon Madonna. A comparison of photographs taken c. 1920 with those taken in more recent times proves indeed that modern conservation measures have been extensive. Yet many parts of the painting that are still clearly legible disclose close resemblances with *Enthroned Madonna and Child*. The affinities concern not only the formal treatment of such details as the faces of the two images of Mary [fig. 3] [fig. 4] or the delicately poetic interpretation of the main personages, but also the high, sustained qualitative level of the execution of both panels, the skilful use of chrysography to articulate and give relief to the bodies,[19] and some peculiar incongruities in the perspective of the thrones. In the Kahn Madonna the artist proposes a rectangular wooden throne with a very elaborate structure and tries to make it illusionistically credible, not only by the three-dimensional modeling of the individual components but also by making the right rear leg visible through the perforations. But he fails to remove incongruities in perspective: while the throne itself is seen from the left, the four legs are represented as if seen from the other side. In the Mellon Madonna, apart from the painter's difficulty in convincingly rendering the foreshortening of the circular seat, it may be noted once again that the two front legs are seen from opposite directions: one from the left, the other from the right. It is difficult to think that all this is merely the consequence of the painter's effort to follow his model, not least because the Mellon Madonna is decidedly not a copy of the other. The two images are in fact different in type and perhaps also in function. Their common provenance seems to suggest that they were executed for the same patron but belong to two different phases of the artist's career and were intended to satisfy different needs.[20]

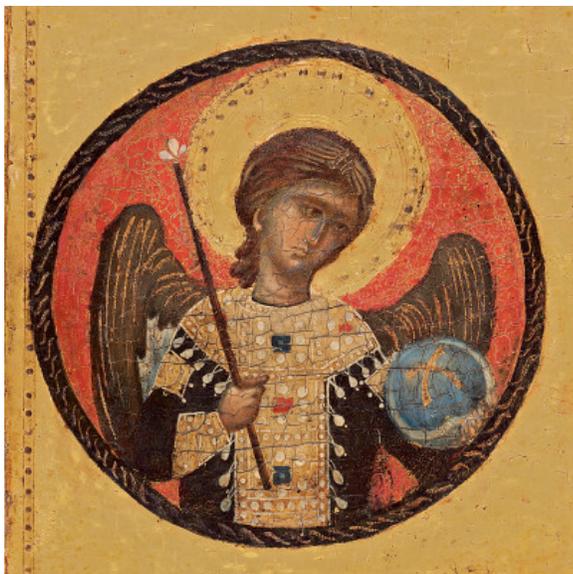
Of the comparisons hitherto proposed, the one indicated by Otto Demus, of the Madonna of the Deesis in the southern gallery of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul [fig. 5], a mosaic probably executed immediately after the Byzantine reconquest of

Constantinople in 1261,[21] seems particularly significant in support of the Constantinopolitan culture of the artist of the two paintings. However, other images too, whether in the form of frescoes, panels, or miniatures,[22] seem to suggest a similar origin of the two Madonnas, the execution of which is unlikely to have been much later than the Deesis in Hagia Sophia. None of the works hitherto compared with the Byzantine panels in the Gallery in fact seems so close to them as this mosaic in Hagia Sophia, both in facial type and in the extreme delicacy of the modeling; this close kinship represents, in my view, the confirmation—despite frequent denials—of the common authorship of the two paintings.[23]

It is understandable that some decorative forms used in the panels—for example, the elaborate incised decoration of the halos of the Kahn Madonna and the type of throne—should have suggested the artist's contact with Tuscan figurative culture. But closer analysis will show that the decorative motifs of the halos,[24] as well as the wooden thrones of the Washington paintings, are well known in Byzantine art. The genre of the Madonna and Child Enthroned on a monumental scale, particularly popular in thirteenth-century Tuscany, was also well known in contemporary central and southern Italian painting and in that of the Venetian and Adriatic area.[25] Influenced, in its realistic elements, by icons imported from the various centers of Byzantine art and by products of so-called Crusader art,[26] these large images were at times commissioned from artists of Byzantine origin and training: this seems to me the case of the Madonna in the Basilica of San Nicola at Bari.[27] It seems plausible to suggest a similar origin for the Kahn and Mellon Madonnas, though these are distinguished from the icon in Bari by the particular accomplishment of their execution and by their stylistic kinship with works having at least a probable Constantinopolitan origin. In conclusion, therefore, while admitting that the origin of these paintings will probably long remain a bone of contention, the present state of our knowledge suggests that they were produced in a workshop culturally bound to Constantinople in years not long before or not long after 1261, the presumed date of the image they most closely resemble, the mosaic in Hagia Sophia.

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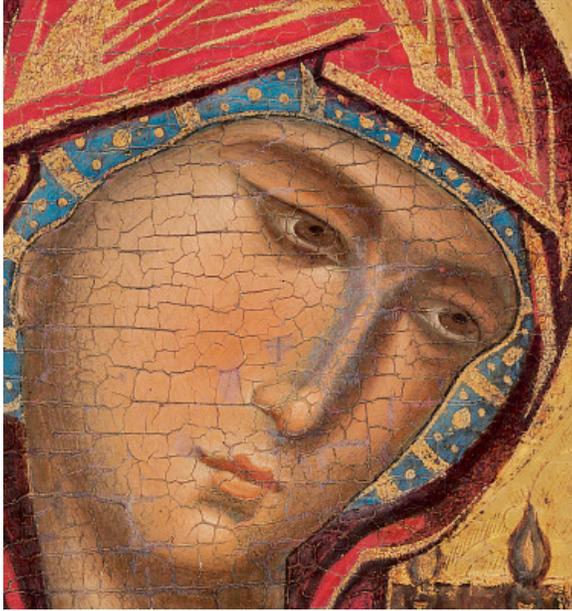
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of left medallion with archangel, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*, c. 1260/1280, tempera on linden, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of right medallion with archangel, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*, c. 1260/1280, tempera on linden, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Madonna's face, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*, c. 1260/1280, tempera on linden, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 4** Detail of Madonna's face, Byzantine thirteenth century (possibly from Constantinople), *Enthroned Madonna and Child*, c. 1250/1275, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mrs. Otto H. Kahn



**fig. 5** Detail of Madonna's face, Byzantine second half of the thirteenth century, *Deesis Mosaic of the South Gallery*, c. 1260/1280, gold and glass mosaic, Hagia Sophia Museum, Istanbul. © Vanni Archive/Art Resource, NY

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## NOTES

- [1] This type of throne, familiar since late antiquity, had a particular diffusion in Byzantine representations of the thirteenth century, and Rebecca Corrie (2000) conjectured that the motif might have had “imperial associations,” with reference to Solomon’s throne, whose top is described as “round behind” (1 Kings 10:19). Rebecca Corrie, in *The Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 438–439. The throne could also allude to the role of Mary herself as *sedes sapientiae*, seat of wisdom, since she supports the Son of God on her lap. See Jaroslav Folda, “Icon to Altarpiece in the Frankish East: Images of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 133–134. On the throne in general, see Ilene H. Forsyth, *The Throne of Wisdom: Wood Sculptures of the Madonna in Romanesque France* (Princeton, 1972), 134–203.

- [2] On the iconography of the *Hodegetria*, cf. Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:59–71. On the cult of the image, see also Christine Angelidi and Titos Papamastorakis, “The Veneration of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Hodegon Monastery,” in *The Mother of God: The Representation of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 373–387.
- [3] Rebecca Corrie, in *The Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 438, emphasized the rarity of the motif of the brilliant red mantle in Marian representations in Italian medieval art. For the motif of the Christ Child holding a scroll, see Klaus Wessel, “Buchrolle,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1966), 1:784–795.
- [4] Cf. D.I. Pallas, “Himmelsmächte, Erzengel und Engel,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1978), 3:26–32, 35–40.
- [5] Bernard Berenson, “Due dipinti del decimosecondo secolo venuti da Costantinopoli,” *Dedalo* 2 (1921): 284–304.
- [6] Osvald Sirén, “A Picture by Pietro Cavallini,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 32 (1918): 44–47, attributed the Kahn Madonna alone to Pietro Cavallini. But since then only Raimond van Marle (1921, 1923, 1932) continued to support the hypothesis that the artist of the two paintings was Roman and associated with a cosmatesque workshop, though Walter Felicetti-Liebenfels (1956) also admitted the possibility that the two panels might have been produced *auf römischen Boden*. Edward Garrison (1949), on the other hand, did not exclude the possibility that the paintings could have been Venetian in origin. See Raimond van Marle, *La peinture romaine au Moyen-Age* (Strasbourg, 1921), 227–228; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 1, *From the 6th until the End of the 13th Century* (The Hague, 1923), 503–505; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 1, *Dal vi alla fine del XIII secolo* (The Hague, 1932), 519–523; Walter Felicetti-Liebenfels, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Ikonmalerei* (Olten, Lausanne, 1956), 61; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 44, 48.
- [7] The Byzantine figurative culture of the two Madonnas is supported by Pietro Toesca, *Il medioevo*, 2 vols., *Storia dell'arte italiana* 1 (Turin, 1927), 2:1035 n. 39; Emilio Cecchi, *Trecentisti senesi* (Rome, 1928), 12, 125; Roger Fry, “Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *L'iconografia della Madonna col bambino nella pittura italiana del Duecento* (Siena, 1934), 43–

44; Helen Comstock, "A Dugento Panel at the Toledo Museum," *Connoisseur* 98 (1936): 231; Helen Comstock, "The Connoisseur in America," *Connoisseur* 126, no. 517 (1950): 52–53; Otto Demus, "Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 (1958): 87–104; Otto Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* (New York, 1970), 216–218, 251 n. 147; Karl Maria Swoboda, "In den Jahren 1950 bis 1961 erschienene Werke zur byzantinischen und weiteren ostchristlichen Kunst," *Kunstgeschichtliche Anzeigen* 5 (1961–1962): 148; Irmgard Hutter, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* (New York, 1971), 156; Horst Waldemar Janson, *History of Art*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1977), 214; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:96–99; Jaroslav Folda, "The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icons or Altarpieces?" *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 57–58; Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Byzantines and Italians on Cyprus: Images of Art," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995): 352 n. 71.

- [8] Subsequent to van Marle 1921, the great majority of art historians accepted this time span for the execution of the two paintings; only Duveen Pictures 1941 and NGA 1941 gave the date as early thirteenth century or, as in Demus 1958, as the first half of the century. John Walker (1963) reaffirmed the Berensonian date of c. 1200. See Raimond van Marle, *La peinture romaine au Moyen-Age* (Strasbourg, 1921), 227–228; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 1; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 31; Otto Demus, "Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 (1958): 87–104; John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC* (New York, 1963), 64, 65, 297.
- [9] George Martin Richter, "The New National Gallery in Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177, proposed the paternity of a "Byzantine master at the court of Norman Kings in Sicily in the twelfth century" for the Mellon Madonna.
- [10] Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, "Early Italo-Byzantine Painting in Sicily," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 63 (1933): 283–284; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Istorija vizantijskoj živopisi: V druch tomach* (Moscow, 1947–1948), 192, 351 n. 116; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, "Constantinopoli e le scuole nazionali alla luce di nuove scoperte," *Arte veneta* 13–14 (1959–1960): 11–13; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), 318–319, 347 n. 177. The scholar's proposal was accepted by Paolo D'Ancona, *Les primitifs italiens du XIe au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1935), 46–47; David Talbot Rice, "Italian and Byzantine Painting in the Thirteenth Century," *Apollo* 31 (1940): 89–90; David Talbot Rice, *Byzantine Painting: The Last Phase* (London, 1968), 55; Ferdinando Bologna, *La pittura italiana delle origini* (Rome, 1962), 80–81; Ferdinando

Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 22, 247, 354; Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 71–73; Maria Calì, “L'arte in Puglia,” *Arte antica e moderna* 15 (1965): 389; Pina D'Elia and Michele D'Elia, eds., *Icone di Puglia: Catalogo della Mostra* (Bari, 1969), no. 33; Victor Ieronim Stoichita, *Ucenicia lui Duccio di Buoninsegna* (Bucharest, 1976), 30–34, 149–150; Anna Tambini, *Pittura dall'Alto Medioevo al Tardogotico nel territorio di Faenza e Forlì* (Faenza, 1982), 32–33; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento a Napoli e nel Meridione,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:463; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Sicilia: Pittura e miniatura,” in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1999), 10:619–620; Maria Pia Di Dario Guida, *Icone di Calabria e altre icone meridionali*, 2nd ed. (Messina, 1993), 119, 121; Francesca Campagna Cicala, “Messina: Scultura, pittura, miniatura e arti suntuarie,” in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:353; Tania Velmans, Vojislav Kora, and Marica Šuput, *Bisanzio: Lo splendore dell'arte monumentale* (Milan, 1999), 202.

[11] Only for the Mellon Madonna did Robert Byron and David Talbot Rice (1930) exclude the possibility that it might have been the work of a Byzantine artist, while Philip Schweinfurth (1930) and Hans Belting (1982 and 1990) rejected the hypothesis of Byzantine authorship for both paintings. See Robert Byron and David Talbot Rice, *The Birth of Western Painting* (London, 1930), 101 n. 1; Philipp Schweinfurth, *Geschichte der russischen Malerei im Mittelalter* (The Hague, 1930), 377–379; Hans Belting, “Introduzione,” in *Il medio oriente e l'occidente nell'arte del XIII secolo, Atti del XXIV congresso internazionale di storia dell'arte, September 10–18, 1979*, ed. Hans Belting (Bologna, 1982), 4–5; Hans Belting, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 7–22; Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 33, 417, 420.

[12] Sergio Bettini (1954) proposed that the artist of both panels was a Florentine mosaicist who had been trained in a Byzantine milieu. Though he considered both panels to have been produced in Constantinople, James H. Stubblebine (1966) detected in them the influence of Duccio. Belting (“Introduzione,” 1982) first proposed that the two paintings were executed in Italy, under the influence of Cimabue and Duccio; later that year (“The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas”) he conjectured that the Kahn Madonna probably had been executed in the area of Pisa, whereas the Mellon Madonna was the work of a local imitator. Hendrik W. van Os, Dillian Gordon, and Hayden B.J. Maginnis accepted this opinion. Joseph Polzer (1999 and 2002), on the basis of the incised decoration of the halos of the Kahn Madonna, which he thought was derived from the halo ornament of Tuscan paintings of the final

decades of the thirteenth century, asserted that the two panels in the National Gallery of Art and some others stylistically akin to them were produced in Tuscany, probably in Siena, in the years 1280–1320. The decorative repertoire published by Pasut 2003 identified the presence of the ornamental motif that Polzer had studied in various paintings executed in Tuscany, and also in other regions of Italy, in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, while Rebecca Corrie (2005) went further and identified its diffusion from Russia to Bulgaria and from Cyprus to Sicily, from the early years of the thirteenth century onwards. Sergio Bettini, “I mosaici dell’atrio di San Marco e il loro seguito,” *Arte veneta* 8 (1954): 32, n. 6; James H. Stubblebine, “Two Byzantine Madonnas from Calahorra, Spain,” *The Art Bulletin* 48 (1966): 379–381; Hans Belting, “Introduzione,” in *Il medio oriente e l’occidente nell’arte del XIII secolo, Atti del XXIV congresso internazionale di storia dell’arte, September 10–18, 1979*, ed. Hans Belting (Bologna, 1982), 4–5; Hans Belting, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 7–22; Hendrik W. van Os, *Sieneese Altarpieces 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function*, vol. 1, 1215–1344 (Groningen, 1984), 23, 26; Dillian Gordon, “Duccio di Buoninsegna,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 9:341; Hayden B.J. Maginnis, *Painting in the Age of Giotto: A Historical Reevaluation* (University Park, PA, 1997), 77; Joseph Polzer, “Some Byzantine and Byzantinising Madonnas Painted during the Later Middle Ages, 1,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 85; Joseph Polzer, “Some Byzantine and Byzantinising Madonnas Painted during the Later Middle Ages, 2,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 167–182; Joseph Polzer, “The ‘Byzantine’ Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Concerning Their Chronology, Place of Origin, and Method of Analysis,” *Arte cristiana* 90 (2002): 401–410; Francesca Pasut, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: Supplementary Volume*, vol. 2, *Ornamental Painting in Italy (1250–1310): An Illustrated Index*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, new ed. (Florence, 2003), 125 n. 20; Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 296.

- [13] Aligning himself with those who considered the Mellon and Kahn Madonnas as the works of two different hands (see also notes 16, 17, and 24), Jaroslav Folda (1995) argued that the Kahn Madonna was painted by a Greek painter of Constantinople, whereas its companion panel dated, in his view, “somewhat later” and was executed in an “as yet undetermined Levantine location.” See Jaroslav Folda, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icon or Altarpiece?” in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Doula Mouriki (Princeton, 1995), 501–506. Returning to the question later (1997, 2001, 2002, 2005), Folda specified Cyprus as the most probable location for the execution of the Mellon Madonna, though

not excluding other possible candidates (Frankish Greece, Crusader states). For her part Rebecca Corrie, having pointed out the Byzantine origin of the types of throne present in the two versions of the Madonna in the National Gallery of Art (1985), later came to the conclusion (1996, 2000, 2005) that “the two Washington panels fit well into Byzantine paintings” and that they were probably the work of “artists trained at Constantinople or Thessaloniki.” Jaroslav Folda, in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, ed. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York, 1997), 391, 396–397; Jaroslav Folda, “Reflections on the Mellon Madonna as a Work of Crusader Art,” in *Dei gesta per Francos: Études sur les croisades dédiées à Jean Richard/Crusade Studies in Honour of Jean Richard*, ed. Michel Balad, Benjamin Kedar, and Jonathan Riley-Smith (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2001), 361–371; Jaroslav Folda, “Icon to Altarpiece in the Frankish East: Images of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 127–129, 131–135, 139; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land: From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187–1291* (Cambridge, 2005), 457–458, 557; Rebecca W. Corrie, “Tuscan Madonnas and Byzantine Masters,” in *Abstracts and Program Statements for Art History Sessions: Seventy-Third Annual Meeting, College Art Association of America, February 14–16, 1985, Los Angeles* (Los Angeles, 1985), 46; Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Perugia Triptych and the Transmission of Byzantine Maniera Greca,” in *Acts: XVIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, vol. 3, *Art History, Architecture, Music*, ed. Ihor Ševenko, Gennady G. Litavrin, and Walter K. Hanak (Moscow, 1996), 41; Rebecca Corrie, in *The Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 438–439; Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 293–300.

[14] Cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 58–59, and Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 299, who considered the two paintings as having come “from the same workshop” and “realized at about the same time,” but not by the same artist.

[15] Hans Belting, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 7, 21 n. 3, was the first to insinuate doubts about the provenance from Calahorra, indicating manuscript notes of E.B. Garrison, not otherwise

specified, as his source for these doubts. Robin Cormack mentioned these notes, presumably found in the Garrison archive, now in the Courtauld Institute in London, during an apparently unpublished lecture given at Dumbarton Oaks in 1979. In essence, Belting claimed, “the dealer Weissberger had fabricated this provenance,” i.e., from Calahorra. What Belting asserted as a certainty is, however, it seems to me, no more than a suspicion, although often accepted by other scholars, e.g., Jaroslav Folda, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icon or Altarpiece?” in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Doula Mouriki (Princeton, 1995), 503; Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 293.

- [16] Roger Fry, “Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245: “The Carl Hamilton picture [*Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*, in comparison with the Kahn Madonna] seems to be more Byzantine...particularly in the purely linear treatment of the throne.”
- [17] Belting’s later scholarship was published alongside a paper by Ann Hoenigswald (1982), who listed various disparities she observed in the respective techniques of the two paintings. In the Kahn Madonna, “the flesh tones seem to have been built upon an underlying green tone which provides the deepest shadows. This is not apparent...in the Mellon panel, where the shadow was mixed into the flesh tone.” Moreover, “the shadow formed by the folds of the blue robe on the Kahn Madonna is implied by the chrysography.... In the Mellon panel, however, there is a two-toned system of a lighter and darker blue juxtaposed with gold outline.” According to Hoenigswald, therefore, the “comparisons of technique...are strong indications that the panels were not the work of the same artist.” Hans Belting, “Introduzione,” in *Il medio oriente e l’occidente nell’arte del XIII secolo, Atti del XXIV congresso internazionale di storia dell’arte, September 10–18, 1979*, ed. Hans Belting (Bologna, 1982), 4–5; Hans Belting, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 7–22; Ann Hoenigswald, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: Technical Investigation,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 27, 28, 29.
- [18] We do not have at our disposal sufficient data to determine whether, and to what degree, the technique of a painter of this period could alter in the course of years or decades.
- [19] Though observing differences between the chrysography of the Kahn Madonna and the Mellon Madonna (in which he detected an “etwas kühlen Klassizismus” [a somewhat cool classicism], 91), Otto Demus justly emphasized that both were characterized by a “Formverständnis”

(understanding of form, 93) absent from contemporary Italian paintings. Otto Demus, "Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 (1958): 90–91, 93–94.

[20] Reflecting on the different functions of the two Madonnas in the National Gallery of Art, Jaroslav Folda (1995) conjectured that the Kahn Madonna was intended as a large processional icon, whereas the other panel might have been "one wing of a large diptych for private or public use." Folda also confirmed these hypotheses in later contributions, specifying (2002) that the Kahn Madonna "can be easily understood as a large processional icon that could have been placed on a proskynetarion or positioned behind an altar in a Latin church." Victor M. Schmidt (1996) accepted this proposal, though he did not exclude that the Mellon Madonna might originally have been a self-standing icon. According to Rebecca Corrie (2005), "a panel such as the Mellon Madonna might have been made for private devotion, or even as part of an iconostasis perhaps," while the Kahn Madonna, in view of its considerable size, "could have functioned in a pair of despotic icons." Jaroslav Folda, "The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icon or Altarpiece?" in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Doula Mouriki (Princeton, 1995), 505–506; Jaroslav Folda, "Icon to Altarpiece in the Frankish East: Images of the Virgin and Child Enthroned," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 127–128; Victor M. Schmidt, "Die Funktionen der Tafelbilder mit der thronenden Madonna in der Malerei des Duecento," *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 55 (1996): 60–63; Rebecca W. Corrie, "The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 295.

[21] See Otto Demus, "Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 (1958): 95–97. Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), 198, and others suggested a date in the twelfth century, but a dating shortly after 1261 is now more prevalent, e.g., Robin Cormack, "The Mother of God in the Mosaics of Hagia Sophia at Constantinople," in *The Mother of God: The Representation of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 118–119; Tania Velmans, "La pittura bizantina: Mosaici, affreschi, icone, miniature," in *Bisanzio, Costantinopoli, Istanbul*, ed. Tania Velmans (Milan, 2008), 182.

[22] "Selbst wenn die Deesis der Hagia Sophia das einzige erhaltene Konstantinopler Werk dieser Epoche wäre"—rightly observed Demus—"müsste die Konfrontation mit ihr genügen, um den hauptstädtischen

Ursprung der Kahn- wie der Mellon-Madonna zweifelsfrei darzutun” (Even if the Deesis of Hagia Sophia were the only surviving Constantinopolitan work of the period, a comparison with the Kahn and Mellon Madonnas would be enough to unequivocally confirm their origins in the capital). Otto Demus, “Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 (1958): 97. However, the same scholar listed some other similar works, including the frescoes in the Saint Demetrios Cathedral in Vladimir, Russia (1194–1199), in which he saw the work of both Constantinopolitan masters and their Russian disciples as a kind of anticipation of some aspects of the art developed in the first decades of the thirteenth century. For his part, Hans Belting (1982) cited the Madonna of the Hilandar monastery on Mount Athos and some other later icons dating to the fourteenth century, though it is fair to say that these reveal a stylistic phase a good deal more advanced than the panels in the National Gallery of Art; Hans Belting, “The ‘Byzantine’ Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some Observations on Duccio,” *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 10–11. Jaroslav Folda (1995) proposed that “the Mellon Madonna master must have seen a Byzantine example such as that in Paris, Bibl. Nat. ms. gr. 54” and thus used as his model the miniatures of an evangelistary; Jaroslav Folda, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icon or Altarpiece?” in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Doula Mouriki (Princeton, 1995), 504. But, in his view, the image in the Gallery especially had close affinities with some Crusader panel paintings in Cyprus (*Madonna and Child* and *Saint Nicholas* with some scenes from his life, both in the Byzantine Museum at Nicosia). For other analogous paintings and miniatures, see Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 293–303. The present writer finds significant affinities between the two Washington panels and some icons preserved in the monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai. These paintings are of uncertain provenance, but they can be assumed to have been executed in the second half of the thirteenth century and in Constantinople, to judge from their very sustained quality of execution and accomplished pictorial technique: I refer in particular to the *Archangel Michael*, the *Archangel Gabriel*, and a half-length *Madonna in Prayer*. See, respectively, Konstantinos A. Manafis, ed., *Sinai: Treasures of the Monastery of Saint Catherine* (Athens, 1990), 170, pl. 41; Helen C. Evans, ed., *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)* (New Haven, 2004), 384–385, no. 240; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land: From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187–1291* (Cambridge, 2005), 222, fig. 126.

[23] Following Fry 1931 and D’Ancona 1935, the proposition that the two Madonnas might have been produced in the same workshop was explicitly

denied by Belting 1982, 1990; Hoenigswald 1982; Folda 1987, 1995, 1997, 2002, 2005; Polzer 1999, 2002; and Kirsch and Levenson 2000. See Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Paolo D'Ancona, *Les primitifs italiens du XIe au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1935), 46–47; Hans Belting, "The 'Byzantine' Madonnas: New Facts about Their Italian Origin and Some Observations on Duccio," *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 7–22; Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 33, 417, 420; Ann Hoenigswald, "The 'Byzantine' Madonnas: Technical Investigation," *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 25–31; Jaroslav Folda, "The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icons or Altarpieces?" *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 57–58; Jaroslav Folda, "The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Icon or Altarpiece?" in *Byzantine East, Latin West: Art-Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann*, ed. Doula Mouriki (Princeton, 1995), 501–510; Jaroslav Folda, in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, ed. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York, 1997), 391, 396–397; Jaroslav Folda, "Icon to Altarpiece in the Frankish East: Images of the Virgin and Child Enthroned," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 123–145; Jaroslav Folda, *Crusader Art in the Holy Land: From the Third Crusade to the Fall of Acre, 1187–1291* (Cambridge, 2005), 457–458, 557; Joseph Polzer, "Some Byzantine and Byzantinising Madonnas Painted during the Later Middle Ages, 1," *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 85; Joseph Polzer, "Some Byzantine and Byzantinising Madonnas Painted during the Later Middle Ages, 2," *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 167–182; Joseph Polzer, "The 'Byzantine' Kahn and Mellon Madonnas: Concerning their Chronology, Place of Origin, and Method of Analysis," *Arte cristiana* 90 (2002): 401–410; Andrea Kirsh and Rustin S. Levenson, *Seeing through Paintings: Physical Examination in Art Historical Studies* (New Haven and London, 2000), 180. It should further be recalled that Viktor Lazarev (1933, 1947, 1959–1960, 1967) consistently spoke of two masters as the authors of the Kahn and Hamilton (Mellon) Madonnas, though he recognized that their figurative culture had a common source. See Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, "Early Italo-Byzantine Painting in Sicily," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 63 (1933): 283–284; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Istorija vizantijskoj živopisi: V druch tomach* (Moscow, 1947–1948), 192, 351 n. 116; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, "Constantinopoli e le scuole nazionali alla luce di nuove scoperte," *Arte veneta* 13–14 (1959–1960): 11–13; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967), 318–319, 347 n. 117.

[24] See Francesca Pasut, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: Supplementary Volume, vol. 2, Ornamental Painting in Italy (1250–1310): An Illustrated Index*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, new ed. (Florence, 2003), 125 n. 20; Rebecca W. Corrie, "The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the

History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 293–303.

- [25] Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, “New Light on the Problem of the Pisan School,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 68 (1936): 61–73, followed by Otto Demus, “Zwei Konstantinopler Marienikonen des 13. Jahrhunderts,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 7 (1958): 93, placed the Kahn and Mellon Madonnas in relation with the Madonna and Child Enthroned, no. 240 in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, which he considered the work of a Pisan master. In my view, the painting in Moscow is a precious and rare example of Venetian painting of the third quarter of the thirteenth century, which, like the later but still thirteenth-century two-sided panel in the monastery of Santa Maria at Zadar, exemplifies knowledge and diffusion of this genre in the Venetian and Adriatic regions. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 134 n. 284; Miklós Boskovits, Andrei Bliznukov, and Rodolfo Maffei, “Studi recenti sulla pittura italiana in Russia: Il nuovo catalogo del Museo Puškin,” *Arte cristiana* 92 (2004): 113–114; and Helen C. Evans, ed., *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)* (New Haven, 2004), 497–498. A throne of very effective perspective rendering and of similar type also appears in the large panel in the basilica of San Nicola at Bari; it, too, sometimes is compared with the two paintings in the National Gallery of Art. See Pina D’Elia and Michele D’Elia, eds., *Icone di Puglia: Catalogo della Mostra* (Bari, 1969), no. 33. The Bari icon, which to judge from its style ought to be the work of a master of Byzantine formation, again dating to the thirteenth century, is the forerunner of a type of Marian image that would become very widespread in southern Italy, as shown for instance by the Madonna usually attributed to Montano d’Arezzo in the Sanctuary of Montevergine near Avellino; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell’arte nell’età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 102–107. On the thrones of the Kahn and Mellon Madonnas, see the analogies quoted by Rebecca W. Corrie, “The Kahn and Mellon Madonnas and Their Place in the History of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot and Burlington, VT, 2005), 296.

- [26] On the relations of the two Washington Madonnas with works of Crusader art, see in particular Jaroslav Folda, “Icon to Altarpiece in the Frankish East: Images of the Virgin and Child Enthroned,” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 129–138. To the list of panels by artists of Byzantine formation that depict, perhaps at the request of Western donors, the full-length Madonna and Child Enthroned, I would add that in

the Museo Nazionale of Ravenna, cf. Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Storia della pittura bizantina* (Turin, 1967) fig. 428, and that in the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden (no. 23), usually left in anonymity and considered of fourteenth-century date. However, Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 116, significantly proposed it as a work of the “school of Giunta Pisano.”

[27] See note 25 above.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden support consists of two linden (*tiglio*)[1] boards with vertically aligned grain. The panel has been thinned, and three horizontal battens have been attached to its back. Wooden margins at the top and two sides show that an engaged frame may have formed part of its original structure. The gilding is modern, laid over a red bole with gesso and fabric discontinuous from that beneath the rest of the painting.[2] Although the technique of execution is essentially similar in this painting and in the *Kahn Madonna*, some discrepancies have been observed in the painting procedure; Ann Hoenigswald (1982) considered this evidence of “a difference in the training or traditions of the artists” who painted them.[3] The painted surface has been extensively damaged along the crackle lines and is generally worn and considerably inpainted. Inpainting can also be observed in particular in the faces, in the child’s hair, in the acorn-shaped decorations at the top of the throne, in the chrysography of the draperies, in the borders and red ground of the medallions, in the green ground plane at the foot of the throne, and along the join between the two boards forming the support (which runs vertically between the figure of the Christ child and the face of the angel to the right). A first treatment of the painting c. 1920, probably including restoration of the wooden support, must have been followed by a further treatment, shortly before 1928.[4]

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed a sample of the wood, using optical microscopy, and found it to be linden (report dated December 26, 1985, NGA conservation files).

[2] Cross-sections of the gilded area and the painted area were analyzed using

light microscopy and scanning electron microscopy to compare the preparatory layers. A layer of glue was found beneath the gilded areas, which is unusual and further indicates that the gold has been replaced. The NGA scientific research department performed the analysis (report dated January 6, 2006, NGA conservation files).

- [3] Ann Hoenigswald, "The 'Byzantine' Madonnas: Technical Investigation," *Studies in the History of Art* 12 (1982): 28.
- [4] The reproductions that Berenson published in 1921 illustrate the painting in different states. The plate showing the whole image proves its damaged condition, with numerous small lacunae, especially along the edges. This was evidently the painting's condition at the time it appeared on the Madrid art market in 1912. The detail with the bust of the Madonna and Child, however, documents the result of a subsequent treatment evidently conducted shortly before the publication. On this occasion the gold ground was renewed (leaving the halos without decoration), the faces were retouched, and the decoration on the back of the throne reconstructed. Possibly this was the restoration mentioned in the Duveen Brothers Records on January 3, 1920, according to the information collected in 1986 by Katherine Baetjer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, when the Duveen papers were held by that institution (cf. her letter to Jaroslav Folda of September 16, 1985; copy in NGA curatorial files). By the mid-1920s, by which time Carl Hamilton had returned the painting to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance, note 4), a decision had been made to subject it to a more thorough restoration; it was then that the painting acquired the appearance it still has. The second intervention must have been realized sometime before 1928, for in that year Emilio Cecchi reproduced it in its newly restored state.

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## PROVENANCE

Said to have come from a church or convent in Calahorra (province of La Rioja, Spain). Gabriel Dereppes, Madrid;<sup>[1]</sup> purchased 11 September 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[2]</sup> Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, early 1920s;<sup>[3]</sup> (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[4]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The Andrew W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The provenance from Calahorra, reported for the first time by Bernard Berenson ("Due dipinti del decimo secondo secolo venuti da Costantinopoli," *Dedalo* 2 (1921): 284-304), and then repeated in the subsequent literature, has sometimes been doubted, but, according to NGA systematic catalogue author Miklòs Boskovits, not on any good grounds. (See also the

provenance for NGA 1949.7.1.) Writing from Madrid, Dereppes brought the painting to the attention of Duveen Brothers in a letter of 25 May 1918; he commented that he believed it to be by Pietro Cavallini and compared it to the Kahn painting (NGA 1949.7.1) that he had seen in New York. He said the painting at that time was actually with the Goya critic Aureliano de Beruete y Moret; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 212, box 357, folder 7; copies in NGA curatorial files. [2] Generally (cf. Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:96), first Carl Hamilton, and then Duveen Brothers, Inc., are cited as the owners of the painting, but this order needs to be reversed. It is well known that the majority of Hamilton's paintings came from Duveen. According to Meryle Secrest (*Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 421, though she confuses the Kahn and Hamilton Madonnas, both with a provenance from Calahorra), Hamilton agreed to purchase NGA 1937.1.1 from Duveen Brothers (who had evidently offered the painting to him) in 1919. This is corroborated by the information on the provenance of the painting collected by Katherine Baetjer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, when the Duveen papers were held by that institution. She reports (in her letter to Jaroslav Folda of 16 September 1985; copy in the NGA curatorial files) that the Mellon Madonna "was purchased ... for the Paris branch of Duveen ... on 11 September 1919, as a work of Cavallino." Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reels 8–11, boxes 17–26 (New York Stock Books); reels 36 and 37, boxes 105–109 (Paris Stock Books); reel 422 (the X-book, 1910–1927). [3] Berenson (1921) reported that the panel was in the Hamilton collection; evidently it was one of the paintings from Duveen Brothers with which "Hamilton was furnishing his [New York] city apartment....on credit" (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 127-129). Indeed, Hamilton refers to the painting as in his possession when he writes to Joseph Duveen on 21 December 1921, enclosing Stephen Pichetto's translation of Berenson 1921; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 161, box 306 (copy in NGA curatorial files). [4] In 1921 Hamilton declared he was unable to pay for the paintings furnished to him on credit by Duveen Brothers, Inc., and returned them, at least in large part (Fowles 1976: 127-129). The panel continued to be cited in the literature for many years as belonging to Hamilton, but it must have been returned to the dealer at least by 1923, when it re-appeared in Duveen's New York stock books (see the letter of Katherine Baetjer cited in note 2). It was during these years that the painting must have been subjected to a new restoration, the result of

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which is illustrated by the reproduction in Emilio Cecchi, *Trecentisti senesi*, Rome, 1928: 12. In the English edition of his study (*Studies in Medieval Painting*, New Haven, 1930: 4-16), Berenson described the panel as having previously belonged to the Hamilton collection. [5] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, Box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files. The provenance "from a convent in Calahorra, Spain" (see note 1) is given on the invoice.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1997 *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843-1261*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1997, no. 262, repro.

2000 *The Mother of God: Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, Benaki Museum, Athens, 2000-2001, no. 68, repro.

2004 *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2004, no. 286, repro.

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# *Daddi, Bernardo*

Also known as

Daddo, Bernardo di

active by 1320, died probably 1348

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Son of Daddo di Simone, Bernardo is recorded for the first time in the registers of the Arte dei Medici e Speziali when he enrolled in the guild (which also included artists) between 1312 and 1320.[1] By this date he must have been a firmly established painter, as the reconstruction of his oeuvre also suggests; presumably, he had been born by the last decade of the thirteenth century, if not earlier. His first securely dated work is the signed triptych in the Uffizi, Florence; its inscription contains not only the artist's name but also the year 1328. Recent studies, however, have assigned various works, also of large dimensions, to previous years, such as the cycle of frescoes in the chapel of the Pulci and Berardi families in Santa Croce in Florence; the polyptych of San Martino at Lucarelli (Siena), now in the New Orleans Museum of Art; and the polyptych divided among the Galleria Nazionale in Parma, the Museo Lia in La Spezia, and a private collection.[2] Although perhaps trained in the circle of painters such as Lippo di Benivieni or the Master of San Martino alla Palma,[3] in the second or the early third decade of the fourteenth century Bernardo worked in close contact with *Giotto's* shop (executing for the church of Santa Croce, then the preserve of the pupils and followers of the great master, not only the abovementioned frescoes but also possibly the Parma–La Spezia polyptych).[4] During the fourth and fifth decades of the century, Daddi's shop seems to have produced by preference numerous small but precious panels destined for private devotion. Among these are the well-preserved and dated triptychs in the Museo del Bigallo in Florence (1333); the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts (1334); the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (1336); the National Gallery of Edinburgh (1338); the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery in London (1338); and the Minneapolis Museum of Art (1339).[5] The artist's output of altarpieces for churches also continued to flourish during this period; these include the polyptych for the Cappella della Cintola (Chapel of the Holy Girdle) in Prato Cathedral (of which a fragment of the central panel is now in the Robert Lehman collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the predella in the Museo Civico in Prato);[6] the huge multipart altarpiece for the high altar of Florence

Cathedral (dismantled and in part dispersed: most of its panels are now in the Uffizi, while the predella is scattered between various collections);[7] the polyptych from Santa Maria Novella in Florence (1344); the Madonna and Child in the tabernacle of Orsanmichele (1346/1347), again in Florence; and the polyptych for San Giorgio at Ruballa (1348), the main panels of which are now in the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery and the fragments of its predella in private collections.[8]

Although at the start of his career his work was influenced by the Giottesque ideals of severity and solemnity, Bernardo Daddi soon began to express his preference for a more gentle and lyrical approach. The sacred figures that fill his paintings are more graceful in behavior and inconstant in character than those populating the world of Giotto's close followers. His gifts as an accomplished narrative painter are best exemplified in the small narrative scenes of his predella panels, where the most complex actions are recounted with perspicuity and great vivacity. After his earliest Giottesque phase, Daddi's works reveal the influence of the former pupil of Giotto, Taddeo Gaddi, with whom he would establish a relation of collaboration, and of the Sienese artists *Pietro* and *Ambrogio Lorenzetti*, who were frequently active in Florence between the third and fourth decades of the fourteenth century, and sculptors such as *Tino di Camaino* and *Andrea Pisano*. Richard Offner, the scholar who has most contributed to our knowledge of the painter, explained that Bernardo found "small scale suited to his purpose because it includes, within a limited space, the elements of a happening and can therefore be apprehended in its interrelations at a single glance." [9] But even the figures of his panels on a more monumental scale reveal—albeit below a veil of modesty and discretion—strong emotions that, together with the luminous chromatic harmonies of his compositions, would strongly influence and serve as a model for Florentine painters of the middle decades of the fourteenth century.

[1] Irene Hueck, "Le matricole dei pittori fiorentini prima e dopo il 1320," *Bollettino d'arte* 57 (1972): 115, 119, 120.

[2] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 65–66; Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 180–185, 425–437. For their dating, see Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 70.

[3] On Lippo, see Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 25–34, 169–182; on the Master of San Martino alla Palma, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 13–14, 71–166.

[4] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 337–338; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall'antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 41–43.

[5] See, respectively, Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 216–220, 315–321, 262–269, 302–304; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 20–21.

[6] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 354–355; Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 212–221.

[7] This altarpiece was supposed to have been painted for the church of San Pancrazio, Florence, where it was seen by Vasari and later sources; Paula Spilner and Anna Padoa Rizzo discovered its original destination for the Duomo. See Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 231–307.

[8] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 209–220; Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 312–349.

[9] Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 22.

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Bernardo Daddi

active by 1320, died probably 1348

## *The Crucifixion*

c. 1320/1325

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface (including gilded frame): 34.9 × 22.7 cm (13 3/4 × 8 15/16 in.)

overall: 35.5 × 23.6 × 2.7 cm (14 × 9 5/16 × 1 1/16 in.)

framed: 40 × 27.9 cm (15 3/4 × 11 in.)

Inscription: upper center on the tablet topping the cross: IC . XC (Jesus Christ) [1]

[1] The Greek letters are the commonly used abbreviations of IHCOYC XRICTOC, the Greek version of the name Jesus with the title Christ, literally the “Anointed One” (the translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”); Hans Feldbusch, “Christusmonogramm,” in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, edited by Otto Schmitt and Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte München, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1937-2003: 3(1954):707-720.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.2

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### ENTRY

The panel, which to judge from its proportions and rectangular shape was probably originally the right shutter of a diptych,[1] shows the Crucifixion, with the kneeling Mary Magdalene clinging to the cross; to the left, Mary, Mother of Jesus, who swoons, supported by her arm on the shoulders of one of the holy women on one side and Saint John on the other;[2] and, to the right, the centurion, a Pharisee, and a third man, who witness the Crucifixion with arms and eyes raised and seem to speak to Christ on the cross.[3] To the sides of the cross, against the gold ground, small angels in flight gather the blood that flows from the Savior’s wounds.

Mentioned only perfunctorily by art historians, but in general linked to the name of Bernardo Daddi, the painting in the National Gallery of Art was first introduced to the literature by F. Mason Perkins (1911) as a “genuine, albeit rather weak little work” of this artist.[4] Later scholars confirmed the attribution until Richard Offner declassified the painting in 1930, inserting it among those erroneously attributed to the master.[5] Osvald Sirén (1917) compared the panel to similar versions of the

Crucifixion painted by the artist, particularly those in the Galleria dell'Accademia and Museo Horne in Florence; he judged it an early work,[6] while Raimond Van Marle (1924) pointed out its affinity with the portable triptych in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, dated 1336.[7] Lionello Venturi (1931), however, rejected Offner's doubts about the autograph status of the Washington Crucifixion, and compared the painting with Bernardo's portable triptych dated 1333 in the Museo del Bigallo in Florence; Venturi (1933) maintained that the work was actually superior in quality to the triptych in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg,[8] in which Offner, by contrast, recognized Bernardo's hand. Further, after Offner (1958) noted for the first time retouches in various parts of the panel and proposed a classification "close to the Master of S. Martino alla Palma," opinions were divided: Bernard Berenson (1963), followed by Burton Fredericksen and Federico Zeri (1972), maintained the attribution to Bernardo, while the Gallery (1965, 1968, 1985) and Fern Rusk Shapley (1966) classified the painting as "attributed to Daddi," and Wolfgang Kermer (1967) and later Shapley herself (1979) spoke of "Follower of Daddi." [9] The present writer, after having cited the panel as a studio work by the artist (1984), has since 1989 expressed his conviction that it is a fully autograph work by Bernardo.[10] Ada Labriola (1999) also accepted this proposal, as did Laurence Kanter (in correspondence), who noted similarities to the so-called Master of San Martino alla Palma and pointed out the archaism of the frame carved in one with the panel support.[11]

The affinities noted by Offner between the Washington Crucifixion and the work of the Master of San Martino alla Palma are worth underlining, since they throw some light on Daddi's beginnings and on the date of this painting. Thought in the past to be a follower of Bernardo, the Master of San Martino alla Palma is now recognized to have been at work not after, but at the same time as, Daddi's initial phase and had probably begun his activity even earlier.[12] The very fact that he used freehand incisions with a graving tool, and not punch marks, to decorate the halos and ornamental borders of his paintings suggests that the Master's oeuvre did not extend beyond the third decade of the fourteenth century; it was only after that date that the use of decorations with punched motifs in the gold ground of panels began to spread rapidly in Florence.[13] In light of our present knowledge, the very real similarities to the Master of San Martino alla Palma that Offner observed in our painting would imply a relatively precocious date for it, which can be extended also to two other similar compositions from Bernardo's early phase, one in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston [14] and the other, of which only two fragments are known today, divided between the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart and the Strossmayer Gallery

in Zagreb [fig. 1].<sup>[15]</sup> The affinities of all these paintings with those of the Master of San Martino alla Palma are undeniable, but the figures' more elongated proportions, the more spacious but less rigorously calibrated structure of the compositions, and the figures' restrained gestures and ponderous movements reveal a phase of particular attention to Giotto's models in the development of the young Daddi.<sup>[16]</sup> For his part, the Master of San Martino alla Palma, whom Offner called "a painter of a lyrical sweetness and bird-like volubility,"<sup>[17]</sup> never shows any signs of particular interest in Giotto's figurative world. A motif like the swooning Madonna, who is supported by one of the holy women and by Saint John and who seems to be falling forward, as in the panel discussed here and in the fragment in Zagreb, is absent from numerous other, presumably later versions of the Crucifixion painted by Bernardo.<sup>[18]</sup> The passage would seem to suggest that the panel belongs to a phase of youthful experimentation preceding the dated examples of 1333. Several stylistic data seem, in my view, to lead to the same conclusion. Admittedly, in the Washington Crucifixion we no longer find the rigidly static composition nor the ponderous forms that distinguish the figures in the phase of Daddi's closest allegiance to Giotto's models, datable between 1315 and the early 1320s, such as the frescoes in the Pulci and Berardi chapel in Santa Croce in Florence.<sup>[19]</sup> Nor do we find in it the spontaneity and immediacy of communication that characterize the triptych in the Uffizi, Florence, dated 1328, and that would become increasingly evident in subsequent works by the artist.<sup>[20]</sup> The lack of punched motifs, as well as the use of pseudo-Kufic inscriptions in the marginal decoration of the painting in the Gallery, similarly suggests a dating prior to c. 1330,<sup>[21]</sup> perhaps within the first half of the third decade.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Bernardo Daddi, *Fragment of a Crucifixion*, c. 1325/1330, tempera on panel, Strossmayer Gallery, Zagreb

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**NOTES**

[1] Usually the scene of the Crucifixion is shown in the right shutter of diptychs, flanked by an image of the Madonna and Child; cf. Wolfgang Kermer, *Studien zum Diptychon in der sakralen Malerei: Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (PhD diss., Eberhardt-Karls-Universität, Tübingen, 1967); Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 31–60.

[2] In representations of the Crucifixion, when the cross is not flanked solely by the figures of the Virgin Mary and Saint John, arranged on either side of Christ, Mary and the holy women are represented (as they are here) to the left of the crucified Christ. The Gospels tell us that Christ on the cross was accompanied by Mary Magdalene (Matthew 27:56); by Mary, wife of Clopas (John 19:25); by Mary, mother of James and Joses (Mark 15:40); and by Salome (Mark 15:40), sometimes identified as the sister of the mother of

Jesus (John 19:25).

- [3] The centurion who recognizes the dying Jesus as the Son of God (Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:47) is a common element in Crucifixion iconography. But so too are onlookers with long beards and veiled heads, indicated as Jewish religious leaders, whom the Gospel narratives also attest to as being present at the Passion of Christ (Matthew 27:4; Mark 15:31; Luke 23:35).
- [4] F. Mason Perkins, "Dipinti italiani nella raccolta Platt," *Rassegna d'arte* 11 (1911): 1.
- [5] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *Works Attributed to Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1930), 5.
- [6] Galleria dell'Accademia, no. 8563, and Museo Horne, no. 43, both in Florence; see Osvald Sirén, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, trans. Frederic Schenck, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1917), 1:168, 270; and Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 250–253, 50–54.
- [7] No. 60; see Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 378; and Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 316–321.
- [8] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 35; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1:no. 44. The modern literature generally recognizes both the dated triptych in the Museo del Bigallo and the triptych no. 15 in the museum in Altenburg as autograph works by Daddi; see Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 170–183, 222–227.
- [9] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 142; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 1:58; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 63, 290, 646, 665; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 36; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and*

*Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 29; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 111; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 26–27; Wolfgang Kermer, *Studien zum Diptychon in der sakralen Malerei: Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (PhD diss., Eberhard-Karls-Universität, Tübingen, 1967), 1:255 n. 48; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:155.

- [10] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence 1984), 67 n. 246.
- [11] Ada Labriola, “Daddi, Bernardo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner (Munich, 1999), 23:356–357.
- [12] Writing about the Master of San Martino alla Palma in 1947, Richard Offner—the scholar who initiated and devoted greatest attention to the study of this artist—placed his output in the second quarter of the fourteenth century, considering him in essence a follower of Daddi: Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 73–80. Only later did Luciano Bellosi point out that the art of this anonymous master must represent a “proto-Daddesque” episode, to be placed in the first decades of the century and to be related to the activity of the Master of the Codex of Saint George. The latter, the most manifestly gothicizing in style of Florentine artists of the period, is known to have been active in the years shortly after 1315; cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 78; Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 16–17; and Chiara Forzini, in *Bonifacio VIII e il suo tempo: Anno 1300 il primo Giubileo*, ed. Marina Righetti Tosti-Croce (Milan, 2000), 151–152. The present writer has conjectured that the Master of San Martino alla Palma “received his training in the circle of Lippo di Benivieni around or soon after 1310 and...came into contact with Daddi only at a later stage”; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 67.
- [13] According to Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:34–36, 78–80, the use of punch marks in the decoration of panel paintings in Florence caught on no earlier than the early 1330s, with few exceptions. This finding, however, should not be understood as a rigid terminus post quem; Skaug, in fact, established it only by considering

securely dated paintings and without taking into account works such as Giotto's crucifix in the Church of Ognissanti in Florence or the *Pietà* of Lippo di Benivieni in the Museo Civico of Pistoia, both undoubtedly earlier in date than 1330 and yet furnished with some, albeit partial, punched decoration. Cf. Giorgio Bonsanti, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 147–150; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 174–175.

- [14] Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, no. 23.211. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 225–227, classified the painting as a product of the “close following of Daddi,” but the editors admitted (p. 505) the authorship of Daddi himself. The painting was later cataloged by Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. 1, *13th–15th Century* (Boston, 1994), 52–54, as an autograph work by Daddi and thought to precede the triptych in the Uffizi, Florence, dated 1328.
- [15] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 137–140, classified it as “close to the Master of S. Martino alla Palma.” The fragment now in Stuttgart was acquired by the Staatsgalerie in 1969 (inv. no. 3064), and August Bernhard Rave, ed., *Frühe italienische Tafelmalerei: Vollständiger Katalog der italienischen Gemälde der Gotik* (Stuttgart, 1999), 84–87, cataloged it as a work by Daddi himself.
- [16] Presumably the Giottesque models that influenced the artist during this phase were of the type of panels of the Crucifixion now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. 1074 A) or that in Strasbourg (no. 167), both of uncertain date but generally placed in the more recent literature between the second and third decade. Cf., respectively, Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 164–165, 170–173. In these works, Daddi would have ascertained a tendency to populate the compositions with slender-proportioned figures that express themselves with expansive gestures, though not devoid of elegance, and in dress characterized by delicate, close-set, and slightly curving folds. In this phase, too, the chiaroscuro contrasts in the modeling are attenuated, with effects that have led some scholars to assign the execution of a good part of the works produced in Giotto's shop between c. 1315–1325 to a studio assistant variously identified under the conventional name “Parente di Giotto” or “Master of the Stefaneschi Altarpiece.”
- [17] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence,

2001), 73.

- [18] Florentine painters of the early Trecento mainly represented the motif of the fainting Mary in such a way that the swooning Virgin, held up in the arms of one of the Marys and Saint John, can barely stand upright; she turns to the left with bowed head, as if she can no longer bear the sight of her dying son. See Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 148–151. We find her in this pose in the various versions of the Crucifixion painted by Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) and also in those by Bernardo Daddi, with the exception of those in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and that formerly in a private collection in Brussels; in these latter examples, the Madonna seems to be falling not forward but backward, assuming a pose very different from the more composed attitude usually shown in similar representations, including the panels in Washington and Zagreb. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), pls. 17 and 31.
- [19] The frescoes were perhaps executed c. 1320; Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 122–145. Other works painted by Daddi around this date include, we may assume, the polyptych now dispersed among the Galleria Nazionale in Parma, the Museo Civico Amedeo Lia in Spezia, and a private collection; the Madonna no. 180 in the Pinacoteca Vaticana and the Mary Magdalene in a private collection that originally belonged to the same altarpiece; and the polyptych in the New Orleans Museum of Art. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 425–436, 133–139, and 189, respectively; and the Madonna Enthroned in a private collection, on which see Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 342, pl. 169.
- [20] For triptych no. 3073 in the Uffizi, Florence, see Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 110–121. Other works belonging to the same phase and probably slightly later than the Gallery Crucifixion might include, for example, the Lucarelli polyptych in the Church of San Martino in Radda, in Chianti; the Madonna Enthroned in the Church of San Pietro in Lecore (Signa, near Florence); and the dismantled portable triptych in the Pinacoteca Vaticana, no. 177–177b. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3,

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vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 66, pl. 11; Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 105–107, 63–70.

- [21] Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:99, registered the presence of tiny punch marks in Bernardo's triptych of 1328 and in the undoubtedly earlier Madonna no. 180 in the Pinacoteca Vaticana. He also observed (110, n. 174) that *Saint Paul and a Group of Worshippers* in the National Gallery of Art, generally recognized in the more recent literature as an autograph work by Bernardo Daddi, is devoid of punch marks although it is dated 1333. On the problem of Daddi's use of halo decorations incised in freehand as late as c. 1333 and its possible connection with the devastating flood in November 1333, see Erling S. Skaug, "Bernardo Daddi's Chronology and Workshop Structure as Defined by Technical Criteria," in *Da Giotto a Botticelli: Pittura fiorentina tra gotico e rinascimento; Atti del convegno internazionale Firenze, Università degli Studi e Museo di San Marco, May 20–21, 2005*, ed. Francesca Pasut and Johannes Tripps (Florence, 2008), 79–96.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single wooden panel [1] with vertical grain, whose frame was carved as one with the panel. The panel and the frame were prepared with a fabric interlayer on which the gesso ground was applied. The gesso was then covered with a layer of red bole in the area to be gilded. The interface between the painted and gilded areas was demarcated by incising. Single point punches and incised patterns were used to create the halos and to decorate the gilding along the outside edge of the pictorial surface. The paint was applied with the small, discrete brushstrokes typical of tempera technique and with green underpaint in the flesh areas. Remnants of silver leaf are evident in the helmet and boots of the centurion on the right side.

The support has been damaged by woodworm in the past, as is apparent in the x-radiographs. To address this insecurity and a history of blistering, Stephen Pichetto cradled the panel in 1944. The gilding, bole, and gesso have been lost along the outer edges of the frame. The painted surface is generally worn, with many inpainted losses along the edges of figures, where the paint covers the edges of

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the gold leaf background. The gilded background is well preserved, but the mordant gilding on the decorative borders of the garments survives only in remnants. The silver leaf of the centurion's helmet and boots, also present only as remnants, has tarnished to black. All shadowed areas in the faces of Christ, Mary Magdalene, and the Virgin have been reinforced with transparent dark glazes, and the bridge of Christ's nose and the shadows of his legs have been reconstructed. Inpainted losses and highlights can be seen in the profile of the Pharisee on the right side. The angels' faces have been reconstructed and their wings generously inpainted. The garments of the Virgin are very worn. According to records in the NGA conservation files, Stephen Pichetto performed a "slight cleaning," inpainted losses, and revarnished the painting at the time of the cradling in 1944.[2] The varnish is glossy and slightly yellow.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the wood and found it to be poplar (report dated January 1990 in NGA conservation files).
- [2] See record in NGA conservation files. Apparently the painted surface was not significantly treated on this occasion; a "slight cleaning" could refer to a grime cleaning, a reduction of varnish, or a partial varnish removal.
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### PROVENANCE

(N. van Slochem, New York) by 1908;[1] sold 1910 to Dan Fellows Platt [1873-1938], Englewood, New Jersey;[2] sold November 1943 by Trustees of the Platt Estate to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[3] gift 1961 to NGA. [1] Dan Fellows Platt to Richard Offner; see Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, Sec. III, vol. VIII, New York, 1958: 142. [2] Dan Fellows Platt Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University, New Jersey: box 2, folder 23, call number C0860. The painting was lent by Platt to the Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives at F Kleinberger Galleries, New York, in November 1917. [3] Copies of the documents recording the sale are in NGA curatorial files; the painting was one of six purchased from the Platt estate and is listed as "Attributed to Bernardo Daddi."

## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1915 Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitive Paintings, Fogg Museum of Art, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1915, unnumbered checklist.

1917 Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives, F. Kleinberger Galleries, New York, 1917, no. 3, repro., as Christ on the Cross by Bernardo Daddi.

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, May-October 1939, no. 72, repro.

1939 Seven Centuries of Painting: A Loan Exhibition at San Francisco, California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, December 1939-January 1940, no. 13.

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 795.

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- 1946 Frankfurter, Alfred M. *Supplement to the Kress Collection in the National Gallery*. New York, 1946: 21, repro.
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Bernardo Daddi  
active by 1320, died probably 1348

## *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*

c. 1345

tempera on panel

painted surface: 50.2 x 24.2 cm (19 3/4 x 9 1/2 in.)

overall (including engaged frame): 57.1 x 30.5 x 2.6 cm (22 1/2 x 12 x 1 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.61

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### ENTRY

The painting, which formed the central panel of a portable triptych for domestic devotion,[1] represents the Madonna and Child, in larger proportions than the other figures in the composition, seated on a raised throne. The throne is in the form of a tabernacle or ciborium:[2] its crocketed triangular gable is framed by the inner trefoil arch of the panel, and its inner canopy is decorated with an azure star-studded “sky.” Mary supports her child with both hands. The Christ child is holding a fruit, perhaps a pomegranate,[3] in his left hand and is stretching out his right to take the small bird perched on a finger of the angel closest to him.[4] The throne is flanked on both sides by a red seraph and an azure cherub [5] and, below these, by two pairs of angels, of which the one to the far left plays a shawm—the medieval precursor of the oboe—and that on the opposite side a psaltery; the concert of angels is completed by the portative organ and the viol played by two angels kneeling in the foreground.[6] Of the four saints to the sides of the throne we can identify, to the left, Apollonia, with a tooth in her hand,[7] and, more doubtfully, Catherine of Alexandria to the far right,[8] while the six saints in the foreground are Lucy, John the Baptist, Andrew, Paul, Peter, and Agnes.[9]

The painting has always been recognized as an autograph work by Bernardo Daddi, to whom Richard Offner (as cited in Sinibaldi and Brunetti 1943) was the first to attribute it.[10] Subsequently, however, the same scholar (1958) conjectured the

hand of assistants in its execution, but this proposal has found little or no support in the more recent literature.[11] Indeed, the only interventions alien to Daddi in the execution are those of modern restorers. Stylistic affinities have been observed between the panel in the National Gallery of Art and the triptych dated 1338 [fig. 1] now in the Seilern collection of the Courtauld Institute Gallery in London,[12] and there are also various shared features of ornamentation. Thus, some of the motifs punched in the gold ground of the Washington painting are present both in the Seilern triptych and in other dated works by Daddi of the following year.[13] Similar, too, are the decoration of the cloth of honor [14] and some aspects of the garments.[15]

The details in question suggest for our panel a date either close to or probably slightly after 1340. In this phase the artist tended to add more spaciousness to his compositions, while his figures gain in grandeur thanks both to their expanded forms and the amplitude of the mantles that envelop them. At the same time, however, they become more relaxed in posture, more spontaneous in gesture [fig. 2]. Not only spectators but participants in the action, they confer a certain air of naturalness on the scene. Typical examples of this interpretive approach are the female saint in our panel, who with a friendly, caressing gesture rests one hand on Mary's throne;[16] the Christ child, who twists impulsively away from his mother to grasp the small bird that the angel, smiling, is offering to him;[17] and the two female saints portrayed below this angel and the two angels on the other side of the throne, who exchange glances, commenting in silent complicity on the child's joyful reaction. Other characteristic aspects of this phase in Daddi's art are a tendency toward simplification of the drawing: for example, the mantle of Saint Agnes that falls in an unbroken perpendicular line from head to ground; the preference for faces drawn in profile; and the clarity of the compositional structure. The modeling, too, is softer than in Daddi's previous works, dated before c. 1335, anticipating developments that would be expressed more powerfully in the last years of the artist's life.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Bernardo Daddi, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints, and God in an Attitude of Benediction*, 1338, tempera and gold leaf on panel, Courtauld Institute of Art, The Courtauld Gallery, London. © The Samuel Courtauld Trust, The Courtauld Gallery, London



**fig. 2** Detail, Bernardo Daddi, *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*, c. 1340, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**NOTES**

[1] The edges of the wooden support and of the engaged frame have been scraped and smoothed down. Following this operation practically no trace of the hinges that fastened the shutters to the central panel remain, although as Laurence Kanter kindly pointed out to me, the concave channels on the sides of the frame housed rotating columns that secured the wings of the triptych, as in the Seilern triptych by Bernardo Daddi in the Courtauld collection in London; see Richard Offner, *Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following* (Florence, 1958), 19–21. Not only the proportions but also the composition and the ornamental decoration suggest that the panel was the centerpiece of a portable triptych very similar in form and composition to that in the Courtauld Gallery, which has images of the Nativity and the Crucifixion in its side panels. Presumably,

both panels being discussed here and the central panel of the triptych in London were topped by a triangular gable bearing the image of the Blessing Christ. Another panel by Bernardo Daddi, very similar to this one in the National Gallery of Art, must also have originally been the centerpiece of a triptych: namely, the Madonna and Child now in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, no. 61.61; see Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 297–300. According to Eliot W. Rowlands, the latter should be reconstructed along the lines of the exemplar in London. Eliot W. Rowlands, *The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: Italian Paintings, 1300–1800* (Kansas City, MO, 1996), 51–52. Evidently, Daddi's shop produced several related versions. *Madonna and Child with Angels and Saints* in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 73) seems, both in iconography and in the arrangement of the figures, almost a facsimile of the example in Washington. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 443–446. Further evidence of the success of this composition is Pietro Nelli's replication of it in a panel whose whereabouts are now unknown; it too was formerly the centerpiece of a portable triptych, for which see Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 417.

- [2] In the works by Daddi that can be securely dated to 1338 (National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, no. 904) and 1339 (Minneapolis Institute of Art, no. 34.20), the Madonna is sitting on a throne with a tall, gabled but flat backrest. Yet in the same year as the Edinburgh Madonna (1338), the throne of the Seilern triptych in the Courtauld Art Gallery, London, is transformed into a gabled and vaulted ciborium, forming a kind of tabernacle around the Son of God and his mother. The images of the Madonna sitting on a simpler tabernacle-shaped throne in a private collection in Germany and in the National Gallery in Prague could be slightly earlier in date; see Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 214–215, 377–380. The tabernacle throne, however, can be assumed to be an innovative feature of the second half of the 1330s.
- [3] The pomegranate is a well-known symbol of the Church, and also of the sacrifice and Resurrection of Christ: see Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance: Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence, 1977), 312–318.
- [4] According to Herbert Friedmann, in paintings of the Gothic and Renaissance periods, small birds in the hand of the Christ child may symbolize the soul,

the Resurrection, the Passion of Christ, or death. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946), 7–35.

- [5] On these representatives of the highest rank of the hierarchies of angels, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [6] Howard Mayer Brown and Joan L. Lascelle, *Musical Iconography: A Manual for Cataloguing Musical Subjects in Western Art before 1800* (Cambridge, MA, 1972).
- [7] The customary iconography of Saint Apollonia is to show her with her symbol of martyrdom: pincers holding an extracted tooth; see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 97–98.
- [8] Offner identified the two crowned female saints to the right as Margaret and Catherine, but the attributes of the crown and the processional cross in the hand of the former could equally well be adapted to other royal saints, such as Agatha. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 16. The identification of the other female saint as Catherine, the learned saint par excellence, is suggested by the book she bears in her hand; cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234.
- [9] For the iconography of these saints, cf. respectively George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 644–650, 549–560, 35–46, 799–816, 7–12.
- [10] Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti, eds., *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937* (Florence, 1943), 499, no. 157.
- [11] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 15–17.
- [12] Fern Rusk Shapley observed these affinities, and Eliot W. Rowlands confirmed them. Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 26; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:154; Eliot W. Rowlands, *The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: Italian Paintings, 1300–1800* (Kansas City, MO, 1996), 53. For the Seilern triptych, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo*

*Daddi* (New York, 1958), 19–21, pls. IV, IVa; Courtauld Institute of Art, *The Princes Gate Collection* (London, 1981), 10–12; Courtauld Institute of Art, *The Courtauld Gallery at Somerset House* (London, 1998), 26–27.

- [13] Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) identified punches in the panel in the National Gallery of Art that recur in various paintings by Daddi, including the two triptychs dated 1338 and 1339, respectively (cf. note 10) and the Crucifixion in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, dated 1343. Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 382, 411, 444–445. According to Erling S. Skaug, the painting in the Gallery would be datable “in the mid-forties” on the basis of its punches. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:114 n. 186.
- [14] Brigitte Klesse found the decorative motifs of fabrics in the panel being discussed here in paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Frick Museum in Pittsburgh, and the Galleria Sabauda in Turin; see Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 454; and Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 84–86, 233–238, 293–296. These are all undated works, but on stylistic grounds should be placed in the period 1330–1335 and beyond.
- [15] Useful clues for the dating are the garments of the young female saints with their striking décolleté and wide *manicottoli*—the tight-fitting sleeves of their dresses, which widen considerably at the elbows and hang down to their thighs. On the basis of these fashionable elements of court dress of the period, Luciano Bellosi suggested a dating of the panel being discussed here to the late 1330s or slightly beyond. Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: A) gli affreschi della Basilica Inferiore di Assisi,” *Prospettiva* 10 (1977): 21–31; Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 12–27.
- [16] By the thirteenth century, and hence also in works by Giotto and other masters of the early Trecento, the angels often lay one hand with a gesture of familiarity on Mary’s throne, or grasp it, giving the impression that they have just brought it before the onlooker or are about to take it away. Bernardo Daddi, on the other hand, emphasized the emotional contact between the sacred group and the saints and angels who surround it. One of the group rests his hand on the throne (as in the small panels in the Museo Horne in Florence, the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena, the Museum in Kansas City, etc.), while some of the angels enter in a playful rapport with the child. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical*

*and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), pls. I, III, XXXIX.

[17] Though expressed with great discretion, the motion of the slightly parted lips and the slight contraction of the muscles around the eyes seem deliberately to confer a joyful, smiling expression on the personages, abandoning the formula of serene but regal composure that hitherto had almost always seemed to be considered appropriate to images of the Madonna and saints in Florence. On the theme of the smile in religious painting of the period, a little investigated aspect, cf. Jan Svanberg, "The Gothic Smile," in *Künstlerischer Austausch: Akten des xxviii. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte, Berlin, July 15–20, 1992*, ed. Thomas W. Gaehtgens (Berlin, 1993), 2:357–370.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a single plank of wood, 2.6 cm thick with vertical grain. The outer edges of the wooden support and of the engaged frame, which were originally covered with gesso, have been scraped and smoothed down. Long, red, concave channels were cut into the outer edges on both sides of the frame, from the base to the spring of the arch. A continuous layer of gesso was applied to the front of the panel, including the colonettes and molding, and to the back of the panel, which was then covered with dark red paint. Areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole. The gold ground was embellished with punch marks in the halos and around the edges of the arched termination of the painted surface. The figures were placed on the panel by incising their outlines into the wet gesso. The paint was applied with discrete brushstrokes, with green underpainting in the flesh areas. The trim on the robes was mordant gilded.

The panel has not been thinned and retains its original reverse coating. In spite of the coating, the panel has a convex warp. A blackened hollow area at the bottom of the frame on the left side may be the result of a candle burn. By the mid-1930s, the panel appeared much darkened by dust and opacified varnishes, and the face of the Virgin had been heavily inpainted, while some areas of the painted surface appeared worn.[1] Mario Modestini treated the panel in Italy in 1948.[2] The paint layer is somewhat abraded, especially in the Madonna's face and the Christ child. There is some inpainting in the shadowed portions of some of the figures' blue robes, in the profile of Saint Paul, and in the face of the female saint (Margaret?)

standing close to the throne on the right side.[3]

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The painting is reproduced in this state in the Brogi photograph no. 26084, as well as in the reproduction in Sinibaldi and Brunetti 1943, according to whom “il viso della Madonna è completamente ridipinto e vi sono qua e là svelature” (the face of the Madonna is completely repainted, and there are abrasions here and there). Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti, eds., *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937* (Florence, 1943), 498–499. See also Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 15–17, pl. III.
- [2] According to Roberto Longhi’s handwritten expertise of March 20, 1950 (copy in NGA curatorial files), “questa anconetta...era gravemente offuscata da un cattivo restauro...ora...una intelligente pulitura ha ricuperato la pittura originale” (this little tabernacle...was gravely compromised by a bad restoration...now...an intelligent cleaning has recovered the original painting). The provider of the “intelligent cleaning” was, as Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) pointed out, Mario Modestini, in Italy; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:154. NGA conservation department files have a Kress Restoration Record that noted that Modestini cleaned and restored the painting in Italy in 1948 before acquisition. Longhi’s opinion may be somewhat too optimistic. In fact, Richard Offner (1958), who noted that the “painting was cleaned in 1951,” criticized the reconstruction of the Virgin’s face for its “unseemly expression of spurious suggestiveness.” In Offner’s opinion other areas of the painting were also, “with small exception,” retouched. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 16.
- [3] Describing the state of the painting when Mario Modestini treated it in 1948, Dianne Dwyer Modestini wrote (2003): “The right side of the Madonna’s face as it turns into the shadow is completely missing. The original gesso was present but there was no verdaccio, or underdrawing.... The eye is totally missing. All the drapery passages were severely worn.” Dianne Dwyer Modestini, “Imitative Restoration,” in *Early Italian Paintings: Approaches to Conservation; Proceedings of a Symposium at the Yale University Art Gallery, April 2002*, ed. Patricia Sherwin Garland (New Haven, 2003), 215.

## PROVENANCE

According to a tradition reported by a previous owner, Virgoe Buckland, the panel comes from the Vallombrosa abbey near Florence and in 1872 it was given by the abbot to the painter and restorer J. Stark;<sup>[1]</sup> purchased from Stark by Sir Henry Doulton [1820-1897];<sup>[2]</sup> his heirs;<sup>[3]</sup> by inheritance to Commander Virgoe Buckland [d. 1949], Hove, Sussex;<sup>[4]</sup> (sale, Sotheby's, London, 2 November 1949, no. 76, as by Bernardo Daddi); (Mannenti), probably the agent for (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonaccossi, Florence); sold July 1950 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. VIII*. New York, 1958: 16) provides the early provenance, which had been communicated to him by Buckland. After a first suppression in 1808, the expelled monks were able to return to Vallombrosa, which was already deprived of its archive, library, and works of art. In 1866, however, the abbey was suppressed for good and some years later its church transformed into the parish church. See Nicola R. Vasaturo, Guido Morozzi, Giuseppe Marchini, and Umberto Baldini, *Vallombrosa nel IX centenario della morte del fondatore Giovanni Gualberto. 12 luglio 1703*, Florence, 1973: 141-143. The abbot in those years, from 1867 to 1877, was Germano Gai, who, indeed, may have owned the painting, and taken it with him when he was obliged to leave the abbey. On Gai see Francesco Tarani, *L'ordine vallombrosano. Note storico – cronologiche*, Florence, 1920: 28, 151-152. The identity of "J. Stark" is uncertain. Possibly he may have been Arthur James Stark (1831–1902), a landscape painter; see *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart.*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols., Leipzig, 1907-1950 (reprinted 1970-1971): 31(1937):478. [2] Sir Henry Doulton was instrumental in developing the firm of Royal Doulton Pottery and served as vice president of the Society of Art in London; see *The Dictionary of National Biography*, London, 1906: 358. [3] Offner 1958, 16 (and repeated by later authors), says Doulton bequeathed the painting to "his daughter, Mrs. Buckland." However, Doulton's daughters were Sarah Lilian, who married John Kinnersley Hooper, and Katherine Duneau, who was unmarried. "Mrs. Buckland" would have been one of Doulton's two younger sisters, either Jane (1824-1892), who married Thomas Buckland, or Marianne (1829-by 1895), who married Virgoe Buckland (1825-1883). Virgoe Buckland and Henry Doulton were the executors of the will of Henry's

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father, John Doulton (1793-1873), and in that document Virgoe Buckland is described as an "auctioneer and surveyor" (will made 22 February 1873; John Doulton died 21 May 1873; will proved 29 October 1873; copy in NGA curatorial files). In his will Henry Doulton bequeaths "all my furniture books pictures prints musical instruments works of art...unto my Trustees Upon trust to divide the same in equal shares as nearly as they can having regard to the money value thereof between such of them my said son and two daughters as shall survive me." (See the copy of the will [proved 7 January 1898] and information about the Doulton and Buckland families, in NGA curatorial files.) [4] The relationship of Commander Virgoe Buckland to Henry Doulton's daughters and sisters has not yet been determined. Commander Buckland died 8 May 1949, and his estate consigned the painting to the sale in November of that year. His will (proved 12 August 1949; copy in NGA curatorial files) leaves money to various "cousins," including several with the surname Buckland and Doulton. Other than his wearing apparel, no specific possessions are itemized. [5] "Mannenti" is the name recorded as the buyer at the 1949 sale. The Kress Foundation made an offer to Contini-Bonacossi on 17 June 1950, for a group of 125 paintings and one sculpture, including NGA 1952.5.61. The offer was accepted on July 1, and the works of art were released to the foundation on July 6 after the first payment was received. See copies of correspondence in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1937 Mostra Giottesca, Palazzo degli Uffizi, Florence, 1937, no. 165A (no. 157 in the 1943 catalogue of the exhibition, edited by Sinibaldi and Brunetti).

1949 Possibly loan to display with permanent collection, Hove Museum and Art Gallery, England (according to 1949 sale catalogue).[1]

2012 Florence at the Dawn of the Renaissance: Painting and Illumination, 1300-1350, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 2012-2013, not in catalogue (shown only in Toronto).

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] See the Provenance of the painting for details about the 1949 sale. The Hove Museum is now unable to locate a record of the painting being lent to them (e-mail, 6 June 2011, Karen Wraith to Anne Halpern, in NGA curatorial files).

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Bernardo Daddi  
active by 1320, died probably 1348

## *Saint Paul and a Group of Worshippers*

1333

tempera on panel

painted surface: 224.8 × 77 cm (88 1/2 × 30 5/16 in.)

overall: 233.53 × 88.8 × 5.3 cm (91 15/16 × 34 15/16 × 2 1/16 in.)

Inscription: above the saint's halo: S[ANCTUS]; above the saint's shoulders: PAULUS; on the lower frame below the worshippers: [ANNO DOMI]NI.MCCCXXXIII M...II.ESPLETUM FUIT H[O]C OPUS (In the year of the Lord 1333... this work was finished) [1]

[1] The much-abraded inscription has been variously read. Sirén (1919) transcribed it as “ESPLETUM FUIT H(OC) OPUS (ANN)O DI MCCCXXXIII MED”; Venturi (1931, 1933), as “A.MCCCXXXVI... ESPLETUM FUIT H(OC) OPUS”; Coletti (1942), accepting Sirén’s reading, interpreted the letters MED as a fragment of Mediolanum and suggested the very unlikely theory that the painting was executed in Milan. Shapley (1979) and more recent authors accepted the date 1333; Shapley considered the fragmentary letters after the year (M...II?) as probable indication of the month and day. Boskovits (1984) read the letters after the date as MEN[SE]. Conti (1994) specified that if so, the panel must have been executed within the month of July (MEN[SE IUL]II). See Osvald Sirén, “A Great Contemporary of Giotto, 1,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 35 (1919): 229; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America*, Milan, 1931: no. 27; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, translated by Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols., New York and Milan, 1933: 1:no. 34; Luigi Coletti, “Contributo al problema Maso–Giotto,” *Emporium* 98 (1942): 463-464; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979: 1:152-153; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency*, Florence 1984: 349; Alessandro Conti, “Maso, Roberto Longhi e la tradizione offneriana,” *Prospettiva* 73-74 (1994): 43 n. 19.  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.3

## ENTRY

The panel, with the frontal figure of the standing saint, who is not accompanied to the sides by a series of superimposed narrative scenes of his legend as in so-called biographical icons, belongs to a type of image that began to appear in Florence and in other cities in Italy in the thirteenth century and remained widespread throughout the following century: narrow and elongated in format, these paintings were probably intended to be hung against a pillar in a church.[1] Paintings of this kind, however, were more frequently painted directly onto the pillar or onto the wall of the church with the more economical technique of fresco.[2] Panels with single figures of saints were realized either with a votive intention, as for instance the one by Daddi himself representing Saint Catherine of Alexandria and a kneeling donor, now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence,[3] or as an expression of the cult of a confraternity or a religious lay company that met to pray and sing before the image at particular times. Both the number of the minuscule kneeling figures below the saint—six men and six women—and the absence of any name or coat of arms of a donor family make it likely that a confraternity commissioned our panel.[4]

The composition of the painting is decidedly archaic: the device of placing the inscription of the name of the saint over a red ground against the gold on both sides, divided into two syllables by the figure, is especially found in paintings dating to the last decades of the thirteenth and early decades of the fourteenth centuries.[5] Also archaizing seems to be the exclusive use of decorations incised by hand, without any punched motifs, in the ornament of the halo [fig. 1]: in the years in which Bernardo painted this panel, major Florentine painters preferred to use the more rapid and labor-saving as well as more showy method of decorations impressed with punches in the gold ground. On the other hand, ornamental motifs very similar to those that decorate the halo of Saint Paul in this panel are also found in the lateral panels of the polyptych painted by Bernardo Daddi for the Ospedale della Misericordia in Prato only a few years later.[6] So the incised decoration, if it is not a deliberate archaism, is at any rate somewhat *demodé*, though it would recur throughout the painter's work. Clearly, this archaic character of the image, the form itself of the panel with the triangular gable (without the inscribed Gothic arch and other decorative elements that usually embellished painted panels from the 1330s on), and the severity of expression of the frontally standing saint misled art historians, who failed for so long to recognize the master who painted it. Osvald Sirén's attribution to the Master of Santa Cecilia, or to

Buonamico Buffalmacco, with whom the art historian thought he could identify the anonymous master (1919, 1920), was the first attempt to establish an authorship.[7] Raimond van Marle (1924) accepted his reference to the Master of Santa Cecilia, but Richard Offner (1927, 1931, 1947) firmly rejected it, though without suggesting an alternative name.[8] By 1931, Bernard Berenson had given the painting to “a contemporary and close follower of Giotto,” and George Martin Richter was “inclined to feel [the painting] is too good for Maso, and [thought it] could be by Orcagna.”[9] Lionello Venturi’s alternative proposal (1931, 1933) of the authorship of Maso di Banco was probably formulated after the restoration commissioned by Duveen Brothers, Inc., a treatment that attenuated the grandeur and softened the rather rough character of the original image.[10] Wilhelm Valentiner (1933, 1935) accepted the proposed attribution to Maso, as did Luigi Coletti (1942, 1946), at least initially; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951) endorsed it, and Walter Paatz reported it skeptically (1941) before the later literature jettisoned it for good.[11] Emilio Cecchi gave the panel to Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) himself (1937). The more cautious definition “School (or follower) of Giotto,” with which the painting was first labeled in its present location (“The Mellon Gift” 1937), was promulgated by the earlier catalogs of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941, NGA 1949) and by the volume *Duveen Pictures* (1941), in which an attribution with a question mark to Giotto himself was hazarded; the postwar studies also abandoned it (Salvini 1952, Vigorelli and Baccheschi 1966).[12] David George Wilkins (1969, 1985), however, did not exclude the possibility that it might have been “a product of the late Giotto workshop,” while Arno Preiser (1973) preferred to speak vaguely of “Florentine school.”[13] Richter (1941) returned to the old identification proposed by Sirén and conjectured an attribution to Buffalmacco, a point of view that remained without any following.[14] So, too, did the hypothesis of Richard Offner (1958), who compared the panel in the Gallery with four lateral panels of a dismantled polyptych in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (nos. 8704, 8705, 8708, 8709), subsequently given to Lorenzo Monaco (Florentine, c. 1370 - c. 1425) by Federico Zeri and by most modern authorities.[15] Berenson, in letters to Edward Fowles and Joseph Duveen, had altered his opinion in favor of Daddi by 1935, and the dealer recorded it on the 1936 bill of sale to the Mellon Trust while describing the painting as “attributed to Giotto.”[16] Coletti (1950) repropounded Daddi’s authorship, perhaps independently and with considerable caution.[17] This view finally achieved almost unanimous acceptance after being cited in the posthumous edition of Berenson’s *Lists* (1963) and then in the catalogs of the Gallery from 1965 onwards.[18]

How, then, can this panel be inserted in the sequence of the painter's works, assuming that the date in the inscription should be transcribed as 1333?[19] Observing the imposing figure of Saint Paul and especially his brooding face, rigidly frontal, dilated eyes, as well as the forms modeled (as the old photo testifies) with extreme delicacy, we may at first be reminded of certain paintings by Giotto himself, especially in his earlier phase. But the elements that exclude a Giottesque authorship are too many to be ignored. The proportions of the figure (in which the ratio between head and overall height of the figure lies between 8:1 and 9:1) are without parallel in Giotto's oeuvre, with the exception of the final phase in his career, for example in the frescoes in the chapel of the Bargello, Florence, where the scenes painted by the artist (or by his pupils) are populated by very tall figures.[20] The subtle detailing of the garments and the saint's furrowed brow are also quite alien to Giotto. The works most closely related to the Saint Paul in Washington are to be found, instead, in the output of Bernardo Daddi, especially among those paintings that reveal affinities with Giotto's pupil Taddeo Gaddi, with whom Bernardo seems to have established a kind of collaborative venture around 1333–1334.[21] In his cycle of frescoes in the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce, Florence, Taddeo adopted extremely tall figures of powerful monumentality.[22] On the other hand, the rhythm of the draperies in the Washington panel is too refined, too static, and the chiaroscuro modeling of the forms too delicate for an artist trained exclusively in the school of Giotto. Admittedly, the physiognomic type of the saint is rather unusual in the production of Daddi's shop:[23] nonetheless a Saint Paul with a youthful face framed by a short and silky beard does occasionally appear in Daddi's paintings dating to the early 1330s.[24] The delicately calligraphic pictorial modeling of the face can be compared with that of the frontal bust of Christ in the votive Madonna, now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Florence, executed in February 1335.[25] The soft fabric of our saint's mantle, breaking into sweeping folds that further emphasize the figure's corporeal substance, seems very similar to that presented by Daddi in the already cited figure of Saint Catherine, dated 1333.[26] In conclusion, that Bernardo Daddi was the artist of the Gallery panel can, I think, be unhesitatingly confirmed.[27]

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## COMPARATIVE FIGURES



**fig. 1** Tracing of halo, Bernardo Daddi, *Saint Paul and a Group of Worshippers*, 1333, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)

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## NOTES

- [1] On the typology and function of panels with the figure of a single standing saint, cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 222 n.1.
- [2] Pillar frescoes with figures of saints, the patrons of a family or guild, are common in fourteenth-century Florence; we may cite those in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore and in Orsanmichele. See Walter Paatz and Elisabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1940–1953), 3:625–629; and Diane Finiello Zervas, ed., *Orsanmichele a Firenze*, 2 vols., *Mirabilia Italiae* (Modena, 1996), 1:549–557.
- [3] See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 221–226. The painting’s votive character is suggested by the presence of the donor as devotee—evidently a member of the Medici family, as is indicated by the well-known family coat of arms at the foot of the panel.
- [4] For more on this question, see Ronald F.E. Weissman, *Ritual Brotherhood in Renaissance Florence, Population and Social Structure* (New York and London, 1982); John Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence* (Oxford, 1994). An appendix in Henderson lists confraternities

active in Florence between the mid-thirteenth and the mid-fifteenth centuries. He included among them a Compagnia di San Paolo, founded in 1434, which used to meet in the Badia Fiorentina, and a Compagnia di San Paolo dei Sarti, founded in 1435, whose meeting place is unknown. One should not forget, however, that confraternities were often active many years or even decades before their first documentation.

- [5] Examples of a bilateral placing of the inscription include the thirteenth-century panel of Saint Luke and two devotees attributed to the Magdalen Master, now in the Uffizi, Florence (no. 3493), and various Florentine paintings of the early Trecento, such as Giotto's polyptych in the church of the Badia (now displayed in the Uffizi) or the panel of the Vicchio-Paris Master representing Saint Felix, formerly in the Cini collection in Venice; cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 6, *Following of the St. Cecilia Master, Lippus Benivieni, Master of the Fogg Pietà* (New York, 1956), 116.
- [6] In the polyptych in Prato—probably dating to after 1334, when Fra Francesco di Tieri became rector of the hospital—the particular foliate motif in the halo of Saint Catherine (further embellished in the external and internal circles with tiny motifs impressed with metal tools) seems virtually identical with the decoration of the halo of Saint Paul in the National Gallery of Art. The year 1337, when Bernardo Daddi was entrusted with the commission to paint the altarpiece of the Cappella del Sacro Cingolo in what is now the cathedral (then pieve) of Prato, should be considered a probable *terminus ante quem* for the hospital polyptych; cf. Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 45 n.53; Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 124. Bernardo also used motifs incised by hand in the halo of a panel of Saint Catherine, its present whereabouts unknown, dated 1333 (the painting was auctioned at Christie's, New York, January 24, 2003, lot 25); see also Offner (1991, 102–104), though here small punched motifs also appear in the external and internal circles of the halo.
- [7] Osvald Sirén, "A Great Contemporary of Giotto, 1," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 35 (1919): 228–230, 236; Osvald Sirén, "The Buffalmaco Hypothesis: Some Additional Remarks," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 37 (1920): 183.
- [8] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 276; Richard Offner, "A Great Madonna by the St. Cecilia Master," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 50 (1927): 97; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3,

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vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle* (New York, 1931), 17; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 7, 39, 42 n. 1, 94 n. 1.

- [9] These opinions are recorded by Duveen Brothers, Inc.; see cable, November 3, 1931, Duveen's London office to Duveen's Paris office; cable, November 4, 1931, Paris to London; and letter, July 9, 1935, Duveen's New York office to Edward Fowles in the Paris office (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 101, box 246, folder 4; copies in NGA curatorial files). I wish to thank Anne Halpern in the National Gallery of Art department of curatorial records and files for this information.
- [10] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 27; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 34. The restoration was done in 1928; see cables, April 30 and May 3, 1928, Duveen's New York office to the Paris office (see note 9 for citation). Again, Anne Halpern kindly provided this information.
- [11] Wilhelm R. Valentiner, "Die Leihausstellung frühitalienischer Malerei in Detroit," *Pantheon* 12 (1933): 238–239; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, "Giovanni Balducci a Firenze e una scultura di Maso," *L'Arte* 38 (1935): 29; Luigi Coletti, "Contributo al problema Maso–Giotto," *Emporium* 98 (1942): 463–464; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xli; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 2:1604, 1606; Walter Paatz and Elisabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1940–1953), 2 (1941): 51.
- [12] "The Mellon Gift: A First Official List," *Art News* 35 (1937): 15; Emilio Cecchi, *Giotto* (Milan, 1937), 174; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 80–81; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Mellon Collection* (Washington, DC, 1949), 7; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 12; Roberto Salvini, ed., *Tutta la pittura di Giotto*, *Biblioteca d'arte Rizzoli* (Milan, 1952), 52; Giancarlo Vigorelli and Edi Baccheschi, *L'opera completa di Giotto* (Milan, 1966), 122–123.
- [13] David G. Wilkins, *Maso di Banco: A Florentine Artist of the Early Trecento* (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1969), 214; David G. Wilkins, *Maso di Banco: A Florentine Artist of the Early Trecento* (New York, 1985), 209; Arno Preiser, *Das Entstehen und die Entwicklung der Predella in der italienischen Malerei* (Hildesheim and New York, 1973), 37–38.
- [14] George Martin Richter, "The New National Gallery in Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177 n. 3.

- [15] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 46 n. 2. On the problem relating to the dismantled polyptych from the Ardinghelli Chapel in the Church of the Carmine, documented between 1398 and 1400, cf. the contribution by Angelo Tartuferi, in Daniela Parenti and Angelo Tartuferi, eds., *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento* (Florence, 2006), 120–127.
- [16] Letters (see note 9 for citation): Bernard Berenson to Edward Fowles, July 13, 1935, in which Berenson wrote, “This attribution [to Bernardo Daddi] I came to years ago, and it has stood the test of time—for me”; Berenson to Joseph Duveen, October 20, 1935; Berenson to Joseph Duveen, October 15, 1936. Information kindly supplied by Anne Halpern. For the bill of sale, see Provenance, note 6.
- [17] Luigi Coletti, “Il Maestro colorista di Assisi,” *Critica d’arte* 8–9 (1949–1950): 447.
- [18] Apart from the above-cited catalogs and scholars, the following recognized, though sometimes with reservations or doubts, Bernardo Daddi as the master of the Saint Paul: Burton B. Frederickson and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, 1972), 63, 437, 645; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 22, 195 n. 47, 243 n. 201; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 71, 349–350, pls. 177b, 178; Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 309; Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 35 n. 15, 37, 87, 391; Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 166 n. 3, 513; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 635; Roberta Ferrazza, “Elia Volpi e il commercio dell’arte nel primo trentennio del Novecento,” in *Studi e ricerche di collezionismo e museografia, Firenze 1820–1920* (Pisa, 1985), 414 n. 50; Roberta Ferrazza, *Palazzo Davanzati e le collezioni di Elia Volpi* (Florence, 1993), 128, 174 (repro.), 216 n. 52, 220 n. 70; Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *The Martello Collection: Further Paintings, Drawings and Miniatures 13th–18th Centuries*, ed. Miklós Boskovits (Florence, 1992), 54; Enrica Neri Lusanna, “Daddi, Bernardo,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane

Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 8:442; Lucia Meoni, *San Felice in Piazza a Firenze* (Florence, 1993), 41 fig. 27, 44; Alessandro Conti, "Maso, Roberto Longhi e la tradizione offneriana," *Prospettiva* 73–74 (1994): 36, 38 fig. 6, 43 n. 19; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:99, 108, 110 n. 174; 2: punch chart 5.3; Andrew Ladis and Hayden B.J. Maginnis, "Sculpture's Pictorial Presence Reflections on the Tabernacles of Orsanmichele," *Studi di storia dell'arte* 5–6 (1994–1995): 45, 49 n. 3, 53 fig. 6; Ada Labriola, "Daddi, Bernardo," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 1999), 23:356; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 444; Angelo Tartuferi, in *Da Bernardo Daddi al Beato Angelico a Botticelli: Dipinti fiorentini del Lindenau–Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2005), 70.

- [19] The reading of the date as 1333 seems to be safe (but see Inscription note 1). However, as Erling S. Skaug (2008) observed, it might mean any date between January 1, 1333, and March 24, 1334. In fact, in Florentine style the year began on March 25. Skaug recalled that a big punch mark that Bernardo used in a Madonna dated August 14, 1333 (inv. no. 6170, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence), never appeared again in the artist's later works and hypothesized that the punch, absent also in the Gallery's Saint Paul, might have been lost at the time of the disastrous flood in November 1333. See Erling S. Skaug, "Bernardo Daddi's Chronology and Workshop Structure as Defined by Technical Criteria," in *Da Giotto a Botticelli: Pittura fiorentina tra gotico e rinascimento; Atti del convegno internazionale Firenze, Università degli Studi e Museo di San Marco, May 20–21, 2005*, ed. Francesca Pasut and Johannes Tripps (Florence, 2008), 82–83.
- [20] Giovanni Previtali and Giovanna Ragionieri, *Giotto e la sua bottega*, ed. Alessandro Conti, 3rd ed. (Milan, 1993), 129, 348–353; Janis Elliott, "The Judgement of the Commune: The Frescoes of the Magdalen Chapel in Florence," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 61 (1998): 509–519.
- [21] The composition of the small triptych with folding shutters now in the Museo del Bigallo in Florence, which bears the date 1333, is virtually replicated by Taddeo Gaddi in a work of similar structure signed and dated 1334, now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (nos. 1079–1081), a circumstance that has been variously interpreted. James Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (1864) believed that the Florentine triptych was also painted by Taddeo, while in more recent times, once Daddi's authorship of it was universally accepted, the inference has been drawn that a now lost prototype from the hand of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) himself (Coletti 1946) or of Maso di Banco (Longhi 1959) must have existed. The present writer (Boskovits 1987; cf. also 2001), on the other hand, conjectures, if not a

shared shop, then perhaps a collaboration between the two artists and a kind of commercial arrangement whereby Bernardo painted only panels for Florentine churches, and Taddeo almost exclusively frescoes. See Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1864), 1:360–362; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xliii; Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi,” *Paragone* 10, no. 109 (1959): 34–35; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 50; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 12.

- [22] On the decoration of the Baroncelli Chapel, see Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 88–112.
- [23] I wonder whether it was not the saint’s youthful face, with its close-trimmed beard, that prompted so acute a connoisseur as Richard Offner to compare the Saint Paul in Washington with the image of the same saint in the Galleria dell’Accademia, Florence (inv. no. 8709), rather similar in facial type but in style clearly belonging to the last years of the fourteenth century.
- [24] I refer, for example, to the image of the saint that appears in the left shutter of a portable triptych in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts (no. 18.33), dated 1334.
- [25] Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 192–200. The date indicated in the inscription below, February 25, 1334, is in Florentine style, which calculated the year as beginning on March 25.
- [26] See note 3 above.
- [27] Perhaps it may not be superfluous to refer briefly to the kinship sometimes suggested between the Saint Paul and a fresco now preserved in the Pinacoteca of Forlì. In a typewritten note (copy in NGA curatorial files), Wilhelm Suida observed similarities between the panel and the representation of the same saint in a fragment of mural painting from the church of Santa Maria in Laterano (or di Schiavonia) at Forlì, where some saints and part of the Procession of the Magi are represented. Since some authorities claimed to have deciphered the signature of a certain Agostino in the fresco, Suida concluded that it was this painter, not otherwise documented, who executed the panel in Washington; cf. Eberhard Kasten, “Agostino,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 1992), 1:546–547.

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Unpublished and ignored by the more recent literature, the hypothesis was cited only by Fern Rusk Shapley (1979); denying that the two paintings belong to the same master, she asserted the view that the painter “Augustinus, probably a native of Forlì, made use of a cartoon inherited from the painter of No. 3,” that is, the Saint Paul. Although Anna Tambini (1982) accepted this proposal in substance, it should be rejected. Apart from the fact that the reading of the presumed signature is quite uncertain (cf. Viroli 1980), the shared use and exchange of cartoons between fourteenth-century painters seems very improbable. The Saint Paul in the fresco, though presented in a frontal pose similar to the saints painted by Bernardo Daddi, is different both in pictorial style and in physiognomic type. It is clearly the work of an Emilian or Lombard artist of the last quarter of the fourteenth century, who could not, I think, have been influenced in any way by the Florentine panel. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:152; Anna Tambini, *Pittura dall’Alto Medioevo al Tardogotico nel territorio di Faenza e Forlì* (Faenza, 1982), 112; Giordano Viroli, ed., *La Pinacoteca Civica di Forlì* (Forlì, 1980), 25–28.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden support, which has not been cradled, retains its original thickness of 3.3 cm. The engaged frame adds another 1.2 cm around the edges. The vertically grained panel is composed of three planks; the central one has a crack running the length of the panel. Three horizontal battens, attached with very large nails, reinforce the panel on the reverse; the lowest of these appears more recent than the other two, which are probably original. The wood panel was covered with fabric, and over it, gesso.[1] The craquelure is continuous over the panel and the inner part of the molding, indicating that the inner portion of the frame molding, attached with nails and dowels, is original. The outermost portion of the molding, however, is a later addition. Red bole serves as the preparation layer for the gold ground, upon which Saint Paul’s halo is incised rather than punched. The gold trim on Saint Paul’s robe and mantle was mordant gilded. The wooden support shows extensive worm damage, especially along the sides. The gold ground is much abraded. The silver leaf of Saint Paul’s sword has oxidized to black in some areas. A broad pattern of wide-aperture craquelure penetrates the painted surface, which contains many small, scattered losses, especially in the headdresses of several small figures at the lower right, and a few scratches. The original engaged frame, decorated with silver leaf overlaid with orange and green pigments, has discolored

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in some of the areas where the leaf is exposed.[2] A small section of the original gable top, mostly underneath the frame, has been replaced. Photographs of the painting made in the years 1910–1915 [fig. 1] [3] show it much darkened by dust and somewhat opaque varnishes. Shortly after the 1916 sale the panel underwent partial varnish removal; the inscription with the date was discovered on this occasion [fig. 2].[4] It was treated again in 1928, when the figures were inpainted and the frame completed above and re-gilded.[5] The painting was treated most recently between 1984 and 1989.[6] During this treatment the insecure areas in the wooden support were strengthened, the discolored varnish and old inpainting were removed, and losses were inpainted.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1915, Bernardo Daddi, *Saint Paul and a Group of Worshippers*, 1333, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail after cleaning but before inpainting, Bernardo Daddi, *Saint Paul and a Group of Worshippers*, 1333, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the ground layer using x-ray powder diffraction (XRD), and the gesso was identified as the dehydrate form of calcium sulfate (see report dated December 15, 1986, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed pigments using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) and optical microscopy. The greens were mixtures of azurite and lead tin yellow; the browns contained massicot and red iron oxide; the reds contained red lakes, red iron oxides, and vermilion; the purples contained azurite and red lake; and the yellows were ocher pigments (see report dated December 15, 1986, in NGA conservation files).
- [3] Apart from the small and rather dark reproduction published in the 1916 sale catalog, the painting's state in these years is also illustrated by a photograph made c. 1910, apparently by the firm Brogi, in Florence. A copy of it is now in the photographic archive of the Fondazione Federico Zeri in Bologna (no. PI 0044/2/32).
- [4] Osvald Sirén, "A Great Contemporary of Giotto, 1," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 35 (1919): 229, reported that by "the Spring of 1917 it had been very successfully cleaned."
- [5] This can be deduced both from a comparison of the photo reproduced by Sirén with Venturi's reproduction (1931 and 1933) and from the Duveen Brothers' habit of immediately cleaning the pictures they acquired. See, e.g., Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers* (London, 1976), 123; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 334. See also Entry, note 9.
- [6] See the report dated 1984 and the treatment report of 1989 in NGA conservation files.

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**PROVENANCE**

The often-repeated statement in the earlier literature that the panel comes from the Florentine monastery of San Felice in Piazza<sup>[1]</sup> does not seem to be based on any secure, or at any rate documented, evidence. Perhaps more plausible, based at least on the identity of the saint, is the more recent proposal of a provenance either from the Florentine Ospedale di San Paolo or from the nearby church of San Paolino, since a handwritten annotation on an old photograph indicated its provenance "dai padri di San Paolino."<sup>[2]</sup> Elia Volpi [1858–1938], Florence, by the early 1900s;<sup>[3]</sup> (his sale, American Art Galleries, New York, 21–27 November 1916, seventh day, no. 1040, as "Primitive school of Tuscany, early XVth century"); (Bourgeois Galleries, New York);<sup>[4]</sup> purchased January 1920 by (Duveen Brothers,

Inc. London, Paris, and New York);[5] sold 15 December 1936 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[6] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] In the introduction to the 1916 sale catalogue (n.p.), Elia Volpi states that among his pictures which “belong . . . to the School of Italian Primitives, the majority . . . [come] from the sacristy of the convent of St. Felice in Florence.” On this basis both Venturi and several other later authors claimed that the NGA *Saint Paul* formerly belonged to that church; however, as Lucia Meoni has (1993) pointed out, “nessuna fonte antica o le schede del Carocci testimoniano l’antica collocazione del San Paolo nella chiesa di San Felice. . . .” (“No early source nor the entries in Carocci’s Inventory [an inventory compiled in 1892 on behalf of the Soprintendenza of Florence] record the presence of the *Saint Paul* in the church of San Felice...”). Roberta Ferrazza (*Palazzo Davanzati e le collezioni di Elia Volpi*, Florence, 1993: 216 n. 52) has found records of sales of art objects from the Conservatorio di San Pier Martire, annexed to the church of San Felice, in the years between 1884 and 1901, as well as a note in the photo archive of the Biblioteca Berenson at I Tatti (Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence), according to which Stephan Bourgeois, who bought the panel now in Washington at the Volpi sale, “went to see Mr. Guglielmetti, Mr. Volpi’s secretary, from whom he [Bourgeois] received the information that Mr. Volpi [said he had] bought the picture in 1907 from the administrators of the Monastery of S. Felice in Florence. . . .” NGA systematic catalogue author Miklós Boskovits is inclined, however, to think that the records of Volpi’s secretary were based on the same rather vague memories and should not be considered trustworthy. [2] According to the unpublished research of Kathleen Giles Arthur (c. 1991; copy in NGA curatorial files) “the *Saint Paul* most probably was commissioned by one of the major charitable institutions in fourteenth century Florence,” i.e., the Ospedale di San Paolo, and the worshippers of the saint can be identified as the members of the third order of Saint Francis, lay men and women who formed the staff of the hospital. The claim, however, is no more than speculation on the part of the author. The provenance from San Paolino, on the other hand, is asserted by a handwritten note on the reverse of an early photograph in the photo archive of Federico Zeri in Bologna (no. PI 0044/2/32; originally taken c. 1910 apparently by the firm Brogi in Florence); see also Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. The fourteenth century, The Painters of the Miniaturist Tendency*, Sec.III, Vol. IX, Florence,1984: 350 n. 3). San Paolino (originally San Paolo), in the Quartiere Santa Maria Novella, was already a collegiate church in the eleventh century and, after various vicissitudes, was sold to the disalced Carmelites in 1618; they rebuilt the church in

its present form later in the seventeenth century and still officiate it. After the suppression of religious orders in 1808, the friars had to abandon the church and its annexed convent, but it was restored to them in 1814, and they remained there until a second suppression of the convent in 1866 (Osanna Fantozzi Micali and Piero Rosselli, *Le soppressioni dei conventi a Firenze*, Montelupo Fiorentino, 2000: 233). Since the late nineteenth century, however, the church has once again been officiated by the discalced Carmelites; see Walter and Elisabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz. Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, Vols. 1-6, Frankfurt am Main, 1940-1953: 4(1952): 591. There is no documentation of any confraternity dedicated to Saint Paul that met in this church, but the large group of donors at the foot of the NGA panel suggests that a lay confraternity commissioned it. It is known, on the other hand, that Daddi did work for San Paolino: another painting by him, representing the *Madonna and Child* and now in the Galleria dell'Accademia (no. 3466; see Angelo Tartuferi in *Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze. Vol. 1: Dipinti*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi, Florence, 2003: 60-63), also comes from this church and can be assumed to be close in date to the Gallery's painting. [3] After an early career as a painter and restorer, Volpi began to work as an art dealer in Città di Castello towards the end of the nineteenth century. He then moved to Florence, where he purchased the Palazzo Davanzati in 1904 and transformed it into a private museum, furnishing it with paintings and *objets d'art* from his collection. The museum was opened to the public in September 1910. Presumably by then the panel discussed here was already in Volpi's possession; the Volpi sale catalogue of 1916 noted that it had come from the Palazzo Davanzati. Luigi Coletti ("Il Maestro colorista di Assisi," *Critica d'Arte* 8-9 (1949-1950): 447) claims that the painting passed through the hands of the dealer Stefano Bardini (1836-1922), but Everett Fahy's research (*L'Archivio storico fotografico di Stefano Bardini. Dipinti, disegni, miniature, stampe*, Florence, 2000) does not confirm this. [4] A copy of the sale catalogue in the NGA library is annotated with the Bourgeois name, which is also given in the Duveen prospectus (in NGA curatorial files). See Osvald Sirén, "A great contemporary of Giotto – I," *The Burlington Magazine* 35 (December 1919): 229; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 152; and note 1 above. [5] Boskovits 1984, 349-350, and Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; reel 45, box 133, folder 1; reel 101, box 246, folder 4; copies from the Duveen records in NGA curatorial files. [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, Box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files. The

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painting is attributed to Giotto, with a parenthetical note stating that Bernard Berenson gives it to Daddi.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1910 Palazzo Davanzati, Florence, between September 1910 and 1916.

1921 Loan Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture by Italian Artists of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, Cincinnati Art Museum, 1921, no catalogue.

1933 Sixteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters. Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century, Detroit Institute of Art, 1933, no. 3.

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# Jacopo di Cione

Also known as

Robiccia

Florentine, c. 1340 - c. 1400?

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Brother of Andrea (nicknamed Orcagna) and of Nardo di Cione (Florentine, active from c. 1340; died 1365/1366), both of them painters and by midcentury considered among the best masters active in Florence.[1] Jacopo is cited in documents for the first time in 1365 as one of the heirs of Nardo, who had died in that year.[2] Only after 1368 is he mentioned as a painter. It may be presumed, however, that by that date he had been working in that role for a decade; the first dated work (1362) that can plausibly be attributed to him (private collection, New York) shows him as a fully formed artist.[3] Jacopo's birth therefore should be placed in years close to 1340.

Upon the death of Andrea di Cione in 1368, Jacopo became the heir to his brother's prestigious shop, and, according to the unanimous opinion of art historians, he was responsible for the execution of such important commissions as the polyptych for the high altar of the church of San Pier Maggiore (1370–1371) and the *Pala della Zecca* (the Mint) in Florence (1372–1374).[4] In the years thereafter the artist is frequently documented until 1398, but no securely authenticated work by his hand has come down to us. It seems that he did not personally participate in the execution of the frescoes in the Palazzo dei Priori at Volterra, for which he was paid in 1383 together with Niccolò Gerini.[5] The attempted reconstruction of Jacopo's oeuvre has thus been based on the two large polyptychs mentioned above, both dating to the early 1370s. Since no registered payment appears alongside his name in the list of Florentine *prestanze* (state loans) dating to 1400, the inference can be drawn that he was dead by that date.[6]

Jacopo must have been trained in the shop of his brother Andrea, for he was strongly influenced by the severe compositional balance of scenes and the sculptural modeling of figures that distinguish Andrea's paintings. Especially in his works dating to the sixth and seventh decade of the fourteenth century, Jacopo adopted Andrea's tendency to reduce the *mise-en-scène* to the minimum and concentrate his attention on the human figures, modeled with dense *chiaroscuro*

and enveloped in precious stuffs that imitate gold-embroidered brocades. Apart from the Madonna dated 1362 formerly in the Stoclet collection, Brussels, we can probably place in his early phase the altarpieces depicting the Annunciation respectively in the churches of Santissima Annunziata di Rosano (Florence) and San Niccolò at Calenzano (Prato), and the Madonna and Child with angels in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, as well as several portable panels intended for private devotion. Among the latter, two small triptychs deserve particular mention because of their extremely accomplished workmanship: one in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence (no. 8465), and the other formerly in the Galleria Moretti in Florence,[7] in which a delicate poetic vein alleviates and adds grace to the severe monumentality and the brooding gravity normative in Orcagna's workshop.

Subsequently, the compositional formulae inherited from Andrea di Cione are reformulated with ever greater rigidity in such works as the polyptych formerly in the Fischel collection in Vienna, dated 1379. In addition, Jacopo's style in the 1380s was enriched, his compositions enlivened, and his repertoire of motifs diversified as a result of his collaborations, both with Niccolò Gerini, who partnered with him in the polyptych in the church of Santi Apostoli in Florence dated 1383, and with Giovanni del Biondo, with whom he painted the panel *Saint Zenobius Enthroned* in Florence Cathedral. In the last decade of the century his creative vein, which had contributed greatly to shaping the characteristics of Florentine painting in the second half of the fourteenth century, showed signs of exhaustion. As demonstrated by the triptych dated 1391 in the Academy of Arts in Honolulu, Jacopo gradually dissociated himself from, or failed to achieve, the ideals of elegance and vivacity typical of the Gothic renewal pursued by painters of the younger generation.

[1] Andrea and Nardo di Cione are listed among the leading masters of Florence in an undated Pistoian document that was probably written shortly after the Black Death in 1348, which had decimated the population of Tuscany. The document was published by Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 257.

[2] For the documents relating to Jacopo, see Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 7–13.

[3] Formerly in the Stoclet collection in Brussels, the painting represents the Madonna and Child surmounted by a bust of the Blessing God the Father. It formed

the centerpiece of a polyptych bearing the coat of arms of the Parte Guelfa, so it was undoubtedly a commission of some prestige and would hardly have been entrusted to a novice painter. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pl. 48; Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 162–163 and pl. 46 (where Kreytenberg reproduced the painting in a deceptively overpainted state and with an erroneous attribution to Andrea di Cione).

[4] Most of the panels of the first of these works are now in the National Gallery in London, while the second altarpiece is now in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence. Cf. Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 31–74, 85–93; Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi, eds., *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze (Florence, 2003), 127–135. The documents relating to the *Pala della Zecca* cite the name of the painter Jacobus Cini, generally identified with the younger brother of Andrea di Cione. The San Pier Maggiore polyptych is assigned to the artist only on the basis of style.

[5] Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 115–119. Recently, Laurence Kanter questioned the traditional reconstruction of Jacopo's oeuvre; see Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 12–18.

[6] Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 13 n. 17, drew this plausible conclusion. The “Jachopo di Cione dipintore” recorded in a Florentine document of 1410 is probably a different person, perhaps a grandson of the Trecento painter with the same name; cf. Werner Jacobsen, *Die Maler von Florenz zu Beginn der Renaissance* (Munich, 2001), 583.

[7] For these paintings cf. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi, eds., *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze (Florence, 2003), 116–121; and Daniele Benati, in *Da Bernardo Daddi a Giorgio Vasari*, ed. Maria Pia Mannini (Florence, 1999), 50–55.

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Jacopo di Cione  
Florentine, c. 1340 - c. 1400?

## *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*

c. 1370/1375

tempera on panel

painted surface: 139.8 × 67.5 cm (55 1/16 × 26 9/16 in.)

overall: 141.2 × 69 × 1.5 cm (55 9/16 × 27 3/16 × 9/16 in.)

framed: 156.8 × 84.1 × 6.7 cm (61 3/4 × 33 1/8 × 2 5/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.18

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### ENTRY

The image of Mary seated on the ground (*humus*) accentuates the humility of the mother of Jesus, obedient *ancilla Domini* (Lk 1:38). The child's gesture, both arms raised to his mother's breast, alludes, in turn, to another theme: the suckling of her child, a very ancient aspect of Marian iconography. In the medieval interpretation, at a time when the Virgin was often considered the symbol of the Church, the motif also alluded to the spiritual nourishment offered by the Church to the faithful.[1] As is common in paintings of the period, the stars painted on Mary's shoulders allude to the popular etymology of her name.[2] The composition—as it is developed here—presumably was based on a famous model that perhaps had originated in the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348).[3] It enjoyed considerable success in Florentine painting of the second half of the fourteenth century and even later: numerous versions of the composition are known, many of which apparently derive directly from this image in the Gallery.[4] This painting, therefore, must have been prominently displayed in a church of the city, and familiar to devotees.

Osvald Sirén (1917) published the panel as an autograph work of Andrea Orcagna, with a dating around 1350.[5] The proposal was widely accepted in the art historical

literature, though Richard Offner initially stated (see Lehman 1928), that it was the work of an assistant to the artist.[6] Bernard Berenson also at first proposed an attribution to Orcagna (Lehman 1928), but later (1931, 1932, 1936) suggested that the master executed the painting in collaboration with the youthful Jacopo di Cione, Orcagna's brother.[7] The attribution to Jacopo himself was suggested by Hans Dietrich Gronau (1932, 1933); Frederick Antal (1948); Offner (in Shorr 1954 and Offner 1962), though the same scholar in 1965 and 1967 detected the collaboration of assistants in the work; Mirella Levi d'Ancona (1957); Klara Steinweg (1957–1959 and Offner and Steinweg 1969); Miklós Boskovits (1962, 1967, 1975); Alessandro Parronchi (1964); Luisa Marcucci (1965); Barbara Klesse (1967 with admission of workshop assistance); Carl Huter (1970); Marvin Eisenberg (1989); Barbara Deimling (1991, 2000, 2001, 2009); Paul Joannides (1993); Erling Skaug (1994); Mojmir S. Frinta (1998); Daniela Parenti (2001); Costanza Baldini (2003); Angelo Tartuferi (2003, 2004); Carl B. Strehlike (2004); and in Galleria dell'Accademia 2010.[8] However, the painting entered the Kress Collection (NGA 1945) as a joint work by Orcagna and Jacopo, probably at Berenson's suggestion,[9] and this proposal met with wide support: it was accepted by Millard Meiss (1951); Berenson (1963); NGA (1965, 1968, 1985); Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, but in 1979 she attributed the painting to Jacopo alone, or to Jacopo and his workshop); Deborah Strom (1980); Perri Lee Roberts (1993); Marilena Tamassia (1995); and Gaudenz Freuler (1994, 1997).[10] More recently, the proposal by Pietro Toesca (1951) and Michel Laclotte (1956), who both considered the painting a product of the shop of Andrea Orcagna, has met with some favor, though modified by some to suggest it is substantially an autograph work by Orcagna (Laclotte and Mognetti 1976; Padoa Rizzo 1981; Kreytenberg 1990, 1991, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2000; Franci 2002; Laclotte and Moench 2005; Freuler 2006).[11]

As for the dating of our panel, its attribution, even partial, to Orcagna implies that it was completed by or not much later than 1368, the year of the artist's death. Sirén (1917) dated the painting to c. 1350, and Raimond van Marle (1924) substantially accepted the proposal. Gronau (1932), though he too supported an attribution to Jacopo, dated the painting c. 1360–1370. Presumably Berenson (1936) had a similar dating in mind when classifying the panel as a youthful work by Jacopo. So did Meiss (1951), who defined the painting as “probably designed by Orcagna and partly executed by Jacopo di Cione.”[12] Levi d'Ancona (1957) suggested a date of 1360–1365 for the painting; the National Gallery of Art (1965) catalog, c. 1360. Steinweg (1957–1959), in turn, dated the panel to after the death of Orcagna in 1368, and Shapley (1966) to 1370.[13] Some scholars who have argued in favor of

Jacopo's authorship have suggested a dating as late as 1370–1380. Offner and Steinweg (1965) dated the panel c. 1380, followed by Klesse (1967) and Carl Huter (1970). Huter detected in the painting, unconvincingly, a reflection of the vision of the Nativity of Our Lord attributed to Saint Birgitta (Bridget) of Sweden during her journey to the Holy Land. Reconsidering her earlier opinion, Steinweg (Offner and Steinweg 1965) called the panel "Jacopo di Cione's latest work." She was followed by Shapley (1979), according to whom it was painted "perhaps as late as the 1380s," while Boskovits (1975) proposed a date of c. 1370–1375.[14] The question is complicated by the problems relating to the reconstruction of the youthful activity of Jacopo di Cione,[15] and also by the poor condition of the former Stoclet Madonna, which, with its date of 1362, represents the only secure chronological point of reference for the artist's initial phase.[16]

The hypothesis that the panel is an autograph work by Orcagna clearly would need to be verified by comparing it with authenticated works of this artist, or works generally recognized as by his hand, in particular the polyptych in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella, Florence, signed and dated 1357; the fresco of the Crucifixion in Santa Marta a Montughi (Florence);[17] the triptych in the Rijksmuseum at Amsterdam, dated 1350;[18] and the polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia,[19] Florence, probably dating to 1353. These paintings illustrate the main stages in Orcagna's career in the years preceding the altarpiece of 1357. His last stylistic phase, in turn, is attested by the frescoes in the former refectory of Santo Spirito in Florence, now Fondazione Salvatore Romano,[20] and the Pentecost triptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia.[21] The presence of the master in the Fondazione Romano frescoes and the Accademia triptych is often judged partial, but even if the involvement of assistants can freely be admitted, especially in the fresco of large dimensions, Andrea's direct intervention is undoubtedly revealed in various parts of the cycle.[22]

The stylistic features that distinguish the art of Orcagna in the last two decades of his life emerge from a comparative assessment of the above-cited paintings. They document his gradual transition from ample, softly modeled and majestic forms, defined by sharp contours, chiaroscuro effects of great delicacy, and a predilection for the abstract purity of large sweeping expanses of color, to a quite different manner. His late works are characterized indeed by a more marked, even at times brutal, accentuation of the three-dimensionality of bodies. Apparently, after the experience of realizing the sculptures for the tabernacle of Orsanmichele (1352–1360), Orcagna was intent on reproducing in his paintings a two-dimensional

simulation of the effect of reliefs that stand out clearly, with smooth and lustrous surfaces, from a monochromatic, enamel-like ground. His narrative scenes are characterized by an extreme reduction to essentials in composition and by the predominant role of the human figure, whose plasticity is accentuated by being delineated, as if *contre-jour*, against the gold ground.

The artist of the Madonna in the Gallery, however, does not seem to have aimed at results of this kind. The delicate passages of chiaroscuro confer softness on the flesh parts, while the gradual darkening of the varicolored marble floor on which Mary is sitting subtly accentuates its extension into depth.[23] In particular the foreshortened prayer book in the foreground and the undulating lower hem of the Virgin's mantle are painted with a deliberate illusionistic effect: the latter in particular projects beyond the front edge of the marble floor that defines the frame of the image, and thus seems to extend into the real space of the spectator. Such illusionistic effects are, as far as his generally recognized works show, alien to Orcagna's repertoire. In the Gallery panel, moreover, there is no trace of the metallic hardness and sheen of forms. Nor does the drapery show any of the angular folds with deep, sharp-edged undercutting that are usually found in Andrea's paintings, especially in those dating to the seventh decade, such as the abovementioned triptych of the Pentecost or the triptych of Saint Matthew in the Uffizi, Florence, a work begun by the artist but completed by a workshop assistant after Orcagna's death in 1368.[24] Only some secondary passages, such as the fluttering angels in the central panel of the Pentecost altarpiece (of which Jacopo's partial execution has been proposed),[25] recall the more fluid drawing and more relaxed emotional climate of the Gallery panel.

It is in fact in the oeuvre of Jacopo di Cione that our panel finds its closest affinities, in particular with the polyptych painted between 1370 and 1371 for the Florentine church of San Pier Maggiore and with the Florentine *Pala della Zecca* (now in the Galleria dell'Accademia) for which Jacopo received final payment in 1373.[26] Close relatives of the face of Mary in the Gallery panel seem to me that of the crowned Virgin in the *Pala della Zecca* [fig. 1] and that of the *Madonna of Humility*, also now in the Galleria dell'Accademia.[27] The Christ child, in turn, is closely akin to counterparts both in the latter panel and in the versions of the Madonna and Child in the church of Santi Apostoli in Florence and in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest.[28] The tiered angels in the upper part of our painting [fig. 2] are almost identical to those in the two gabled panels from the San Pier Maggiore altarpiece [fig. 3], now in the National Gallery in London. The analogies

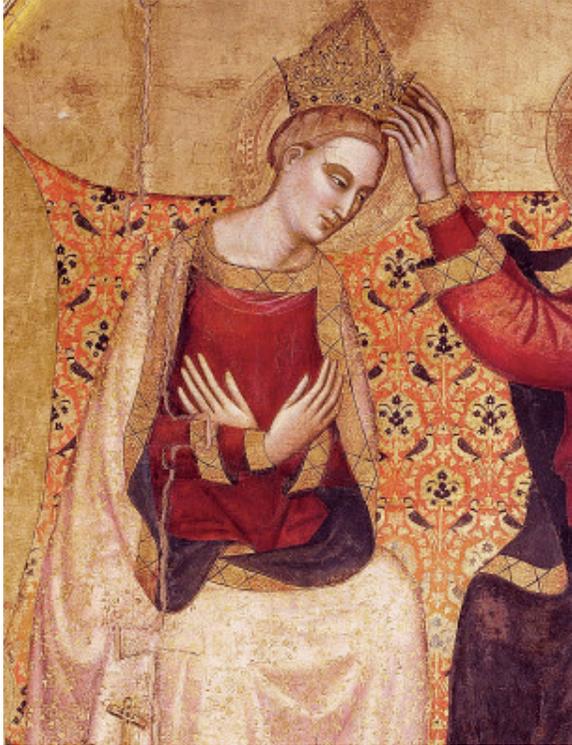
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can also be extended to the blessing God the Father [fig. 4], who recalls the Christ in the Pala della Zecca [fig. 5] and some of the saints, too, in the polyptych of San Pier Maggiore [fig. 6].<sup>[29]</sup> In most of these images the modeling is now impoverished as a result of repeated, over-energetic cleaning, but the fluency of design, spaciousness of composition, and the artist's ever greater attention to three-dimensional effects confirm the attribution of the painting to Jacopo. Typical of Jacopo di Cione, in addition, are such details as Mary's tapering fingers and the mood of subtle languor that characterizes her face. The pursuit of gracefulness of pose and the delicate chiaroscuro in the modeling strongly suggest that the Gallery panel belongs to a phase preceding the artist's output in the 1380s <sup>[30]</sup> and was probably produced in the years c. 1370/1375, probably closer to the second of these dates.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Mary, Jacopo di Cione, *Coronation of the Virgin (Pala della Zecca)*, 1373, tempera on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. © Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 2** Detail of angels, Jacopo di Cione, *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*, c. 1370/1375, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of angels in adoration, Jacopo di Cione, San Pier Maggiore altarpiece, 1370–1371, tempera on panel, National Gallery, London. © National Gallery, London/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Detail of God the Father, Jacopo di Cione, *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*, c. 1370/1375, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 5** Detail of Jesus, Jacopo di Cione, *Coronation of the Virgin (Pala della Zecca)*, 1373, tempera on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. © Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 6** Detail of adoring saints, Jacopo di Cione, San Pier Maggiore altarpiece, 1370–1371, tempera on panel, National Gallery, London. © National Gallery, London/Art Resource, NY

## NOTES

- [1] On the question, see E. Morsbach, “Lactans (Maria Lactans),” in *Marienlexikon*, eds. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1991), 3:701–703. That the suckling of the child has a wider significance than the maternity of Mary is revealed not only by the circumstance that the child mainly directs his gaze towards the spectator but also by the inscription MATER OMNIUM (mother of all) on a Madonna of Humility attributed to Roberto d’Oderisio in the church of San Domenico Maggiore in Naples. Cf. Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Arte di corte nella Napoli angioina* (Florence, 1986), 377 and fig. 63.
- [2] See P. De Ambrogio, “Maria, Santissima,” in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, 12 vols. (Vatican City, 1952), 8:76–85; Günter Bernt, “Stella maris,” in *Marienlexikon*, eds. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:291.

- [3] A Madonna of Humility painted on the back of Bernardo Daddi's Gambier Parry polyptych dated 1348, and now in the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery in London, is the earliest known version of the iconographic theme in Florentine painting. See Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background: The Bourgeois Republic before Cosimo de' Medici's Advent to Power, XIV and XV Centuries* (London, 1948), 181. The composition of the London painting is close to that of the panel being discussed here; it suggests that the model, now lost, for Jacopo's panel can be traced to Daddi's shop. The fundamental study of the iconography of the Madonna of Humility remains that of Millard Meiss, "The Madonna of Humility," *The Art Bulletin* 18 (1936): 435–464; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 132–156; see also Gregor Martin Lechner, "Umiltà," in *Marienlexikon*, eds. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:512–515. Contrary to what Meiss suggested (1936) and what virtually all the subsequent literature endorsed, the iconography of the Madonna of Humility originated not c. 1340 but sometime earlier, and probably at Avignon, where it was familiar even before the arrival of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) in that city in 1335. See Joseph Polzer, "Concerning the Origin of the Virgin of Humility Theme," *Racar* 27 (2000): 1–31; and Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 83.
- [4] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 138 n. 23, lists the following copies of the Gallery panel: Giovanni del Biondo, New York, former Tolentino sale; Don Silvestro dei Gherarducci (now attr. to), Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, no. 3161; Lorenzo di Bicci (now attr. to), Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, no. 3148, now Santa Maria Assunta, Loro Ciuffena; Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon, no. M.I. 365; Lorenzo di Niccolò, chiesa parrocchiale, Cevoli, Pisa; Master of the Orcagnesque Misericordia, formerly Galerie Pardo, Paris; Tommaso del Mazza (now attr. to), Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art, no. 1945.25.119. For more on these copies see, respectively, Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, pt. 2, *Giovanni del Biondo* (New York, 1969), 190, pl. xlv; Gaudenz Freuler, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 4, vol. 7, pt. 2, *Tendencies of Gothic in Florence: Don Silvestro de' Gherarducci*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, new ed. (Florence, 1997), 412–417, pl. xlii; Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 2, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIV* (Rome, 1965), 128–129, fig. 89; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 103; Adelheid Medicus Gealt, *Lorenzo di Niccolò* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1979), 44 and fig. 23; Marilena Tamassia, *Collezioni d'arte tra Ottocento e Novecento: Jacquier fotografi a Firenze, 1870–1935* (Naples, 1995), 85–86; Carl

Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 414–416. Other paintings to be added to this list are those of Don Silvestro dei Gherarducci in the Fine Arts Museums, San Francisco, no. 83.68.4; Niccolò Gerini, Acton collection, Florence; as well as Masolino's famous panel in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich. For these paintings, see Freuler 1997, 422–423; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), fig. 162; Perri Lee Roberts, *Masolino da Panicale* (Oxford, 1993), fig. 5.

- [5] Osvald Sirén, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, trans. Frederic Schenck, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1917), 1:220, 224, 225, 275; 2: pl. 187.
- [6] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 5.
- [7] See note 6 above. Bernard Berenson, “Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 2,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1057; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 275; Bernard Berenson, *Pittura italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 236. In fact, Berenson annotated the back of the photograph in his archive (now in the Berenson Library at I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence): “Madonna by Andrea Orcagna; Christ and angels probably by Jacopo di Cione.” This annotation is also on a photograph in the Kress Foundation records (copy in NGA curatorial files).
- [8] Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Jacopo di Cione,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1932), 26:39; Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Lorenzo di Bicci: Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 4 (1933): 114; Frederick Antal, *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background: The Bourgeois Republic before Cosimo de’ Medici’s Advent to Power, XIV and XV Centuries* (London, 1948), 145, 194, 225 nn. 126–127, pl. 44a; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 74–75; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 1, *Andrea di Cione* (New York, 1962), 73; Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), iv, 3, 5, 6, 103, 104 n. 1, 107–111, 123, 125 n. 5, 139, pls. X–X3; Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 4, *Giovanni del Biondo* (New York, 1967), ix n. 77; Mirella Levi D’Ancona, “Don Silvestro dei Gherarducci e il Maestro delle Canzoni: Due miniatori trecenteschi della scuola di S. Maria degli Angeli a Firenze,” *Rivista d’arte* 32 (1957): 11, 13; Klara Steinweg, “Die Kreuzigung Petri des Jacopo di

Cione in der Pinacoteca Vaticana,” *Rendiconti: Pontificia Accademia romana di archeologia* 30–31 (1957–1959): 244 n. 19; Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, pt. 2, *Giovanni del Biondo* (New York, 1969), v, 59 n. 2; Miklós Boskovits, “Une Madonne de l’atelier de Niccolò di Pietro Gerini,” *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 21 (1962): 27; Miklós Boskovits, “Der Meister der Santa Verdiana: Beiträge zur Geschichte der florentinischen Malerei um die Wende des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 13 (1967): 50; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 330; Alessandro Parronchi, *Studi sulla “dolce” prospettiva* (Milan, 1964), 121; Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 2, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIV* (Rome, 1965), 102, 129, 136, 137; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 99, 149, 160, 255, 397; Carl Huter, “Gentile da Fabriano and the Madonna of Humility,” *Arte veneta* 24 (1970): 29–30, 34 n. 12, fig. 38; Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 7, 53 n. 27, fig. 266; Barbara Deimling, “Il Maestro di Santa Verdiana: Un polittico disperso e il problema dell’identificazione,” *Arte cristiana* 79 (1991): 406; Barbara Deimling and Simona Pasquinucci, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 4, vol. 8, *Tradition and Innovation in Florentine Trecento Painting: Giovanni Bonsi–Tommaso del Mazza*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, new ed. (Florence, 2000), 187 n. 1; Barbara Deimling, “The Contamination of the Senses and the Purification of the Air in Mid-Fourteenth-Century Florence,” in *Opere e giorni: Studi su mille anni di arte europea dedicati a Max Seidel*, ed. Klaus Bergdolt and Giorgio Bonsanti (Venice, 2001), 171 fig. 6; Barbara Deimling, “Tommaso del Mazza: The Portrait of a Painter in Late Trecento Florence,” in *Discovering a Pre-Renaissance Master: Tommaso del Mazza*, ed. Anne Short (Greenville, SC, 2009), 3; Paul Joannides, *Masaccio and Masolino: A Complete Catalogue* (London, 1993), 41, 48, 380, pl. 28; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:195; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 514; Daniela Parenti, “Studi recenti su Orcagna e sulla pittura dopo la ‘peste nera,’” *Arte cristiana* 89 (2001): 330; Costanza Baldini, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 124; Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 136; Angelo Tartuferi, “Jacopo di Cione,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2004), 62:58; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia*

*Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 415–416; Miklós Boskovits and Daniela Parenti, eds., *Dipinti*, vol. 2, *Il tardo Trecento: Dalla tradizione oragnesca agli esordi del gotico internazionale*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze (Florence, 2010), 154.

[9] See note 7 above.

[10] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 31, 42, 138, fig. 140; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 2:106, 163; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 97; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 85; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 294; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 31–32; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:247–249; Deborah Phyl Strom, “A New Look at Jacopo della Quercia’s Madonna of Humility,” *Antichità viva* 19, no. 6 (1980): 19, fig. 6; Perri Lee Roberts, *Masolino da Panicale* (Oxford, 1993), 25, 253, fig. 7; Marilena Tamassia, *Collezioni d’arte tra Ottocento e Novecento: Jacquier fotografi a Firenze, 1870–1935* (Naples, 1995), 85; Gaudenz Freuler, in *Painting and Illumination in Early Renaissance Florence, 1300–1450*, ed. Laurence B. Kanter et al. (New York, 1994), 130, 168; Gaudenz Freuler, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 4, vol. 7, pt. 2, *Tendencies of Gothic in Florence: Don Silvestro de’ Gherarducci*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, new ed. (Florence 1997), 275, 293–294, 296, 412 n. 1, 416, 420 n. 1, 422 n. 2, 277 fig. 1.

[11] Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell’arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 637 n. 157; Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 17; Michel Laclotte and Elisabeth Mognetti, *Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais: Peinture italienne*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1976), no. 78; Anna Padoa Rizzo, “Per Andrea Orcagna pittore,” *Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa: Classe di lettere e filosofia* 11 (1981): 852, 887, pl. lxiii–2; Gert Kreytenberg, “Orcagna’s Madonna of Humility in the National Gallery of Art in Washington: Fragen nach Attribution und Ikonographie,” *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 10 (1990): 57–58; Gert Kreytenberg, “Andrea di Cione,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1991), 1:607; Gert Kreytenberg, “L’arca di San Ranieri di Tino di Camaino: Questioni di tipologia e di iconografia,” in *Storia ed arte nella piazza del Duomo: Conferenze 1992–1993*, ed. Opera della Primaziale pisana (Pisa, 1995), 36–37, fig. 17; Gert Kreytenberg, “Cione,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 7:335; Gert Kreytenberg, “Cione, Andrea di,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols.

(Munich, 1998), 19:259; Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 164–166, 180, 250, pl. 47; Beatrice Franci, “Orcagna, Andrea,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 2:660–661; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 103; Gaudenz Freuler, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 101, fig. 1.

- [12] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 42.
- [13] Osvald Sirén, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, trans. Frederic Schenck, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1917), 1:220, 224, 225, 275; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 466–468; Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Jacopo di Cione,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1932), 26:39; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 236; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 42; Mirella Levi D’Ancona, “Don Silvestro dei Gherarducci e il Maestro delle Canzoni: Due miniatori trecenteschi della scuola di S. Maria degli Angeli a Firenze,” *Rivista d’arte* 32 (1957): 11, 13; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 97; Klara Steinweg, “Die Kreuzigung Petri des Jacopo di Cione in der Pinacoteca Vaticana,” *Rendiconti: Pontificia Accademia romana di archeologia* 30–31 (1957–1959): 244 n. 19; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 31–32.
- [14] Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 108; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 255; Carl Huter, “Gentile da Fabriano and the Madonna of Humility,” *Arte veneta* 24 (1970): 29; Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, pt. 2, *Giovanni del Biondo* (New York, 1969), 59 n. 2; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:247–249; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 330.
- [15] For the problems in reconstructing the artist’s youthful phase, see Angelo Tartuferi, “Jacopo di Cione,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2004), 62:57–58. Bernard Berenson assigned to Jacopo’s early

activity several paintings now generally attributed to the Master of San Lucchese, whereas he attributed to Niccolò di Tommaso various paintings that the present writer and much of the more recent literature has reinstated in the catalog of Jacopo di Cione. Cf. Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 2," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1039–1058; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 321–330. Richard Offner (1933) attributed to Jacopo the former Stoclet Madonna now in a private collection in New York, but the volume of the *Corpus* dedicated to Jacopo excluded it, apparently on the initiative of Klara Steinweg, who believed the most appropriate classification for the painting to be "Daddesque–Orcagnesque." Cf. Richard Offner, "The Mostra del Tesoro di Firenze Sacra," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 63 (1933): 84 n. 59; Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), iii n. 2. These doubts about the attribution to Jacopo of the important ex-Stoclet painting, which apart from the date 1362 also bears the coat of arms of the Parte Guelfa, were later transformed by Gert Kreytenberg into an attribution to Andrea Orcagna. See Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 162–163.

- [16] Comparing the photograph of the painting taken on the occasion of its sale (Sotheby's, London, June 30, 1965, lot 20) with that illustrated by Gert Kreytenberg (2000), it is apparent that the Stoclet Madonna had in the meantime been subjected to the "embellishment" of a restoration that had altered its original character. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pl. 48; and Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), pl. 46. Nevertheless, its stylistic character is sufficiently apparent to be able confidently to affirm for it an attribution to Jacopo di Cione.
- [17] Miklós Boskovits, "Orcagna in 1357—and in Other Times," *The Burlington Magazine* 113 (1971): 239–251; Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 32–34.
- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 986, attributed the Rijksmuseum triptych to Orcagna; see also Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 66–71.
- [19] Mario Salmi, "Review of Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century by Richard Offner," *Rivista d'arte* 11 (1929): 133–145; Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 78–80.
- [20] Osvald Sirén, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, trans. Frederic Schenck, 2

vols. (Cambridge, 1917), 1:232–239; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 1, *Andrea di Cione* (New York, 1962), 65–69.

- [21] Osvald Sirén, *Giotto and Some of His Followers*, trans. Frederic Schenck, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1917), 1:226–227; Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 43–47.
- [22] This is the opinion expressed by Miklós Boskovits, “Orcagna in 1357—And in Other Times,” *The Burlington Magazine* 113 (1971): 251; Anna Padoa Rizzo, “Per Andrea Orcagna pittore,” *Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa: Classe di lettere e filosofia* 11 (1981): 864, 874, 876, 889; Stefania Ricci, “Orcagna, Andrea/Andrea di Cione,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:645; Angelo Tartuferi, “L’arte dell’età gotica,” in *La chiesa e il convento di Santo Spirito a Firenze*, ed. Cristina Acidini Luchinat and Elena Capretti (Florence, 1996), 67.
- [23] The spatial device of the gradual darkening of the floor could be called pseudo-perspective; it is of the kind prescribed in Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell’arte*, ed. Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza, 2003), chap. LXXXV, 127, to suggest distance: “E’ quando ài da fare le montagne che paiano più a lunghi, più fa’ scuri i tuoi colori; et quando le fai dimostrare più appresso, fa’ i colori più chiari” (And when you need to make mountains that appear farther away, make your colors darker; and when you need to show them closer, make your colors lighter). As the editor of the treatise pointed out (Cennini 2003, 222–223 n. 100), some modern commentators consider this rule the result of a mistaken description, but in fact it was a practice that Trecento painters frequently followed.
- [24] As is well known, the commission of the Uffizi triptych was transferred from Andrea to Jacopo di Cione in 1368, “essendo malato detto Andrea” (the said Andrea being ill). Cf. Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 17–26; Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna, Andrea di Cione: Ein universeller Künstler der Gotik in Florenz* (Mainz, 2000), 166–169. I have tried to demonstrate elsewhere that the painting was completed not by Jacopo but by one of his assistants, the Master Ashmolean Predella; in any case, there can be no doubt that Orcagna himself was responsible for the design of the whole work and also for the painting of the central figure. See Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 51.
- [25] Miklós Boskovits, “Orcagna in 1357—And in Other Times,” *The Burlington Magazine* 113 (1971): 251 n. 38; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 324.
- [26] Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of*

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*Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), 2, 8.

[27] Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), pls. VI<sup>2</sup> and VIII.

[28] Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), pls. IX–IX<sup>1</sup> and XII–XX<sup>1</sup>. The second of the two paintings, already given to Jacopo by Bernard Berenson, Offner, and other scholars, was described as “circle of Jacopo di Cione” in the volume of the *Corpus* devoted to this master, again on Steinweg’s initiative.

[29] I refer in particular to the images of Saint James Major (with the pilgrim’s staff) and Saint Julian (with the sword) in the right lateral of the polyptych. See Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), pl. III10.

[30] Apart from the triptych formerly in the Fischel collection in Vienna and dated 1379, and the main figures of the polyptych in the church of Santi Apostoli in Florence, which bears the date 1383, another painting dated to the same year may also be mentioned here, namely the Madonna in the church of Sant’Agata di Mugello in Scarperia. See Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pl. 53 and fig. 119; and Lia Brunori, “Il patrimonio artistico,” in *Scarperia: Storia, arte, artigianato* (Florence, 1990), 47–50.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is constructed with several (probably five) planks of wood with vertical grain. The painted surface is surrounded by unpainted edges, originally covered by the now lost engaged frame. The panel has been thinned down to its present thickness of 0.6 cm, backed by an additional panel, and cradled by Stephen Pichetto in 1944. It has suffered from worm damage in the past. The painting was executed on a white gesso ground that was covered by a red bole preparation in the parts to be gilded. The outlines of the figures were demarcated with incised lines. The artist used warm, brown green underpaint in the flesh tones, and the paint was built up with smooth striations. The decorative borders of the Madonna’s clothing were created by mordant gilding.

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Pichetto removed a discolored varnish during his treatment in 1944. Mario Modestini removed the varnish again and inpainted the panel in 1962.<sup>[1]</sup> Old photographs,<sup>[2]</sup> as well as the photo taken during restoration in 1962, show damage to the paint surface deriving from cracking along the joins between the panels. A vertical join runs through the right wrist of God the Father, the Virgin's forehead and left hand, and the child's right wrist. There are paint losses along this join and along checks passing through the faces and necks of the angels on the right, as well as in the extreme right edge of the Madonna's cloak and in the gold ground. A horizontal scratch through the dove of the Holy Spirit and the faces of the lower pair of angels on the left has also caused minor damage. The losses were inpainted in 1962, when a now somewhat discolored varnish was applied to the paint layer. Apart from the abovementioned damage, the painting is in reasonably good condition.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:249, provided summary information on these restorations. See also the note added to the Condition and Restoration Record in NGA curatorial files, probably after the 1962 treatment.
- [2] Richard Offner and Steinweg seem to have used an earlier photograph for their reproduction in the *Corpus* volume of 1965 than the photograph reproduced by Robert Lehman (1928). The painting appears to have been treated during the time period between the two photos. Lehman's photograph presumably was taken when the painting was still in the art market. The condition of the panel remains essentially the same in the photograph used by Lehman and the photographs taken prior to Pichetto's treatment in 1944. Cf. Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 3, *Jacopo di Cione* (New York, 1965), pls. X–X3; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 5.
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### PROVENANCE

Art market, Florence; Philip Lehman [1861-1947], New York, by 1917;<sup>[1]</sup> sold September 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[2]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] Osvald Sirén (1917) cites the painting as formerly belonging to a Florentine

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art dealer; the *terminus post quem* for Lehman's purchase might be 1911, the year in which he began his activity as a collector. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York: Paintings*, Paris, 1928: Introduction, n.p. [2] Lehman 1928, no. 5. The bill of sale between Robert Lehman and the Kress Foundation for three paintings, including *Madonna and Child with Angels*, is dated 15 September 1943 (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892-1963) was the owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1917 Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives, F. Kleinberger Galleries, New York, 1917, no. 5, repro.

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946.

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# Duccio di Buoninsegna

Also known as

Duccio

Sieneese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319

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The greatest exponent of Sieneese painting between the last quarter of the thirteenth and the first two decades of the fourteenth century, Duccio is documented for the first time in the role of painter in 1278, when he was paid by the *Comune* of Siena for the decoration of twelve coffers (*casse*) for the conservation of documents. Although this cannot have been a work of any particular artistic distinction, we may assume that the civic authorities would have chosen an artist who was already prominent in the city and in charge of a thriving workshop. Duccio is further recorded in Siena in 1279 and 1281, and then almost annually from 1285 onward.[1]

Some inferences can be drawn about his youthful career on the basis of his first documented panel painting, the altarpiece “*ad honorem beate et gloriose Virginis Marie*,” commissioned on April 14, 1285, by a Florentine confraternity, the Compagnia dei Laudesi, for Santa Maria Novella in Florence—the so-called *Madonna Rucellai*, now in the Uffizi, Florence. The strongly Cimabuesque character of this work (though, in contrast to the contemporary production of Cimabue, it is distinguished by a more intimate and lyrical interpretation of the subject and by more studied calligraphic elegance of line and rich decorative patterning that recall the refinement of French and English Gothic painting of the period) suggests the existence of close relations between the leading Florentine master and the young Sieneese painter in the first half of the 1280s. This also seems confirmed by other works probably painted in these years, such as the frescoes in the Chapel of Saint Gregory in Santa Maria Novella, the *Madonna Gualino* (Galleria Sabauda, Turin), and the *Madonna di Crevole* (Museo dell’Opera del Duomo, Siena), as well as by the circumstance that some paintings of Cimabue datable to the 1280s were in the past erroneously thought to be works of Duccio or executed with his collaboration (the *Madonna* in the Santa Verdiana Museum, Castelfiorentino, the *Maestà* in the church of Santa Maria dei Servi in Bologna, and the *Flagellation* in the Frick Collection in New York).[2] There seem to be good

grounds, therefore, for supposing that the two artists worked closely together in the early 1280s, perhaps within the same atelier. But there can be no doubt that Duccio was first trained in Siena in the eighth decade of the thirteenth century, under the influence of such masters as Guido and Rinaldo da Siena. A testimony of the style of this initial phase can perhaps be found in some of the mural paintings in the crypt below the cathedral in Siena, rediscovered in recent years.[3]

Duccio presumably spent the years 1280–1285 in Rome. This is evidenced by a single work, the painted cross formerly in the Castello Orsini at Bracciano (near Rome) and now in the Salini collection near Asciano in the province of Siena. Evidence of the artist's encounter with classical and postclassical figurative culture in Rome is also clearly visible in the great stained-glass rose window (*Dormition, Assumption, and Coronation of the Virgin and Saints*) in Siena Cathedral, based on a design by Duccio and likely dating to the late 1280s. Thereafter the master probably spent his career permanently in his hometown, where he began producing precious small devotional paintings for high-ranking private patrons (the Madonna in the Kunstmuseum in Bern, the former Stoclet collection Madonna now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the small triptych in the Royal Collections of England, Hampton Court). But he was also commissioned to paint altarpieces for churches outside Siena (the Madonna formerly the center of a polyptych in San Domenico in Perugia and now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia). The hypothesis of Duccio's identification with a documented Duch de Siene, reported at Paris in 1296 (Stubblebine 1979), has now been discarded.[4]

Both the Cimabuesque reminiscences and the pursuit of grandeur suggested by his experience of Roman art disappeared from the works of Duccio's full maturity. In this phase he seemed more interested in cultivating elegance of pose, softness, and the expression of feelings. Important stages of his development in the first decade of the fourteenth century are the polyptychs nos. 28 and 47 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and, especially, the great *Maestà* destined for the high altar of Siena Cathedral, executed between c. 1308 and 1311. It was the largest and most complex altarpiece ever produced in Italy until then. Painted on front and rear sides, it comprised in all some eighty separate scenes.

Many uncertainties surround the output of the last years of Duccio's life. Some art historians—though without sufficient grounds—assign polyptych no. 47 in the Pinacoteca of Siena to this period. A more likely late work of the artist is the important though much damaged fresco *The Submission of the Castle of*

*Giuncarico* in the Sienese seat of government, the Palazzo Pubblico, which is datable to c. 1314. Documents suggest that the two-sided altarpiece for the Cathedral in Massa Marittima, modeled on the *Maestà* in Siena Cathedral, was in the course of execution in 1316. Undoubtedly painted with the extensive participation of Duccio's workshop assistants, the work is now fragmentary. Its most accomplished passages reveal an extraordinary delicacy in the modeling and a renewed pursuit of realistic effects, both in the composition and in the representation of the human figure, worthy of the master himself.

[1] See "I Documenti," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 573–582.

[2] For the relations between Cimabue and Duccio in the 1280s cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Duccio, la Maestà* (Milan, 1998), 128–137; and Miklós Boskovits, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 271–278. Hayden B. J. Maginnis, on the other hand, reversed the influence and conjectured that Cimabue, under the influence of the *Madonna Rucellai*, "responded rapidly to the challenges of Duccio." See Hayden B. J. Maginnis, "Duccio's Rucellai Madonna and the Origins of Florentine Painting," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 123 (1994): 161.

[3] Cf. Alessandro Bagnoli, "Alle origini della pittura senese: Prime osservazioni sul ciclo dei dipinti murali," in *Sotto il duomo di Siena: Scoperte archeologiche, architettoniche e figurative*, ed. Roberto Guerrini and Max Seidel (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 105–145.

[4] James H. Stubblebine (1979) cited Parisian documents relating to a Duch de Siene in 1296 and a Duch le Lombard in the following year. Neither one is described as a painter. See James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:4, 6, 8, 198–199.

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Duccio di Buoninsegna  
Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319

# *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*

1308-1311

tempera on panel

painted surface: 42.7 × 45.5 cm (16 13/16 × 17 15/16 in.)

overall: 43.3 × 46.2 × 4.4 cm (17 1/16 × 18 3/16 × 1 3/4 in.)

framed: 53.3 × 55.9 × 4.4 cm (21 × 22 × 1 3/4 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.141

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## ENTRY

The episode illustrated in the panel is that recounted in the synoptic Gospels of the calling of the first two apostles: Jesus [fig. 1], walking by the Sea of Galilee, accosts Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, as they are casting a net into the sea, and invites them: “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”[1] The composition conforms to the iconographic scheme already familiar in Sienese art in the thirteenth century,[2] though enriched by such details as the motif of the net full of fishes and Peter’s timid gesture of remonstrance, reported only by Luke (“Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!”). The painting was the fourth of the nine scenes ([fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4] [fig. 5] [fig. 6] [fig. 7] [fig. 8] [fig. 9]) representing episodes of the public ministry of Jesus, arranged in the predella on the rear side of the altarpiece, the side turned towards the apse [fig. 10] (see also *Reconstruction*). It was a kind of introduction to the narrative of the Passion, recounted in the twenty-six scenes of the main register of the back of the *Maestà* and the seven postmortem scenes placed in the gables [fig. 11] (see also *Reconstruction*). The

front side [fig. 12] (see also *Reconstruction*), facing the nave, was dedicated to the glorification of the Virgin Mary, to whom the cathedral was consecrated. In the main register she appears enthroned, surrounded by twenty angels and ten saints. In the upper register was a gallery of ten busts of apostles, while the predella illustrated seven stories of the childhood of Christ interspersed with six figures of prophets (see entry for *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*). The stories of the death and glorification of the Virgin appeared in the seven panels of the gable. Above these latter, at the very top of the altarpiece, on both sides of the work, small panels with busts of angels flanked further lost images.

The altarpiece of monumental dimensions and complex structure, of which *The Nativity* and *The Calling of the Apostles* formed part, is unusually well documented.[3] The procedures regulating the execution of the work and the payments to be made to the artist were meticulously described in a document dated October 9, 1308. It obliged Duccio to conduct the enterprise continuously, without any interruption, and without taking on any other work. It also stipulated that the hours of any absences from his workshop should be deducted from his daily remuneration. The wording of the document, and the fact that it fails to specify the subject or structure of the altarpiece, suggests that it was not in fact the original contract but a supplement to it, presumably prompted by the excessive slowness in the progress of the execution. By October 1308, therefore, Duccio probably had been at work on the *Maestà* for some time. On the other hand, we do have a secure *terminus ante quem* for the completion of the altarpiece: on June 9, 1311, some musicians were paid for having accompanied it as it was being transported, in triumphal procession, from the artist's workshop to the cathedral.[4] Subsequent events in the history of the work also can be followed almost step by step, thanks to the rich surviving documentation.

Art historical discussion of the *Maestà* has concentrated mainly on the problem of reconstructing the original appearance of the dismantled and in part dispersed ensemble. An exception is James Stubblebine's attempts to distinguish the parts attributable to various assistants who hypothetically participated in its execution.[5] The only fully autograph parts, in his view, were the large image of the *Maestà* itself on the front side and the predella below, while the rest of the altarpiece was attributable to various of the main Siennese painters of the early Trecento. In particular, the rear predella, of which this panel formed part, was, according to Stubblebine, painted by Pietro Lorenzetti (Siennese, active 1306 - 1345). More recent studies have not accepted this attribution, at variance with the stylistic data, and

the wording of the contract of 1308 also apparently contradicts it: a daily remuneration for Duccio was stipulated as “sixteen soldi of Sienese money for each day that the said Duccio shall work with his own hands on the said panel.”[6] In any case, the extraordinary stylistic coherence of the altarpiece seems to exclude the participation of artists who had already completed their apprenticeship and were able to express themselves with a style of their own—in other words, artists other than those of Duccio’s shop. Duccio, of course, would not have tackled single-handedly the daunting task of painting the eighty or so images of various size that make up the *Maestà*: he would have undoubtedly entrusted to others the largely mechanical realization of the more decorative parts. His assistants, following the outlines of his drawing, would have intervened in the painting of the less demanding areas of the settings, architectural backdrops, and draperies. But it is equally certain that the master rigorously controlled the work of his assistants, reserving for himself the task not only of painting the faces, or the bodies in movement, but also of revising and finishing the passages he had not personally painted himself.[7]

Discussion has also focused on how best to interpret the iconography of the scenes on the back of the *Maestà*,[8] which remains in some respects problematic. But art historical analysis has been especially prolific, as noted above, in trying to reconstruct its original appearance. This task, made difficult by the dismemberment of the altarpiece at an early date and the loss of some of its components, was systematically tackled for the first time by Eduard Dobbert (1885), a scholar whose knowledge of the front predella was limited to six scenes and six figures of prophets.[9] He rightly intuited that the sequence of the stories of the childhood of Christ must have begun with *The Annunciation* [fig. 2], that the scenes must have been interspersed with figures of prophets, and that the predella as a whole must have been as broad as the main panel of the *Maestà* above. Of the back predella, Dobbert seemed familiar only with *The Wedding at Cana* [fig. 5], which had remained in the Opera del Duomo in Siena, but he succeeded in correctly guessing the subjects of five other scenes.[10] Dobbert assumed that the number of episodes in the predella must have been identical on both sides of the altarpiece; so it followed that the scenes relating to the public life of Jesus, the first of which must have been a lost Baptism of Christ, would have been similarly interspersed with figures of prophets. Curt Weigelt (1909) accepted Dobbert’s reconstruction of the front predella but proposed the presence of ten stories in the rear predella (adding to the subjects already taken into consideration the Temptation in the Wilderness, Temptation on the Mount [fig. 4], and the Temptation

on the Temple [fig. 3], the latter a panel he himself had rediscovered).[11] Weigelt was in error in assuming that the gable zones were filled by eight panels of identical size on both sides.[12] This error was corrected in the reconstruction proposed by Vittorio Lusini (1912), who intuited the presence of a panel of larger size at the center of the upper tier: an image of identical width to that of the Crucifixion below. The two central panels, he conjectured, would have been composed of the now lost scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin (on the front side) and the Ascension (on the back), each of which would have been flanked by three gable panels on either side: the last episodes of the life of Mary above the *Maestà* and the postmortem stories of Christ on the back. This suggestion has in general been endorsed by more recent studies, whereas the reconstruction proposed by Lusini of a predella with as many as fifteen compartments (nine stories and six prophets) below the *Maestà* and eleven in the predella on the opposite side has not been accepted.[13]

In more recent decades, general consensus has been reached regarding the nine episodes of the rear predella. Weigelt's reconstruction of the front predella has also been accepted. It is also generally conceded that one of the stories of the public life of Jesus and the two scenes filling the front and rear of the central gable have been lost.[14] A second order of gable panels with busts of angels, some of them still extant, is also a generally accepted hypothesis.[15] The important research by John White (1973, 1979) has permitted the original dimensions of the *Maestà* to be established in a plausible way. It measured, according to White, 439 cm in width, while the predella would have been about 450 cm long. The altarpiece would have been supported by two robust lateral pillars or buttresses, with a width of some 30 cm.[16] The overall height of the *Maestà* remains difficult to calculate, since the gabled elements at the center of the altarpiece are now missing. Sporadic attempts to identify the lost panels with surviving paintings have not met with acceptance in the literature. Alessandro Conti thought that *Coronation of the Virgin* in Budapest (Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, no. 16) was a surviving fragment of the central panel of the upper tier on the front side.[17] The proposal is interesting, since the painting in question undoubtedly has Duccesque characteristics and its proportions (contrary to what has been claimed) do not seem at variance with those of the *Maestà*. Moreover, a witness as trustworthy as Lorenzo Ghiberti maintained that the Coronation did appear on the front side of the altarpiece. So, while we may admit that the pictorial treatment of the panel in Budapest reveals a hand inferior to that of Duccio himself, we ought not to dismiss too hastily the hypothesis that it originally formed part of the *Maestà*. [18]

Another hypothesis, formulated more recently by the present writer (1982, 1990), concerns the missing first scene of the back of the predella.[19] It seems to me that it can be identified with the little painting also in the museum in Budapest, *Saint John the Baptist Bearing Witness* [fig. 2]. In general, previous proposals for the reconstruction of the *Maestà* assumed for this part of the predella an image (perhaps the one that was still visible in the sacristy of the cathedral in 1798 and then disappeared) representing the Baptism of Christ or the Temptation in the Wilderness, though the theme of the Baptist Bearing Witness was also considered a possible subject.[20] The Budapest panel, which is in poor condition and perhaps for this very reason sold by the Opera del Duomo, represents a rare subject; very likely it formed part of a larger complex of which, however, no other component has yet been identified. Usually it has been connected with the activity of Ugolino da Siena. Might it instead have formed part of the altarpiece over the high altar in the cathedral? In its present condition it is very difficult to judge, but both the circumstance that Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle (who had perhaps been able to see it, in the mid-nineteenth century, in better condition than it is now) did not hesitate to attribute it to Duccio [21] and the slenderness of the arguments with which art historians have tried to deny that it formed part of the predella of the *Maestà* concur to make its belonging to this work an option that still, in my view, remains valid.[22]

The original appearance of the *Maestà*, and in particular of the back predella, thus still remains a discussed problem. What remains unchallenged, on the other hand, is the artistic quality of the two panels now in the National Gallery of Art, and on this point a further brief comment should be made. The particular accomplishment of execution of the paintings in the lower zones of the *Maestà* has long been recognized. Some have tried to explain this phenomenon by assuming that the painter left less room there for the intervention of studio assistants than in the less visible parts, in the upper tiers of the altarpiece.[23] Others emphasize, more plausibly, the more *retardataire* style detectable in the panels that would have adorned the gables of the work. They point out that the work would have proceeded from top to bottom, and suggest that during the long gestation of the enterprise Duccio was able to experiment with new solutions and to modify his initial project.[24] The painstaking execution, accomplished technique, concise narrative, and expressive emotion in the figures that populate the stories of the predella, where the perspective incongruities present in the gable panels and in the stories of the Passion no longer appear, would therefore depend on their later

dating, though this cannot be any later than June 30, 1311.[25] If we compare a passage such as the Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew with the similar scene of the Apparition of Jesus on the Sea of Tiberius (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena), we will immediately feel the greater spaciousness of the composition of the painting now in the Gallery. The figures are smaller and fewer but characterized by particular fluency and eloquence in gesture [fig. 13]. Similar aspects can also be detected in the predella panel of the Nativity [fig. 14], especially if the painting is compared, for example, with one of the last episodes of the life of Mary, recounted in the gable panels. In the Nativity, by contrast, a large number of figures are included, and yet the scene does not seem unduly crowded. In spite of some archaic features, such as the adoption of a larger scale for the figure of Mary than for the other figures, or the incongruity of the roof of the stable, seen from below on the right side and from above on the left, Duccio's "digressive approach to narration" [26] succeeds in both creating convincing spatial effects and combining the various episodes into a coherent composition. This is also thanks to the master's subtle analysis of the conduct of the protagonists, who, with their intense emotional participation, render the narrative vivid, complex, and humanly credible.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Christ, Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 2** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Saint John the Baptist Bearing Witness*, c. 1308–1311, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest



**fig. 3** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Temptation on the Temple*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo



**fig. 4** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Temptation on the Mountain*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Frick Collection, New York. Image © The Frick Collection, New York



**fig. 5** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Wedding at Cana*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo



**fig. 6** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Christ and the Samaritan Woman*, 1310–1311, tempera on panel, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid. Image © Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid



**fig. 7** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Healing of the Man Born Blind*, 1307/1308–1311, tempera on panel, The National Gallery, London. Image © National Gallery London/Art Resource, NY



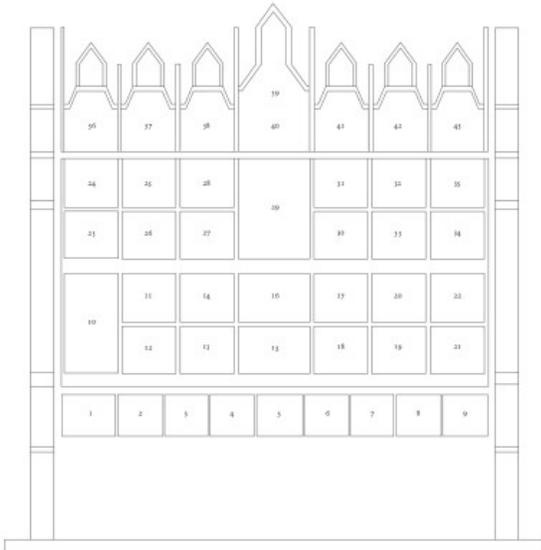
**fig. 8** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Transfiguration*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, The National Gallery, London. Image © National Gallery London/Art Resource, NY



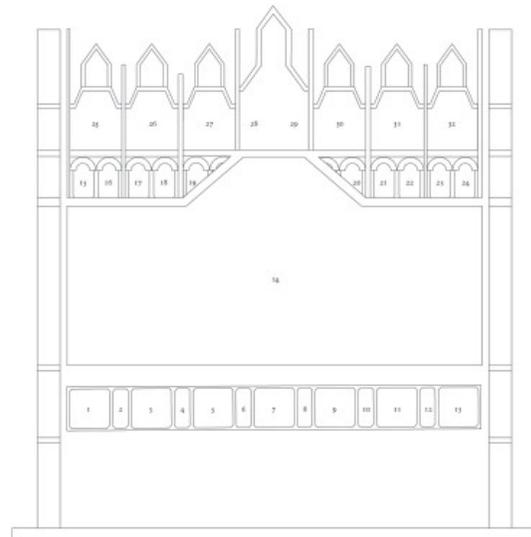
**fig. 9** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Raising of Lazarus*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth. Image: Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas/Art Resource, NY



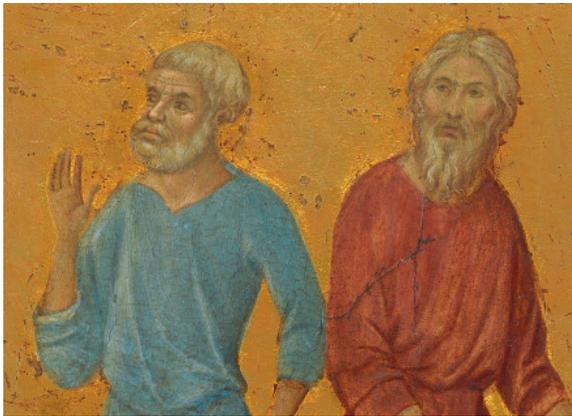
**fig. 10** Reconstruction of the back of the predella of Duccio di Buoninsegna's *Maestà*: a. *Saint John the Baptist Bearing Witness* (fig. 2); b. *Temptation on the Temple* (fig. 3); c. *Temptation on the Mountain* (fig. 4); d. *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*; e. *The Wedding at Cana* (fig. 5); f. *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (fig. 6); g. *Healing of the Man Born Blind* (fig. 7); h. *The Transfiguration* (fig. 8); i. *The Raising of Lazarus* (fig. 9)



**fig. 11** Reconstruction of the back of the *Maestà* altarpiece for Siena Cathedral by Duccio di Buoninsegna



**fig. 12** Reconstruction of the front of the *Maestà* altarpiece for Siena Cathedral by Duccio di Buoninsegna



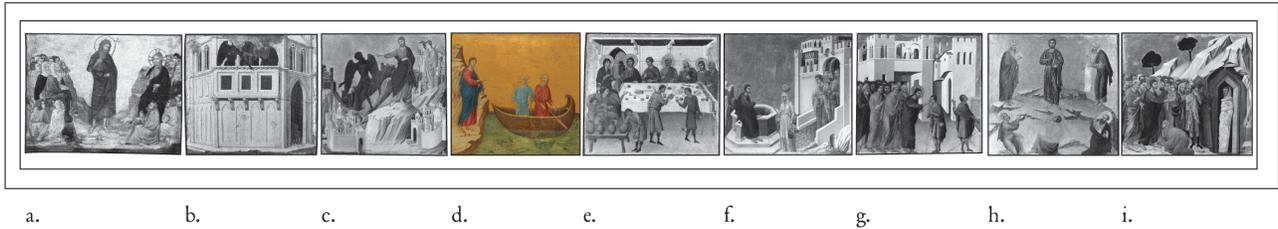
**fig. 13** Detail of apostles Peter and Andrew, Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 14** Detail of First Bath of the child, Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

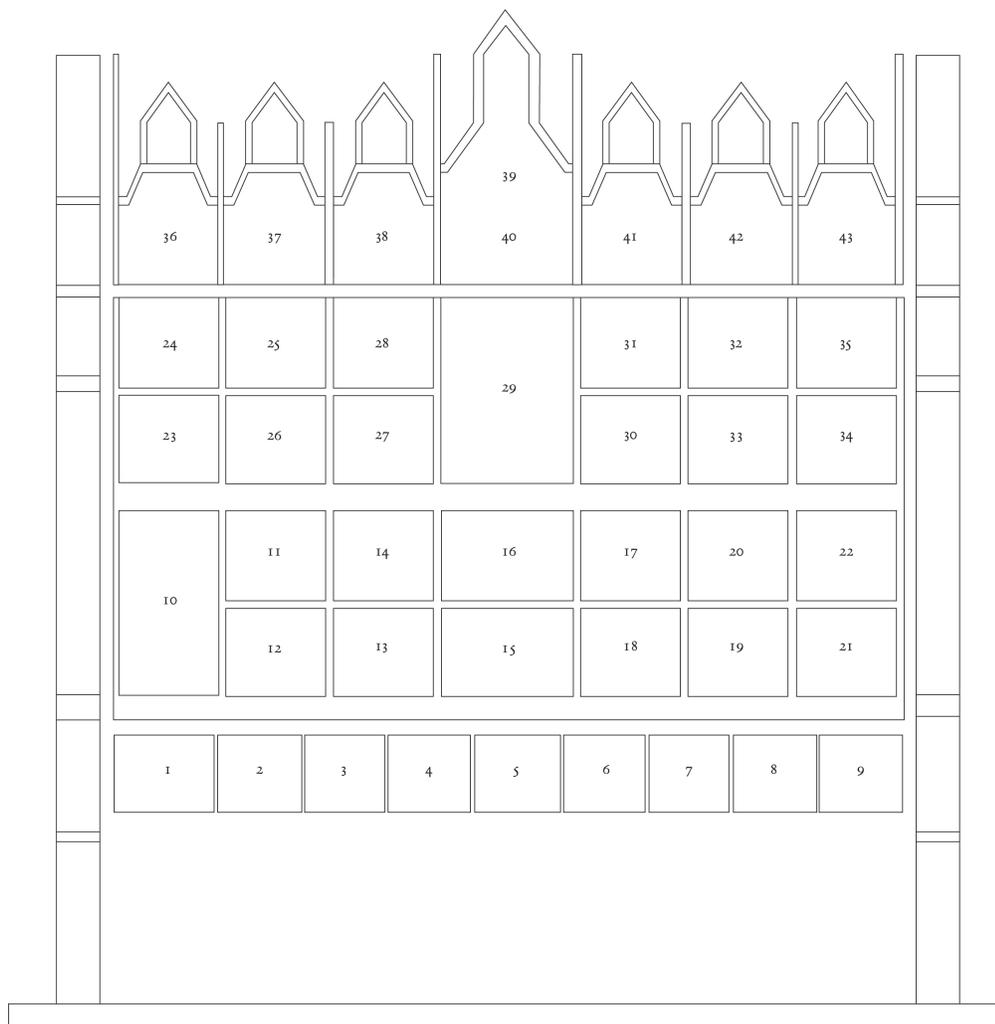
**RECONSTRUCTIONS**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of the back of the predella of Duccio di Buoninsegna's *Maestà*

- a. *Saint John the Baptist Bearing Witness* (Entry fig. 2)
- b. *Temptation on the Temple* (Entry fig. 3)
- c. *Temptation on the Mountain* (Entry fig. 4)
- d. *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*
- e. *The Wedding at Cana* (Entry fig. 5)
- f. *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (Entry fig. 6)
- g. *Healing of the Man Born Blind* (Entry fig. 7)
- h. *The Transfiguration* (Entry fig. 8)
- i. *The Raising of Lazarus* (Entry fig. 9)

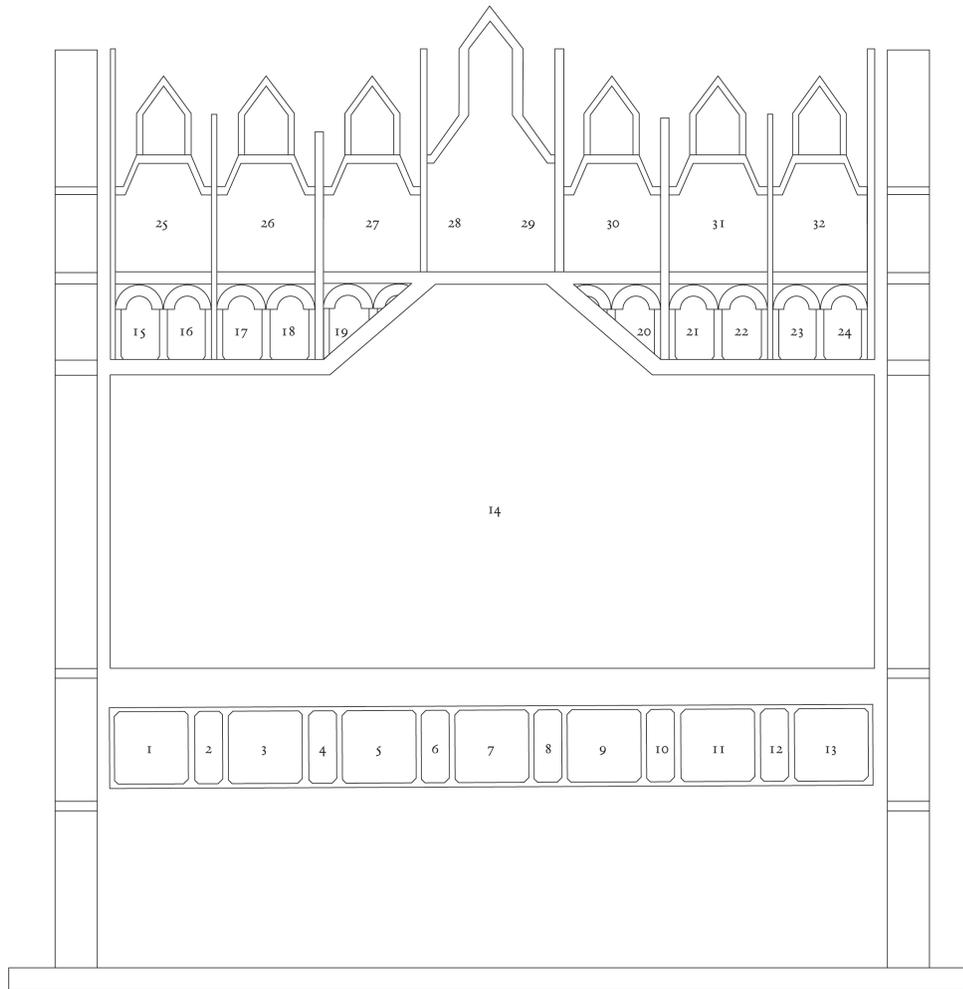


Reconstruction of the back of the *Maestà* altarpiece for Siena Cathedral by Duccio di Buoninsegna:

## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

1. *John the Baptist Bearing Witness* (Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest)
2. *Christ's Temptation on the Temple* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
3. *Christ's Temptation on the Mountain* (Frick Collection, New York)
4. *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew* (National Gallery of Art, Washington)
5. *The Wedding at Cana* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
6. *Christ and the Samaritan Woman* (Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid)
7. *The Healing of the Blind Man* (The National Gallery, London)
8. *The Transfiguration* (The National Gallery, London)
9. *The Raising of Lazarus* (Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth)
10. *The Entry into Jerusalem* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
11. *The Washing of the Disciples' Feet* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
12. *The Last Supper* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
13. *Christ Taking Leave of the Apostles* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
14. *Judas Taking the Bribe* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
15. *The Agony in the Garden* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
16. *The Betrayal of Christ* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
17. *The First Denial of Saint Peter* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
18. *Christ before Annas* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
19. *The Second Denial of Saint Peter* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
20. *The Third Denial of Saint Peter* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
21. *Christ Accused by the Pharisees* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
22. *Christ before Pilate* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
23. *Christ before Herod* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
24. *The Mocking of Christ* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
25. *The Flagellation* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
26. *The Crowning with Thorns* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
27. *Pilate Washing His Hands* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
28. *Christ Carrying the Cross* (lost)
29. *The Crucifixion* (lost)
30. *The Deposition* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
31. *The Entombment* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
32. *The Holy Women at the Tomb* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
33. *The Descent into Limbo* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
34. *Noli me tangere* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
35. *The Way to Emmaus* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
36. *The Apparition behind Closed Doors* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
37. *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
38. *The Apparition on the Sea* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
39. *Christ in Glory or The Last Judgment* (lost)
40. *The Ascension* (lost)
41. *The Apparition in Galilee* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
42. *The Apparition at Supper* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
43. *Pentecost* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)



Reconstruction of the front of the *Maestà* altarpiece for Siena Cathedral by Duccio di Buoninsegna:

## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

1. *The Annunciation* (The National Gallery, London)
2. *Isaiah* (National Gallery of Art, Washington)
3. *The Nativity* (National Gallery of Art, Washington)
4. *Ezekiel* (National Gallery of Art, Washington)
5. *The Adoration of the Magi* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
6. *Solomon or David* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
7. *The Presentation in the Temple* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
8. *Malachi* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
9. *The Massacre of the Innocents* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
10. *Jeremiah* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
11. *The Flight into Egypt* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
12. *Hosea* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
13. *Christ among the Doctors* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
14. *The Virgin and Child, Saints, and Angel* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
15. *Saint Thaddaeus* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
16. *Saint Simon* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
17. *Saint Philip* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
18. *Saint James the Great* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
19. *Saint Andrew* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
20. *Saint Matthew* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
21. *Saint James the Less* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
22. *Saint Bartholomew* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
23. *Saint Thomas* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
24. *Saint Matthias* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
25. *The Annunciation of the Virgin's Death* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
26. *The Virgin's Farewell to Saint John* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
27. *The Virgin's Farewell to the Apostles* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
28. *The Coronation of the Virgin* (lost)
29. *The Assumption* (lost)
30. *The Death of the Virgin* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
31. *The Funeral of the Virgin* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)
32. *The Entombment of the Virgin* (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena)

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## NOTES

- [1] See Mt 4:18–20; Mk 1:16–18; Lk 5:1–11.
- [2] Guido da Siena had proposed a similar composition in his *Pala di S. Pietro*, no. 15 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena.
- [3] For the relevant documentation, cf. Jane Immler Satkowski, *Duccio di Buoninsegna: The Documents and Early Sources*, ed. Hayden B.J. Maginnis (Athens, GA, 2000), 69–81; Alessandro Bagnoli et al., eds., *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 577–579.
- [4] Various scholars rightly have accepted John Pope-Hennessy's suggestion that the document of 1308 could not have been the original contract. Luciano Bellosi, however, thought that the work was executed between October 1308 and June 1311. See John Pope-Hennessy, "Some Italian Primitives," *Apollo* 118 (1983): 10–11; Luciano Bellosi, "Il percorso di Duccio," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 124.
- [5] James H. Stubblebine, "Duccio and His Collaborators on the Cathedral

Maestà,” *The Art Bulletin* 55 (1973): 185–204; James H. Stubblebine, “The Back Predella of Duccio’s Maestà,” in *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss*, ed. Irving Lavin and John Plummer, 2 vols. (New York, 1977), 1:430–436; James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:32, 39–48.

- [6] “Duccius promisit...laborare continue in dicta tabula temporibus quibus laborari poterit in eadem, et non accipere vel recepire aliquod aliud laborerium ad faciendum donec dicta tabula completa et facta fuerit... dominus Jacoppus operarius...promisit dicto Duccio pro suo salario...sedicim solidos denariorum Senensium pro quolibet die quo dictus Duccius laborabit suis manibus in dicta tabula” (Duccio promised...to work continuously upon the said panel at such times as he was able to work on it, and not to accept or receive any other work to be carried out until the said panel shall have been made and completed.... Lord Jacopo, clerk of works... promised the said Duccio as his salary...sixteen soldi of Sienese money for each day that the said Duccio shall work with his own hands on the said panel). Jane Immler Satkowski, *Duccio di Buoninsegna: The Documents and Early Sources*, ed. Hayden B.J. Maginnis (Athens, GA, 2000), 69; Alessandro Bagnoli et al., eds., *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 577.
- [7] For the organization of the work and the involvement of studio assistants in the execution of the *Maestà*, cf. John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 102–119; Luciano Bellosi, *Duccio, la Maestà* (Milan, 1998), 20. Bruno Zanardi’s observations on the system of collaboration between the painters in the fresco decoration of the basilica of San Francesco in Assisi should, however, be taken into consideration in this regard. Cf. Bruno Zanardi, *Giotto e Pietro Cavallini: La questione di Assisi e il cantiere medievale di pittura a fresco*, Biblioteca d’arte Skira (Milan, 2002), 39–83. Although in my view not always convincing, the observations of this intelligent and well-prepared restorer remain valuable, because they are the outcome of long experience with restoring medieval cycles of frescoes. The organization of teamwork between master and pupils in a cycle of mural paintings cannot have been very different from that ascertained, or assumed, in a large altarpiece like the *Maestà*.
- [8] Cf. John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 124–130; Florens Deuchler, *Duccio* (Milan, 1984), 58–63; Luciano Bellosi, *Duccio, la Maestà* (Milan, 1998), 14–15.
- [9] Eduard Dobbert, “Duccio’s Bild *Die Geburt Christi* in der Königlichen Gemälde-Galerie zu Berlin,” *Jahrbuch der Preußischen Kunstsammlungen* 6 (1885): 153–163.

- [10] Though Dobbert did not say so, he probably knew, either directly or at least indirectly, the five components of the back predella that passed into the hands of Fairfax Murray: *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*, *Christ with the Woman of Samaria*, and *Raising of Lazarus*, all three subsequently sold to the Benson collection in London; *Healing of the Man Born Blind*, sold together with the *Annunciation* from the front predella to the National Gallery in London in 1883; and the *Transfiguration*, purchased in Siena (presumably again from Fairfax Murray) by R.H. Wilson and donated to the National Gallery in London in 1891. The omission of the *Temptation on the Mountain*, undoubtedly in the hands of the same painter and art dealer in the early years of the nineteenth century, is difficult to explain. It was perhaps ignored merely because, according to Dobbert, no more than seven stories could have been placed on this side of the predella.
- [11] Curt H. Weigelt, "Contributo alla ricostruzione della Maestà di Duccio di Buoninsegna, che si trova nel Museo della Metropolitana di Siena," *Bullettino senese di storia patria* 16 (1909): 191–214.
- [12] A hypothetical reconstruction of the *Maestà* that proposed a complete series of representations of the three Temptations would involve an intractable problem of how to coordinate panels of unequal number in the various registers of the complex: ten stories in the predella, eight in the upper register, and seven episodes of the narrative of the Passion in the main panel. The thesis of ten stories in the back predella was revived in more recent times in the reconstruction proposed by Ernest T. DeWald, "Observations on Duccio's *Maestà*," in *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend Jr.*, ed. Kurt Weitzmann (Princeton, 1955), 367; Cesare Brandi, ed., *Il restauro della Maestà di Duccio* (Rome, 1959), 9.
- [13] In his efforts to complete the iconographic program in what seemed to him the most plausible way, though without taking sufficient account of the evidence of the surviving parts, Vittorio Lusini argued that the representations extended on both sides beyond the width of the main panel, also occupying the lateral pillars of the frame. Vittorio Lusini, "Di Duccio di Buoninsegna," *Rassegna d'arte senese* 8 (1912): 70–75.
- [14] Frederick A. Cooper, "A Reconstruction of Duccio's *Maestà*," *The Art Bulletin* 47 (1965): 163–164, proposed, implausibly, a predella with only six stories of the childhood of Christ, transferring the scene of Christ among the Doctors to the predella on the back. James H. Stubblebine rightly pointed out that the front and back predella must have had the same width and therefore that the back predella could not have accommodated more than nine scenes. James H. Stubblebine, "The Angel Pinnacles on Duccio's *Maestà*," *Art Quarterly* 32 (1969): 131–152; James H. Stubblebine, "The Back Predella of Duccio's *Maestà*," in *Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Painting in Honor of Millard Meiss*, ed. Irving Lavin and John Plummer, 2

vols. (New York, 1977), 1:430–436; James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:54. In his attempt iconographically to complete the subjects of the panels, he conjectured that a further two stories, a representation of Christ with the Baptist (the Baptism of Christ or the Baptist Bearing Witness) and a scene of a miracle (the Raising of Lazarus), were placed at the two narrow sides of the frame of the altarpiece, respectively flanking the episodes of Christ among the Doctors and the Transfiguration. Ruth Wilkins Sullivan made a similar proposal, though it has to be said that predellas of this type (with narrow side panels) otherwise appear in Siennese painting no earlier than the end of the fourteenth century. Ruth Wilkins Sullivan, “The Anointing in Bethany and Other Affirmations of Christ’s Divinity on Duccio’s Back Predella,” *The Art Bulletin* 67 (1985): 32–50.

- [15] The payment memorandum, undated but datable to c. 1309, referred to certain “angiolette di sopra” (little angels above) in the *Maestà*, which ever since Dobbert’s reconstruction (1885) were understood as panels of the highest tier. Cf. Jane Immler Satkowski, *Duccio di Buoninsegna: The Documents and Early Sources*, ed. Hayden B.J. Maginnis (Athens, GA, 2000), 75–76; Alessandro Bagnoli et al., eds., *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 578. Different proposals, however, have been formulated about the form and number of the components of this third register. Dobbert assumed twelve such busts of angels, placed to the sides of the stories of Christ, while Curt Weigelt (1909) concluded that there were eight on either side of the panel. After some tentative attempts at identification, it was James H. Stubblebine (1969) who identified the four busts of angels that the more recent literature recognizes as belonging to the *Maestà*: those in the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum in South Hadley, Massachusetts; in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (J.G. Johnson Collection); in the Stichting Huis Bergh in ’s-Heerenbergh, Holland; and the panel formerly in the Stoclet collection in Brussels. According to Stubblebine there must originally have been six busts of angels, both on the front and back sides, placed to the sides of the central image. Stubblebine’s proposal regarding the round-arched termination of these panels seems unjustified, since none of the four surviving busts of angels retains its original profile. See Eduard Dobbert, “Duccio’s Bild Die Geburt Christi in der Königlichen Gemälde-Galerie zu Berlin,” *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 6 (1885): 153–163; Curt H. Weigelt, “Contributo alla ricostruzione della Maestà di Duccio di Buoninsegna, che si trova nel Museo della Metropolitana di Siena,” *Bullettino senese di storia patria* 16 (1909): 191–214; James H. Stubblebine, “The Angel Pinnacles on Duccio’s Maestà,” *Art Quarterly* 32 (1969): 131–152. On this question see also Giovanna Ragionieri, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 25; Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson*

*Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 124–133.

- [16] John White, “Measurement, Design and Carpentry in Duccio’s *Maestà*, 1,” *The Art Bulletin* 55 (1973): 334–364; John White, “Measurement, Design and Carpentry in Duccio’s *Maestà*, 2,” *The Art Bulletin* 55 (1973): 547–569; John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 94, 207–208. White calculated the dimensions of the individual components of Duccio’s altarpiece starting from the assumption that the artist “almost certainly used a Roriczer Progression based on the width of the main panel together with a second progression based on the diagonal of the main panel, to control the entire proportional design of his altarpiece”(White 1979, 94). On the buttresses that served to support the elaborate and heavy structure of the *Maestà*, cf. Christa Gardner von Teuffel, “The Buttressed Altarpiece: A Forgotten Aspect of Tuscan Fourteenth-Century Altarpiece Design,” *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 21 (1979): 21–65.
- [17] Alessandro Conti, “Review of *Duccio, Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* by John White,” *Prospettiva* 23 (1980): 100.
- [18] Vittorio Lusini (1912) maintained that the subject represented in the central panel of the gable zone would have been a theme of particular importance and would have been linked iconographically with the central part of the main part of the altarpiece: he conjectured the Coronation of the Virgin (surmounted by the image of the Blessing Christ) over the *Maestà* and the Ascension (surmounted by the image of the Blessing God the Father) on the other side. Vittorio Lusini, “Di Duccio di Buoninsegna,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 8 (1912): 74. This proposal still retains its validity today, though a more accredited variant is that which links the episode of the Assumption with the Coronation and the Resurrection with the Ascension; both subjects are missing from the surviving panels of the *Maestà*. It is very significant, moreover, that Ghiberti, speaking of Duccio and the “tavola maggiore del duomo di Siena” (high altarpiece of Siena Cathedral), said that “nella parte dinançi” (on its front side), one could see “la incoronazione di Nostra Donna” (the coronation of Our Lady); cf. Julius von Schlosser, ed., *Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1912), 1:43. Alessandro Conti’s hypothesis, which Giovanni Ragionieri accepted (1989), was, however, rejected by more recent studies (Schmidt 1999, 2001, 2003) and evidently was not shared by Luciano Bellosi (1998), who failed to refer to it in his study on the *Maestà*. See Giovanna Ragionieri, *Duccio: Catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Florence, 1989), 134–135; Victor M. Schmidt, “A Duccesque Fragment of the Coronation of the Virgin,” *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 90–91 (1999): 39–52, 167–174; Victor M. Schmidt, “Duccio di Buoninsegna,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2001), 30:153–157; Victor M. Schmidt, “Tipologie e funzioni della pittura senese su tavola,” in *Duccio*:

*Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 557, 560; Luciano Bellosi, *Duccio, la Maestà* (Milan, 1998). However, as Victor M. Schmidt pointed out, the “pattern of the cloth of honor behind the Virgin in the Budapest panel is a virtual repetition of that of St. Catherine’s mantle,” and “the pattern of the Virgin’s mantle in the fragment repeats that of St. Agnes”: two of the female saints that appear alongside the Madonna in the *Maestà* (Schmidt 1999, 40–42). It should also be recalled that the motifs incised in the halos of the panel in Budapest closely resemble those in Duccio’s altarpiece. According to Schmidt, the dimensions of the fragment (51.5 × 32 cm) would exclude its belonging to the *Maestà*, since if the parts now truncated were to be reintegrated the panel would be too big to fit into the central gable. However, the reconstruction proposed by Schmidt did not take into account uncertainties in the calculation of the original size of the Budapest fragment: the difference between its effective width and the lost width of the central gable as John White reconstructed it (77.8 cm) would, in my view, leave sufficient space to accommodate the now lost figure of Christ and the essential structures of the throne. What seems hardly compatible with Duccio’s work is not the size but the style of the Budapest fragment, with its overly dense chiaroscuro and rather schematic modeling. On the other hand, the date of execution of the painting in the Hungarian museum (also in light of the analogies of the ornamental motifs that Schmidt observed) ought to fall more or less in the same years as the *Maestà*. Bearing this in mind, as well as the relative rarity of the subject as a self-standing image, I cannot categorically exclude the intervention of a studio assistant in this upper zone of the complex.

- [19] Miklós Boskovits, “Review of Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School by J.H. Stubblebine; and Duccio di Buoninsegna by J. White,” *The Art Bulletin* 64 (1982): 497–502; Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 76.
- [20] Though admitting the possibility that the first scene of the back predella might have been the Baptism of Christ, James H. Stubblebine wrote that “there is evidence pointing to the likelihood that the scene...represented the first time that the Baptist bore witness, as it is described in the Gospel (John 1: 26–27).” James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 53–54. According to Stubblebine, the painting representing this subject in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest (no. 6) could be a copy of the lost scene of the *Maestà*.
- [21] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1864), 2:52. The attribution to Duccio was later confirmed by such connoisseurs as Robert Langton Douglas, in Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in Italy from the Second*

to the Sixteenth Century, vol. 3, *The Sienese, Umbrian, and North Italian Schools*, ed. Robert Langton Douglas (London, 1908), 19 n. 2; and Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 176.

[22] Victor M. Schmidt observed that in the painting now in Budapest “some significant details are at odds with the scenes...that surely belong to the *Maestà*. First, the red color of the Christ’s garment is too dark.... Second, Christ’s blue mantle is striated with golden striations.... Third, Christ’s halo... has painted contours.” Victor M. Schmidt, “A Duccesque Painting Representing St John the Baptist Bearing Witness in the Museum of Fine Arts,” *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 96 (2002): 53–54. But in the painting’s current state, with its surface covered by a layer of grime and darkened varnish, and with the gold ground completely regilded, the first and last of these observations cannot be seriously taken into consideration. As for the second, since the mantle of Jesus also has golden striations in the last episode of the predella, the Transfiguration, it cannot be excluded that the same was also the case in the initial scene, another epiphany, in which John recognizes the Messiah in Jesus: “This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me’” (Jn 1:30). According to Anna Eörsi, the panel, which she confirmed to be probably the missing element on the back predella, illustrates the words of the Gospel of John (1:26): “there is one among you whom you do not recognize.” Anna Eörsi, “. . . There is one among you whom you do not recognise”: Some Golden Threads to Miklós Boskovits with Reference to Duccio’s Saint John the Baptist,” *Bulletin du Musée Hongrois des Beaux-Arts* 104 (2006): 63–73.

The dimensions of the Budapest painting in its present condition (28.5 × 38 cm) are considerably smaller than those of the predella (c. 48 × 50 cm is the average size of those predella panels that have not been cropped), but it seems that it has been cut on all sides, with the possible exception of the lower side. The proportions of the figures correspond, however, to those of the protagonists in the stories of Duccio’s predella. Evidently in view of its poor condition, the painting was transferred to a new support. This operation, conducted at some point in the first half of the nineteenth century, was botched, making drastic restoration of the painting’s whole surface necessary. Johann Anton Ramboux, who had purchased the painting in Siena, said it was comparable with those preserved in the sacristy of Siena Cathedral, i.e., the surviving gable and predella panels of the *Maestà*. See J.M. Heberle, *Catalog der nachgelassenen Kunst-Sammlungen des Herrn Johann Anton Ramboux* (Cologne, May 23, 1867) no. 70. This raises the strong suspicion that it was just this episode that was still present in the sacristy of the cathedral in 1798 but was then discarded.

[23] Weigelt, who suspected the intervention of assistants in the Marian scenes

of the upper register, considered the postmortem stories of Christ “ganz Schülerarbeit.” Curt H. Weigelt, *Duccio di Buoninsegna: Studien zur Geschichte der frühsienesischen Tafelmalerei* (Leipzig, 1911), 16. Vittorio Lusini also proposed the intervention of assistants in the gable panels, while in more recent times Enzo Carli spoke of the involvement of collaborators in the execution of the gable zone and perhaps also in the series of busts of apostles. See Vittorio Lusini, *Il Duomo di Siena* (Siena, 1911), 68; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese* (Milan, 1955), 48; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 66.

- [24] Apart from a first mention by Hayden B.J. Maginnis, it was John White who formulated a hypothesis on how such a large and complex work as the *Maestà* might have been painted. Hayden B.J. Maginnis, “The Literature of Sienese Trecento Painting 1945–1975,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 40 (1977): 279–280; John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 93, 106–107. In his view, the execution must have begun only after the completion of its wooden frame. He also assumed that the painting of the huge surface must have proceeded with the use of scaffolds, as in the case of a fresco. According to White, the undated memorandum of c. 1309 that established the procedures for the payment of the rear side of the altarpiece did not mention the predella, because at the time it was not yet in the course of execution. Therefore, it would have been the last part of the complex to be executed. Julian Gardner noted that the idea of alternating narrative scenes and standing figures derives from Nicola Pisano’s pulpit in the cathedral of Siena. Julian Gardner, “Some Aspects of the History of the Italian Altar, ca. 1250–ca. 1350: Placement and Decoration,” in *Objects, Images and the Word: Art in the Service of the Liturgy*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, 2003), 151.
- [25] Basing himself on the more advanced style of the scenes of the predella, Alessandro Conti suggested that it was added to the *Maestà* later than 1311. Alessandro Conti, “Review of Duccio, Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop by John White,” *Prospettiva* 23 (1980): 101. Except for Giulietta Chelazzi Dini et al., however, no recent scholars seem to have shared this hypothesis. Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, Alessandro Angelini, and Bernardina Sani, *Pittura senese* (Milan, 1997), 36.
- [26] Keith Christiansen, *Duccio and the Origins of Western Painting* (New York; New Haven, 2008), 29.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support consists of a single piece of horizontally grained wood, cradled by Stephen Pichetto in 1935 and probably thinned (thickness 0.9 cm) at that time.

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Before the painting process, fabric and gesso layers were applied to the panel. The main contour lines were incised into the gesso, and red bole was applied to the areas to be gilded. Infrared reflectography at 1.1–2.5 microns [1] reveals underdrawing marking the main folds of the garments, the facial features, and hatching in the boat. It also shows that Christ's face and proper right foot were moved. The paint was applied in thin, smooth layers.

The gold ground is probably modern, but the paint surface is only slightly worn. The two apostles probably had incised halos, which have completely disappeared. Small areas of inpainting are intended to conceal the prominent, vertical linear cracks in the panel that appear throughout the composition. In an area between the left edge of the boat and the left edge of the panel a series of thin, vertical, white lines form a kind of hatching. These lines seem to be a combination of damage and inpainting. They do not appear in early twentieth-century photographs,[2] and therefore the inpainting was probably added during the 1935 restoration. At that time, in addition to cradling the panel, Pichetto removed a discolored varnish and inpainted the losses. The similar but diagonally aligned hatching that appears in the water to the right of the net full of fishes also probably dates from the same intervention.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focal plane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.
- [2] See the reproduction in *Portfolio of Photographic Reproductions in the Early Italian Art Exhibition* (London, 1894), pl. 42; Robert Langton Douglas, ed., *Exhibition of Pictures of the School of Siena and Examples of the Minor Arts of That City* (London, 1905), pl. VI.

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### PROVENANCE

NGA 1939.1.141 formed part of the rear predella of Duccio's double-sided altarpiece the *Maestà*, which was in the course of execution by October 1308 and was placed on the high altar of the Cathedral of Siena on 30 June 1311;[1] the altarpiece was removed from the cathedral in 1506, first stored by the Cathedral authorities, and then later displayed on the wall of the left transept, close to the altar of Saint

Sebastian, but probably by this time the predella and gable panels had already been separated from it;<sup>[2]</sup> the altarpiece was moved to the church of Sant'Ansano in 1777, where its two sides were separated and returned to the cathedral;<sup>[3]</sup> in 1798 the gables and eight panels of the predella were reported as being housed in the sacristy of the cathedral, whereas the rest, including NGA 1939.1.141, must already have been in private hands;<sup>[4]</sup> Giuseppe and Marziale Dini, Colle Val d'Elsa (Siena), by 1879;<sup>[5]</sup> purchased 1886 by (Charles Fairfax Murray [1849-1919], London and Florence) for Robert Henry [1850-1929] and Evelyn Holford [1856-1943] Benson, London and Buckhurst Park, Sussex;<sup>[6]</sup> sold 1927 with the entire Benson collection to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[7]</sup> sold 1 October 1928 to Clarence H. Mackay [1874-1938], Roslyn, New York;<sup>[8]</sup> sold 1934 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[9]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] The documents are published in Jane Immler Satkowski, *Duccio di Boninsegna. The Documents and Early Sources*, ed. Hayden B.J. Maginnis, Atlanta, 2000: 69-81, and in Allesandro Bagnoli et al., eds. *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, Milan, 2003: 577-579. [2] See Alessandro Lisini, "Notizie di Duccio pittore e della sua celebre ancona," *Bullettino senese di storia patria* 5 (1898): 24-25. According to this author, in 1506 the altarpiece "venne confinata in certi mezzanini dell'Opera [del Duomo]...e per introdurvela fu necessario di togliere tutte le cuspidi e gli accessori" ("was stored in certain passages in the Opera del Duomo...and to enter there it was necessary to cut off all the pinnacles and accessories"). This latter term presumably comprises the predella. Lisini stated that only "sulla fine del secolo" - i.e., at the end of the sixteenth century - was the painting brought back to the cathedral. In Giovanna Ragionieri's opinion, however, the altarpiece had already been returned to the cathedral in 1536 and installed near the altar of Saint Sebastian. See Giovanna Ragionieri, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al., Siena, 2003: 212. [3] See Pèleo Bacci, *Francesco da Valdambino, Emulo del Ghiberti e collaboratore di Jacopo della Quercia*, Siena, 1936: 185-186. The author did not mention the gables and predella; these had probably been separated earlier from the rest of the altarpiece (see the previous note). After the separation of the two sides of the main panel, the front with the image of the Madonna and Child enthroned in majesty surrounded by saints and angels was hung in its former place in the left transept, and the narrative scenes of the back were hung in the opposite transept. [4] See Bacci 1936, 187. Vittorio Lusini specified that, apart from the twelve scenes of the gable, eight panels of the predella were present in the sacristy at this time, i.e., one more than the predella panels now preserved in the Museo dell'Opera Metropolitana del

Duomo in Siena. The identity of this eighth scene is uncertain, but presumably it was different from those that reappeared in private hands in the second half of the nineteenth century. See Vittorio Lusini, *Il Duomo di Siena*, 2 vols., Siena, 1911-1939: 2:77. The seven predella panels now in the Siena cathedral museum represent the Adoration of the Magi, the Presentation in the Temple, the Massacre of the Innocents, the Flight into Egypt, and Christ among the Doctors from the front predella, and the Temptation on the Temple and the Wedding at Cana from the rear predella. James Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, around the mid-nineteenth century, were only able to see six predella panels in the sacristy of the cathedral: the much damaged *Temptation on the Temple* and the eighth panel of unknown subject were no longer there. See Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols., London, 1864: 2:44 n. 1. Curt H. Weigelt discovered *Temptation on the Temple* in the storerooms of the Opera del Duomo in 1909, whereas the eighth panel has so far not been identified. See Curt H. Weigelt, "Contributo alla ricostruzione della Maestà di Duccio di Buoninsegna nel Museo della Metropolitana di Siena," *Bullettino senese di storia patria* 16, no. 2 (1909): 191-214. The predella, its many panels now divided among various museums in the world, was probably disposed of by the Opera del Duomo during the eighteenth century, and was at first privately owned in Siena. [5] The painting was exhibited in Colle Val d'Elsa in 1879 as the property of Giuseppe and Marziale Dini, together with three other predella panels: *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew* framed together with the *Raising of Lazarus*, now in the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth, and the *Temptation on the Mountain* (Frick Collection, New York) framed together with the *Christ and the Woman of Samaria*, now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid. [6] Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:172 n. 2) quotes the following annotation written by Benson in his personal copy of the catalogue of his collection: "In 1886 I gave a commission to C. Fairfax Murray to spend £ 2000 for me in Italy. These 4 Duccios were part of the spoils." This information was supplied by Benson's grandson, Peter Wake, in a letter of 2 February 1976, to Anna Voris (in NGA curatorial files). [7] See Tancred Borenius, "The Benson collection," *Apollo* 6 (1927): 65-70, and Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Special Collections, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 206, box 351, folders 2 and 3; reel 207, box 352, folders 1 and 2 (copies in NGA curatorial files). [8] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Special Collections, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, Series I Business Records, New York Sales Lists 1922-1928.

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The painting was in the Mackay collection in Roslyn, New York (Royal Cortissoz, "The Clarence H. Mackay Collection," *International Studio* 40 (December 1929): 120), whereas the *Raising of Lazarus* together with the *Christ and the Woman of Samaria* were bought by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. for his collection in New York, and the *Temptation on the Mountain* was acquired for the Frick Collection, also in New York. Not long after its acquisition, financial difficulties obliged Mackay gradually to sell off parts of his collection, and Duveen Brothers, Inc. assisted him in this effort (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976:157, and the Duveen Brothers Records, reels 336–339). The NGA painting had been offered—unsuccessfully—to Samuel H. Kress in 1932 (see Colin Simpson, *The Partnership. The Secret Association of Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen*, London, 1987: 236). [9] Shapley 1979, 1:172.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1904 Exhibition of Pictures of the School of Siena, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1904, nos. 1 and 7.

1927 Loan Exhibition of the Benson Collection of Old Italian Masters, City of Manchester Art Gallery, 1927, no. 108.

1935 Exposition de L'Art Italien de Cimabue à Tiepolo, Petit Palais, Paris, 1935, no. 150.

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Duccio di Buoninsegna  
Sieneſe, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319

## *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*

1308-1311

tempera on ſingle poplar panel

painted ſurface (left ſide image): 43 × 16 cm (16 15/16 × 6 5/16 in.)

painted ſurface (center image): 43 × 43.9 cm (16 15/16 × 17 5/16 in.)

painted ſurface (right ſide image): 43 × 16 cm (16 15/16 × 6 5/16 in.)

overall (including original frame): 48 × 86.8 × 7.9 cm (18 7/8 × 34 3/16 × 3 1/8 in.)

Inſcription: left ſection, on the ſcroll of Iſaiah: ECCE VIR / GO CONCI / PIET [et] PA / RIET FILIU[M] / [et] VOCABI / TUR NOM / EN EIUS / [E]MANUE[L] (Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a ſon, and his name ſhall be called Immanuel; from Iſaiah 7:14); middle ſection, on the ſcroll of the announcing angel: A[nnunti]o / Vobis / Gaudiu[m] / Magnu[m] (Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy; variant of Luke 2:10); right ſection, on the ſcroll of Ezekiel: VIDI PORTA[M] / I[N] DOMO D[OMI]NI / CLAUSA[M] / VIR / NO[N] TR[AN]SIBIT / P[ER] EA[M] DOM / IN[US] SOLUS / I[N]TRAT ET[?] / IT [?] P[ER] EA[M] (I ſaw a door in the houſe of the Lord which was cloſed and no man went through it. The Lord only enters and goes through it; variant of Ezekiel 44:2)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.8

### ENTRY

The Nativity is flanked by the full-length figures of the two prophets who foretell the birth of Chriſt [fig. 1] [fig. 2]. Iſaiah, to the left, as revealed by the text of his ſcroll and his leftward-turned gaze, is thematically linked to the previous ſcene of the front predella, representing the Annunciation [fig. 3], now in the National Gallery of London. The iconography of the Nativity follows the figurative tradition of Byzantine art, combining the ſcene with the ſubſidiary episodes of the Glad

## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

Tidings to the Shepherds and the First Bath of the Child. Mary is shown semirecumbent on a mattress inside the cave setting, into which a simple wooden hut with sloping roof is inserted. At the center of the hut, in the background, we see the manger with the child and two animals. In the foreground the episode of the First Bath occupies a central position, with the two midwives portrayed in slightly smaller proportions than the Madonna.[1] To the left we see Saint Joseph seated on a rock, sunk in meditation, while to the right appear the two shepherds conversing with one of the fourteen angels that throng the upper part of the scene.

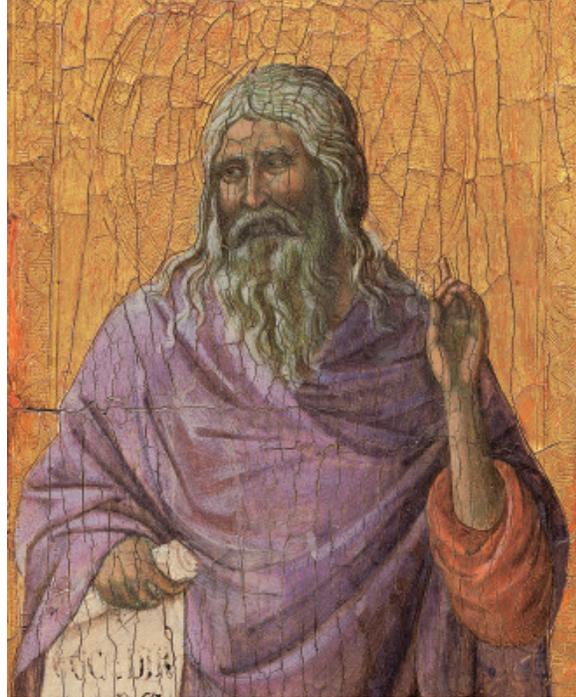
The painting was the second of seven scenes ([fig. 4] [fig. 5] [fig. 6] [fig. 7] [fig. 8]) interspersed with standing figures of prophets that formed the predella of the front side of the two-sided altarpiece placed over the high altar in Siena Cathedral [fig. 9] (see also *Reconstruction*). For a discussion of the multipart complex of which this work has always been recognized as an integral part, see the entry on *The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew*.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Ezekiel, Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*, 1308–1311, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Isaiah, Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*, 1308–1311, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Annunciation*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, The National Gallery, London. © National Gallery, London/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo



**fig. 5** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *Christ among the Doctors*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo



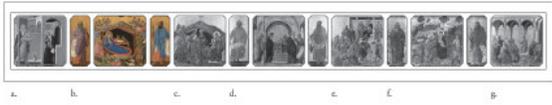
**fig. 6** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo



**fig. 7** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Presentation in the Temple with Salomon (or David?) and the Prophet Malachi*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo



**fig. 8** Duccio di Buoninsegna, *The Flight into Egypt with the Prophets Jeremiah and Hosea*, 1308–1311, tempera on panel, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Image: Soprintendenza per le Belle Arti e il Paesaggio di Siena, Grosseto ed Arezzo

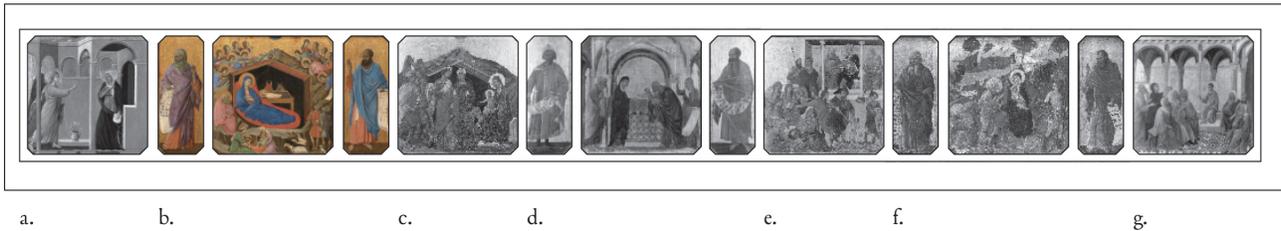


**fig. 9** Reconstruction of the front of the predella of Duccio di Buoninsegna's *Maestà*: a. *The Annunciation* (fig. 3); b. *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*; c. *The Adoration of the Magi* (fig. 4); d. *The Presentation in the Temple with Salomon (or David?) and the Prophet Malachi* (fig. 7); e. *The Massacre of the Innocents* (fig. 6); f. *The Flight into Egypt with the Prophets Jeremiah and Hosea* (fig. 8); g. *Christ among the Doctors* (fig. 5)

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of the front of the predella of Duccio di Buoninsegna's *Maestà*:

- a. *The Annunciation* (Entry fig. 3)
- b. *The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel*
- c. *The Adoration of the Magi* (Entry fig. 4)
- d. *The Presentation in the Temple with Salomon (or David?) and the Prophet Malachi* (Entry fig. 7)
- e. *The Massacre of the Innocents* (Entry fig. 6)
- f. *The Flight into Egypt with the Prophets Jeremiah and Hosea* (Entry fig. 8)
- g. *Christ among the Doctors* (Entry fig. 5)

**NOTES**

[1] On the iconography of the scene, cf. Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 1:69–98; and Günter Ristow, “Geburt Christi,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1971), 2:637–662. The motif of the cave setting for the Nativity first appeared in the East in the sixth century, while the amalgamation of this tradition with that usual in the West, in which the scene is placed in a hut, took place in Italy about 1300. The presence of the two animals next to the child lying in the manger is found in the earliest examples of the iconography, dating to the fourth century. The Church fathers linked the image of the ox and the ass with a passage in the Prophet Habakkuk (3:2): “O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years,” a text that in Hebrew and in the Greek version of the Septuagint reads, “You will reveal yourself between the two animals.” Christian exegetical literature later related these words to the two Churches: the one that descended from the Jewish people, and the other that derives its origin from the gentiles. The motif of the First Bath of the Child, with an evident baptismal reference, was especially disseminated in Byzantine art on the basis of the apocryphal “Protoevangelium” of Saint James. An aspect peculiar to Byzantine art is the inclusion of the scene of the Glad Tidings to the Shepherds, found in representations of the Nativity starting in the tenth century.

## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This is one of the few early Italian panels in the collection that has not been cradled. The wooden support is a two-member poplar panel [1] of remarkable thickness (6 cm), with horizontal grain; engaged to this is a simple gilded molding that demarcates the three areas of the support to be painted. The panel and moldings were prepared with a fine fabric followed by gesso. A thin, orange bole was applied under the gilded areas. The ornamental border along the edges of the gold ground, the halos, and the contours of the figures of the prophets were incised in the preparation before painting. Mordant gilding is evident in the robes of the Virgin and of the angels. Infrared reflectography reveals a simple underdrawing.[2]

A photograph taken in or shortly before 1885 [3] suggests that the painting was subjected to a rather drastic restoration, of unspecified date but probably carried out before the acquisition for the Gemäldegalerie der Königl. Museen in Berlin, in order to integrate the abrasions and render the image more pleasing by extensive retouching. The inscriptions were also reinforced. Helmut Ruhemann treated the painting in 1929;[4] photographs made after this treatment show the worn areas of the painting. The figures of the prophets in particular are damaged by abrasion and by small flaking paint losses as well as by sharp craquelure. A Dr. Friedlander "cleaned" the painting at some point between 1929 and 1937.[5] According to information in the William Suhr archives at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, William Suhr removed a varnish, inpainted, and revarnished the painting.[6] On the whole the painted surface, in spite of some abrasion, is fairly well preserved. Numerous small areas of inpainting affect the faces of the angels, the hair and beard of Isaiah, and the face of the Virgin.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the wood using cross-sectional microscopy, and it was determined to be poplar (see report dated January 31, 1989, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera fitted with a lead sulphide tube and a Kodak Wratten 87A

filter.

- [3] Reproduced in Eduard Dobbert, "Duccio's Bild Die Geburt Christi in der Königlichen Gemälde-Galerie zu Berlin," *Jahrbuch der Preußischen Kunstsammlungen* 6 (1885): 158–159.
- [4] On this treatment, see Helmut Ruhemann, *The Cleaning of Paintings: Problems and Potentialities* (London, 1968), 41. The same restorer noted that on seeing the painting again in 1952, it looked "finished" with "invisible retouchings." The evidence of an old photograph in the photographic archive of the Kunsthistorisches Institute in Florence suggests that a partial cleaning of the panel may have occurred sometime before Ruhemann's.
- [5] A telegram dated April 6, 1937, recorded in the Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 92, box 237, folder 23, stated, "picture cleaned off several years ago by Dr. Friedlander."
- [6] William Suhr archives at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (notes in NGA conservation and curatorial files). This treatment was probably accomplished in 1937, because a telegram dated April 6, 1937, in Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 92, box 237, folder 23, stated, "Absolutely cannot be shown its present state although no important parts missing yet much small detail work necessary get proper effect," and another telegram dated May 7, 1937, stated, "Duccio marvelous perfectly exquisite color enchanting very happy with it far superior Benson Duccios."
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## PROVENANCE

NGA 1937.1.8 formed part of the front predella of Duccio's double-sided altarpiece the *Maestà*, which was in the course of execution by October 1308 and was placed on the high altar of the Cathedral of Siena on 30 June 1311;<sup>[1]</sup> the altarpiece was removed from the cathedral in 1506, first stored by the Cathedral authorities, and then later displayed on the wall of the left transept, close to the altar of Saint Sebastian, but probably by this time the predella and gable panels had already been separated from it;<sup>[2]</sup> the altarpiece was moved to the church of Sant'Ansano in 1777, where its two sides were separated and returned to the cathedral;<sup>[3]</sup> in 1798 the gables and eight panels of the predella were reported as being kept in the sacristy of the cathedral, whereas the rest, including NGA 1937.1.8, must already have been in private hands.<sup>[4]</sup> probably with Charles Fairfax Murray [1849-

1919], London and Florence, in the early 1880s,[5] who seems to have been the seller, in 1884, to the Gemäldegalerie der Königl. Museen, Berlin; deaccessioned 1937[6] and exchanged with (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[7] purchased 26 April 1937 by The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[8] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The documents are published in Jane Immler Satkowski, *Duccio di Boninsegna. The Documents and Early Sources*, ed. Hayden B.J. Maginnis, Atlanta, 2000: 69-81, and in Alessandro Bagnoli et al., eds., *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, Siena, 2003.: 577-579. [2] See Alessandro Lisini, "Notizie di Duccio pittore e della sua celebre ancona," *Bullettino senese di storia patria* 5 (1898): 24-25. According to this author, in 1506 the altarpiece "venne confinata in certi mezzanini dell'Opera [del Duomo]...e per introdurvela fu necessario di togliere tutte le cuspidi e gli accessori" ("was stored in certain passages in the Opera del Duomo...and to enter there it was necessary to cut off all the pinnacles and accessories"). This latter term presumably comprises the predella. Lisini stated that only "sulla fine del secolo" - i.e., at the end of the sixteenth century - was the painting brought back to the cathedral. In Giovanna Ragionieri's opinion, however, the altarpiece had already been returned to the cathedral in 1536 and installed near the altar of Saint Sebastian. See Giovanna Ragionieri, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al., Siena, 2003: 212. [3] See Pèleo Bacci, *Francesco di Valdambriano, Emulo del Ghiberti e collaboratore di Jacopo della Quercia*, Siena, 1936: 185-186. The author did not mention the gables and predella; these had probably been separated earlier from the rest of the altarpiece (see the previous note). After the separation of the two sides of the main panel, the front with the image of the Madonna and Child enthroned in majesty surrounded by saints and angels was hung in its former place in the left transept, and the narrative scenes of the back were hung in the opposite transept. [4] See Bacci 1936, 187. Vittorio Lusini specified that, apart from the twelve scenes of the gable, eight panels of the predella were present in the sacristy at this time, i.e., one more than the predella panels now preserved in the Museo dell'Opera Metropolitana del Duomo in Siena. The identity of this eighth scene is uncertain, but presumably it was different from those that reappeared in private hands in the second half of the nineteenth century. See Vittorio Lusini, *Il Duomo di Siena*, 2 vols., Siena, 1911-1939: 2:77. The seven predella panels now in the Siena cathedral museum represent the Adoration of the Magi, the Presentation in the Temple, the Massacre of the Innocents, the Flight into Egypt, and Christ among the Doctors from the front predella, and the Temptation on the Temple and the Wedding at Cana from the rear predella. James

Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, around the mid-nineteenth century, were only able to see six predella panels in the sacristy of the cathedral: the much damaged *Temptation on the Temple* and the eighth panel of unknown subject were no longer there. See Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols., London, 1864: 2:44 n. 1. Curt H. Weigelt discovered *Temptation on the Temple* in the storerooms of the Opera del Duomo in 1909, whereas the eighth panel has so far not been identified. See Curt H. Weigelt, "Contributo alla ricostruzione della *Maestà* di Duccio di Buoninsegna nel Museo della Metropolitana di Siena," *Bullettino senese di storia patria* 16, no. 2 (1909): 191–214. The predella, its many panels now divided among various museums in the world, was probably disposed of by the Opera del Duomo during the eighteenth century, and was at first privately owned in Siena. [5] No source, as far as Miklós Boskovits knows, claims that Fairfax Murray actually owned the painting; however, James Stubblebine plausibly suggests this (*Duccio di Buoninsegna and his school*, Princeton, 1979: 37). In fact, in 1883 the English painter-dealer sold two other panels of the predella of the *Maestà* to the National Gallery in London, those representing the *Annunciation* and the *Healing of the Man Born Blind* (nos. 1139, 1140). In 1886 he sold four additional panels of the predella to Robert Benson in London (one of these is NGA 1939.1.141). It seems that he initially had hoped to sell them all to the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and had tried to convince the gallery to purchase them, offering to give one of the panels as his gift. Significantly, Eduard Dobbert ("Duccio's Bild 'Die Geburt Christi' in der Königlichen Gemälde - Galerie zu Berlin," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 6 (1885): 153-163) thanked Fairfax Murray for having helped him with information in his hypothetical reconstruction of the *Maestà*. [6] Königliche Museen zu Berlin, *Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Gemälde*, Berlin, 1891: 77, as no. 1062A. The painting is mentioned as having been relinquished by the Gemäldegalerie ("1937 abgegeben") in the museum's *Gesamtverzeichnis*, Berlin, 1996: 601. Helmut Ruhemann, *The Cleaning of Painting*, London, 1968: 41, remembers that the painting was "exchanged [...] for an average Holbein," and Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:172 n. 12, quotes a letter of the same restorer to the National Gallery of Art, according to which the Duccio predella panel "was exchanged in the 1930s by the Gemäldegalerie for a painting by Cranach." This was evidently a slip of the pen; the exchanged picture was the *Portrait of a Man with Lute* by Holbein, no. 2154 in the Berlin gallery, which came from an American private collection and was acquired by the Gemäldegalerie in 1937 (

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*Gesamtverzeichnis*, Berlin, 1996: 60); see the following note. [7] Duveen Brothers wrote to the director of the paintings department at the Berlin museum on 26 February 1937, offering the portrait by Holbein (then "said to be . . . of Jean de Dinteville," from Henry Goldman's collection) in exchange for two paintings in Berlin, this painting by Duccio and the Fra Filippo Lippi *Madonna and Child*, also in the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1939.1.290; Miklós Boskovits and David Alan Brown, *Italian paintings of the Fifteenth Century*, Washington, D.C. and New York, 2003: 401-405). Bernard Berenson's opinion about the painting came in a letter dated 15 March 1937. By April, Duveen's offices in Paris and New York were exchanging messages concerning conservation work on the painting, and David Finley had seen the painting for Andrew Mellon by early May. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 48, box 139, folder 4; reel 92, box 237, folder 23; reel 189, box 334, folder 2; reel 192, box 237, folder 23; copies in NGA curatorial files. See also Duveen Brothers, Inc., *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America*, New York, 1941: 6. [8] The Mellon Trust purchase date is according to Mellon collection records in NGA curatorial files and David Finley's notebook (donated to the National Gallery of Art in 1977, now in Gallery Archives).

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# *Fei, Paolo di Giovanni*

Also known as

Feo, Paolo di

Sieneese, c. 1335/1345 - 1411

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Documented on July 1, 1369, as a member of the General Council of the city of Siena,[1] Paolo must have already reached his majority by then, so that he would have been born sometime prior to 1344–1345. He must have been trained as an artist in his hometown, perhaps in the shop of Bartolo di Fredi (with whom he would collaborate on the frescoes in the Malavolti Chapel in San Domenico in 1397),[2] or in that of Francesco di Vannuccio, with whom his earliest works also reveal affinities. Various documents cite the artist, but only for his civic duties. Works of his that are recorded by the sources (such as the panel dated 1381 or 1391 formerly in the church of San Maurizio) or otherwise documented (some statues that he colored, paintings executed for Siena Cathedral in 1402–1403 and in 1407–1408, and an altarpiece for the chapel of San Daniele there) have been lost. The painter signed his last will and testament on June 1, 1411. By October of that year he was dead.

Art historians have attempted to reconstruct Paolo's oeuvre on the basis of the only signed painting to have survived from his hand: polyptych no. 300 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena. Despite the lack of chronological clues about his artistic production, art historians have agreed in ascribing to his initial phase the half-figure images of the Madonna and Child in the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints* in the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. In these paintings, the rather stereotyped rigidity of poses and the repetitiveness of the facial masks reveal some uncertainty, characteristic of the production of artists at the start of their careers. By contrast, the painter shows himself fully at his ease in proposing an elaborate composition, rich in observations taken from daily life, in the polyptych of the Birth of the Virgin, also in the Pinacoteca of Siena, probably datable to the early or mid-1380s. The few fragments of fresco attributable to him, found in the Accerigi Chapel in San Domenico in Siena, date to 1387.[3] Two *tavolette di Biccherna* in the Archivio di Stato of Siena, also attributed to the artist,

date respectively to 1388 and 1394.[4] An increasingly pronounced attempt to give an individual characterization to the protagonists of his paintings, who now move with ease and spontaneity and are happily immersed in the parts they are called to play, can be noted in polyptych no. 300 in Siena, datable to the early 1390s, and in that of the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, executed in 1398–1399, of which the *central panel* is now in the National Gallery of Art. The polyptych in the oratory of San Bernardino al Prato and the Crucifixion recently rediscovered below a clumsy late-sixteenth-century painting in the Museo Civico in Siena probably date to the same years.[5]

To the concluding phase of Paolo's career, characterized by considerable originality and modernity in compositional schemes and an increasing richness of realistic detail, we can assign some small but precious panels for private devotion, such as the triptych in the Minutolo Chapel in Naples Cathedral, probably painted c. 1408;[6] another triptych with the Crucifixion and stories of the Passion, which recently appeared at a sale in Paris;[7] and the *Assumption of the Virgin* in the Gallery—works that probably played an important role in stimulating the artists of the first generation of Siennese painting in the fifteenth century.

[1] For this and other documentary information on the life of the painter, see Pèleo Bacci, *Dipinti inediti e sconosciuti di Pietro Lorenzetti, Bernardo Daddi etc. in Siena e nel contado* (Siena, 1939), 165–206. Siennese citizens attained their majority at age twenty-five.

[2] Gaudenz Freuler, "Die Malavolti-Kapelle des Bartolo di Fredi und Paolo di Giovanni Fei in S. Domenico in Siena," *Pantheon* 45 (1987): 39–53. In Laurence Kanter's opinion (kind personal communication), Naddo Ceccarelli must have been Paolo's master.

[3] Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 104–110; Peter Anselm Riedl and Max Seidel, eds., *Die Kirchen von Siena*, 3 vols. (Munich, 1985–2006), vol. 2, bk. 1, pt. 2: 656; bk. 2, pt. 2: figs. 730–731.

[4] Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 143–146, 234–235, 242; Luigi Borgia and Enzo Carli, eds., *Le Biccherne: Tavole dipinte delle magistrature senesi (secoli xiii–xviii)* (Rome, 1984), 118–119, 124–125.

[5] Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon, eds., *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto* (Siena, 2005).

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[6] Michael Mallory, "An Early Quattrocento Trinity," *The Art Bulletin* 48 (1966): 85–89.

[7] *Crucifixion (and the Blessing Christ above), Ascent to Calvary, and Deposition (with the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin above)*, 69 × 53 cm, formerly Comte de V. collection, Étude Tajan, sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, March 30, 1998, lot. 1.

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Paolo di Giovanni Fei  
Sienese, c. 1335/1345 - 1411

## *The Assumption of the Virgin with Busts of the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin of the Annunciation*

c. 1400/1405

tempera on panel

painted surface: 66.5 × 38.1 cm (26 3/16 × 15 in.)

overall: 79.8 × 51 cm (31 7/16 × 20 1/16 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.71

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### ENTRY

Although the bodily Assumption of the Virgin did not officially become the dogma of the Catholic Church until 1950,[1] it began to be represented in art in the eleventh century (with some isolated examples even earlier than that).[2] In Italy, one of the first large-scale images of the Assumption is found in Siena, in the great rose window of the cathedral, based on a cartoon by Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319) and dating to c. 1288. Here Mary is sitting in a mandorla of light, supported by angels in flight, with her hands joined in prayer, in the pose in which she would be frequently portrayed in the following centuries.[3] The image of Mary borne up to heaven by angels would then be enriched with further details in the course of the fourteenth century. In particular, it would be accompanied (as in the present panel) with a scene of the apostles with expressions of wonder and awe gathered around the Virgin's tomb, which is filled with flowers only,[4] and with the figure of Saint Thomas, who is shown kneeling on the Mount of Olives, separated from his companions and praying to Mary. He was asking for a sign of her bodily Assumption, and the Virgin answered his prayer by throwing down her girdle,[5] a relic that is now venerated in Prato Cathedral.

The panel in the National Gallery of Art might originally have been a self-sufficient devotional image and not part of a larger complex. This is suggested by the two

medallions with the Angel of the Annunciation and the Virgin Annunciate in its upper spandrels; in polyptychs and portable triptychs, this extremely concise narrative of the Annunciation usually appears on the two outer sides in the upper tier [fig. 1].<sup>[6]</sup>

The attribution of the painting has never been in doubt: ever since Robert Langton Douglas (1904) introduced it to the art historical literature, its ascription to the Sienese master Paolo di Giovanni Fei has been unanimously accepted.<sup>[7]</sup> Greater uncertainties surround its date, even though most art historians agree that it should be ascribed to a relatively advanced phase in Paolo's career. There is also widespread recognition of its high artistic qualities.<sup>[8]</sup> Both opinions can be confirmed, though it should be premised that the earliest of Paolo's securely datable paintings dates to 1387, and hence the first two decades of his career still remain obscure. Nevertheless, research over the last half century, and in particular the studies of Michael Mallory, have helped to establish the sequence of the paintings dating to the painter's maturity and offer sufficient evidence to confirm that the present panel was painted within the first decade of the fifteenth century.

Paolo di Giovanni Fei's stylistic development can be briefly summed up as follows. In works presumably dating to the 1370s, the artist proposed solemn and static compositions. The figures are virtually immobile and symmetrically distributed. Reserved, even impassive, in expression, they are enveloped in thick starched draperies with the consistency of leather, barely ruffled by a few broad folds. After this phase, exemplified by such paintings as the versions of the Madonna in the Atlanta Art Association and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, or the Saint Lawrence formerly in the Matthiesen Gallery in London,<sup>[9]</sup> Paolo modified his style, while largely maintaining his spacious and symmetrical compositions. In such paintings as the fragmentary polyptych in the Museo d'Arte Sacra in Asciano and the portable triptych no. 137 and the diptych no. 146 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, all dating to around 1380, the characterization of the protagonists becomes more animated and the description of their gestures and reactions to the events taking place more circumspect.<sup>[10]</sup> The paintings of this period are distinguished by their very detailed narratives, and the scenes are more complex and crowded. Although the faces remain almost impenetrable to human emotions, the expressiveness of the gestures seems ever more meticulously observed and effective. The artist also reveals a growing interest in the spatial setting of his figures. Results of these developments, dating to the mid-1380s, can be seen in such paintings as the altarpiece of the Birth of the Virgin in the Pinacoteca

Nazionale in Siena and various other large-format works including a polyptych and a painted crucifix executed for the hospital complex of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena, the latter unfortunately the victim of a restorer's excessive zeal.[11] The painting discussed here can no doubt be placed in the last decades of Paolo's career, presumably in the intermediate years between *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* painted for Siena Cathedral (1398–1399) and now in the Gallery and the triptych [fig. 2] in the Cathedral of Naples (1407–1408).[12]

As in other paintings dating to the first years of the fifteenth century, the artist skillfully exploits the background of his compositions to enlarge the space of the action and tries in various ways to give a realistic character to the episodes. In the panel now in Washington, each of the figures reacts in his own personal way to the miracle of the flowers that bloom in profusion in the sarcophagus in place of the body of Mary [fig. 3]. In contrast to the version proposed by Taddeo di Bartolo in his Montepulciano Cathedral polyptych (1401), which also shows the Assumption at the center,[13] Paolo does not try to reunite the apostles in a compact group but distributes them freely around the sarcophagus. His scene is striking both for its spaciousness and for the realistic effects in characterizing the apostles' reactions: their gestures are spontaneous, not over-dramatic in expressing surprise. An example of the artist's pursuit of verisimilitude is the conduct of the youth at the center, who thrusts himself forward between two companions. Supporting himself with one hand on the shoulder of Saint Bartholomew [14] and with the other on the edge of the sarcophagus, he leans forward eagerly, with head bowed, to see better what is happening. His sharply foreshortened face is also typical of the innovations associated with this phase in the painter's career. An even bolder effect of foreshortening is achieved in the backwards-bent head of Saint Thomas, casting his gaze up to the Virgin. In contrast to other contemporary representations of the theme, Saint Thomas is seen at some distance from the rest of the apostles (his figure, indeed, is smaller); he kneels on a rock outcropping, evidently intended to represent the Mount of Olives. The foreshortened sides of the sarcophagus also help to accentuate his distance; not only do they "measure" the depth of the space in which the action is taking place, but they lead the observer's gaze backwards to the apostle invoking the gift of the girdle. Also worth pointing out is the *trouvaillie* of depicting the Madonna of the Assumption not, as usual, in a mandorla of light or in a similar oval form of seraphim, but surrounded only by the rays of light incised in the gold ground and seated on a throne of clouds, whose step has the consistency of cotton-wool and is supported with great delicacy by two fluttering angels. These details suggest for the Gallery's Assumption, as Mallory already

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pointed out, a date more advanced than *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, datable to 1398–1399. On the other hand, Mallory's proposal that the date be deferred to the last years in the artist's life seems questionable.[15] The very elongated proportions of the figures in the Neapolitan triptych, the accentuated hanchement of their poses and the multiplication of the folds in their draperies that introduce a more restless movement into these latter paintings, together with the exaggerated pathos of their facial expressions, seem to me to indicate a further development, a step in the direction of the artistic ideals of the International Gothic. These developments had evidently not yet been made at the time of the painting of our Assumption.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Paolo di Giovanni Fei, triptych, location unknown



**fig. 2** Paolo di Giovanni Fei, Triptych from the Minutolo Chapel, 1407–1408, tempera on panel, Naples Cathedral. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 3** Detail of figures reacting to the miracle of the flowers in place of Mary's body, Paolo di Giovanni Fei, *The Assumption of the Virgin with Busts of the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin of the Annunciation*, c. 1400/1405, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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## NOTES

- [1] Anton Ziegenaus, "Aufnahme: Leibliche Aufnahme Mariens in den Himmel," in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1988), 1:276–286.
- [2] See Else Staedel, *Ikongraphie der Himmelfahrt Mariens* (Strasbourg, 1935); Ulriche Liebl, "Himmelfahrt Mariae: Kunstgeschichte," in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1991), 3:205–208. The Assumption (*Koimesis*) was celebrated in the Orthodox Church from a very early date, but until the thirteenth century only the *assumptio animae* and not the physical assumption of the body of Mary was represented in art. See Klaus Wessel, "Himmelfahrt Mariae," in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1971), 2:1256–1262.
- [3] For a useful summary of the iconographic development of the Assumption in Tuscany in the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 7, *The Biadaiolo Illuminator, Master of the Dominican Effigies* (New York, 1957), 48–49 n. 2.

- [4] In Sienese representations of the early Trecento, the sarcophagus of Mary either does not appear at all or is shown empty. The sarcophagus full of flowers would only begin to appear towards the end of the fourteenth century in works by Francesco di Vannuccio, Bartolo di Fredi, and Taddeo di Bartolo. See Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), pl. 14, fig. 127, pl. 19. It is in this last painting, belonging to the cathedral in Montepulciano and dated 1401, that we see not only the flowers in the sarcophagus but also the apostles gathered around the tomb with expressions of astonishment. Cf. Os, *Marias Demut*, 157–176.
- [5] The legend of the girdle given to Saint Thomas appears for the first time in the *Liber de transitu Virginis Mariae*, probably dating to the sixth century, but its earliest representations in art are not found before the thirteenth century; see Klaus Wessel, “Himmelfahrt Mariae,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1971), 2:1259–1261; and Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 87, 129–131.
- [6] Examples of triptychs or polyptychs in which the Annunciation appears at the two outer sides of the gable zone—the Archangel on one side, the Virgin on the other—are legion. In diptychs, the busts of the Angel and the Virgin Annunciate usually appear respectively in the left and right leaf. It is therefore unlikely that the National Gallery of Art panel originally belonged to such a multipart altarpiece. In some cases, however, the Annunciation is represented in the upper spandrels of the central panel of a portable triptych, such as that by Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319) in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena (no. 35). That this was not the case here is argued by the treatment of the frame: not only is there no evidence of hinges anywhere along the sides, but also the broad, decorated frieze that encircles the composition precludes the existence of movable shutters that might have closed over it. The presence of the Annunciation roundels in our painting also argues against its being one of a class of object not uncommonly found in Trecento Siena: independently framed panels meant to be viewed as parts of a narrative complex but not physically attached to one another. Examples by Pietro Lorenzetti (Sienese, active 1306 - 1345) (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; National Gallery, London), Niccolo di Buonaccorso (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; National Gallery, London; Uffizi, Florence), and others are known.
- [7] Robert Langton Douglas, “The Exhibition of Early Art in Siena,” *The Nineteenth Century and After* 57 (1904): 763. Apart from the publications cited in the Bibliography, it may be recalled that Alberto Riccoboni (1947), in support of the attribution of the painting to Paolo, also cited expertises conducted by himself and by Gino Calore, as well as a “parere concorde” (corroborating opinion) by Roberto Longhi. Alberto Riccoboni, ed., *Prima*

*Mostra Nazionale Antiquaria: Quattrocento pitture inedite* (Venice, 1947), x, xxi, 5 repro.

- [8] Robert Langton Douglas (1904, 1908) called the Washington Assumption “beautiful”; he compared it with the panels by Paolo di Giovanni Fei now in the Lehman Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the latter he believed to be a youthful work. See Robert Langton Douglas, “The Exhibition of Early Art in Siena,” *The Nineteenth Century and After* 57 (1904): 763; Robert Langton Douglas, in Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 3, *The Sieneese, Umbrian, and North Italian Schools*, ed. Robert Langton Douglas (London, 1908), 131 n. 3. Raimond van Marle (1924) termed it “charming,” though erroneously describing it as a “triptych”; he too placed it in the earliest phase of the painter’s career; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 529. Michael Mallory (1964, 1973), by contrast, placed it at the end of Paolo’s career; indeed, he assigned it the very last place in his catalog of the master, observing that “the figure’s crescendo of emotions in this painting climaxes the trend toward expressionism that we have traced in the latter stages of the master’s development.” Michael Mallory, “Towards a Chronology for Paolo di Giovanni Fei,” *The Art Bulletin* 46 (1964): 530; Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 177–191, 241. Fern Rusk Shapley (1966) said that “the superior technique and the serious facial expressions” present in the painting recall Simone Martini (Sieneese, active from 1315; died 1344) and conjectured a dating “about 1385.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 61. Bruce Cole (1980) confirmed a dating around 1400 and called the painting “one of Fei’s most genial altarpiece” (*sic*); later publications generally accepted this dating and placed the work in the first decade of the fifteenth century. Bruce Cole, *Sieneese Painting from Its Origins to the Fifteenth Century* (New York, 1980), 194. Art historians of more recent years have also rated the Washington Assumption highly: “tra le espressioni più alte della sua arte” (among the highest expressions of his art); Elizabetta Campolongo, “Fei, Paolo di Giovanni,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1996), 46:17.
- [9] For the panel in Atlanta, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 62. The date MCCCXXXIII inscribed at the foot of the painting seems to be at least partially original, but the figure now legible (1333) cannot be right and is presumably the result of a mistaken restoration of an illegible letter. It might be conjectured that the original date was MCCCCLXXIII. For the New York Madonna, see Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings:*

*Sieneese and Central Italian Schools: A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 58–59. The formerly Matthiesen Gallery Saint Lawrence is illustrated in *Early Italian Paintings and Works of Art 1300–1480 in Aid of the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum* (London, 1983), 34, no. 17.

- [10] For the polyptych in the Museo d'Arte Sacra in Asciano, now deprived of its central panel, see Cecilia Alessi, ed., *Palazzo Corboli, Museo d'arte sacra, Musei senesi* (Siena, 2002), 120–121; for the panels in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, see Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 181, 184.
- [11] Apart from *Birth of the Virgin* (no. 117), two versions of the Crucifixion probably belong to this phase as well: the frescoed version in Santa Maria della Scala and the version on panel in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. See Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 179–180; Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon, eds., *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto* (Siena, 2005), 13–14. Of the polyptych of Santa Maria della Scala only the central panel of the Madonna and Child with Angels now remains; see Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2: fig. 419. The early fourteenth-century crucifix in Santa Maria della Scala was entirely repainted by Paolo di Giovanni Fei, but his version of the painting was canceled by a drastic restoration after the Second World War, on which see Miklós Boskovits, “Il gotico senese rivisitato: Proposte e commenti su una mostra,” *Arte cristiana* 71 (1983): 265, fig. 19.
- [12] See *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* in this catalog; for the Neapolitan triptych, commissioned by Cardinal Enrico Minutolo, see Michael Mallory, “An Early Quattrocento Trinity,” *The Art Bulletin* 48 (1966): 85–89. Mallory rightly linked the altarpiece to the period that the cardinal spent in Siena between September 1407 and January 1408; it cannot be excluded, however, that the painting, commissioned during Minutolo's residence in Siena, was executed and delivered to him some time later. Other paintings that, in my view, should be placed in the period around 1400 include the polyptych no. 300 in the Pinacoteca of Siena and the polyptych in the Oratory of San Bernardino al Prato, for which see Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon, eds., *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto* (Siena, 2005), 58–59.
- [13] See Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 172–173, figs. 19, 113, and the catalog entry in Gail E. Solberg, *Taddeo di Bartolo: His Life and Work* (PhD diss., New York University, 1991), 477–547.

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- [14] Bartholomew is identifiable by his light-blue mantle and conspicuously brocaded garment and by his facial type, characterized by curly hair and long dark beard: George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 137; Gregor Martin Lechner, “Bartolomäus Ap. u. Mart.,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1973), 5:320–334.
- [15] Michael Mallory wrote, “The Assumption of the Virgin...appears to be the latest of his works to have survived,” in Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 177–178. This opinion was shared by Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 244; Anna Maria Guiducci, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 296; Giovanni Leoncini, “Fei, Paolo di Giovanni,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:570; Simona Manacorda, “Fei, Paolo di Giovanni,” in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1995), 6:133; Veronica Randon, “Paolo di Giovanni Fei ‘dipintore del Terzo di città,’” in *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon (Siena, 2005), 51.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single piece of wood with vertical grain, to which the engaged frame is affixed.<sup>[1]</sup> The round arch springing from corbels by which the composition is enclosed is enlivened on its inner side by a small *pastiglia* arcade. Further *pastiglia* decoration surrounds the painted medallions in the spandrels between the arch and the engaged frame. The painting was executed, as usual, on a white gesso ground, and the areas to be gilded were prepared by a layer of red bole. The outlines of some of the figures and all of the architecture were incised into the wet gesso for preliminary placement on the panel. The paint was applied very thinly, in minute striations. The frame, the border of the gold ground, and the halos are decorated with punch marks, and incised lines simulate rays of light surrounding the Virgin. The brocade fabrics were created using sgraffito.

The panel, which is now 2.5 cm thick, was cradled and probably thinned slightly by Stephen Pichetto in 1948. As the x-radiographs show, it has suffered from worm tunneling in the past. The painted surface is well preserved, apart from some scratches in the lower figure group. In 1949, Mario Modestini removed a discolored

varnish, inpainted the scattered small paint losses, and applied a coating of varnish, now somewhat discolored.[2]

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] On the typology of the important, original frame, see Timothy J. Newbery, George Bisacca, and Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Renaissance Frames* (New York, 1990), 34–35.
- [2] For essential information about the 1948–1949 treatment, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:177. A Reali photograph, probably made for Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi shortly after he acquired the painting (copy in the photo archive of the Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence), shows the painted surface somewhat darkened, with small paint losses in the group of the apostles as well as some scratches, one crossing the face of the third apostle from the left and others around the chest of the third apostle from the right. The gold of the engaged frame appears damaged by various checks, small losses, and tenting here and there. These damages no longer appear on the photo taken after the treatments by Pichetto and Modestini.
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## PROVENANCE

Marchese Bonaventura Chigi Zondadari [1841-1908], Siena, by 1904;[1] his heirs; (Alberto Riccoboni, Italy), by 1947 or 1948;[2] (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence); sold 1948 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[3] gift 1961 to NGA. [1] Robert Langton Douglas (“The Exhibition of Early Art in Siena,” *The Nineteenth Century and After* 57 [1904]: 763; James Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in Italy*, ed. Robert Langton Douglas, 6 vols., London, 1903-1914: 3(1908): 131 n. 3) and F. Mason Perkins (“Dipinti senesi sconosciuti o inediti,” *Rassegna d’Arte antica e moderna* 1 (1914): 99) confirm his ownership. Various authors, through Bernard Berenson (*Pitture italiane del Rinascimento*, Milan, 1936: 159), continued to mention that the painting belonged to the Chigi Zondadari family. [2] The dealer Alberto Riccoboni (*Quattrocento Pitture Inedite*, exh. cat., Venice, 1947: 5) gives no ownership; presumably the painting still belonged to the Chigi Zondadari family at the time and was only entrusted to Riccoboni for sale in the following year. [3] The Kress Foundation made an offer to Contini-Bonacossi on 7 June 1948 for a group of twenty-eight

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paintings, including this one; the offer was accepted on 11 July 1948 (see copies of correspondence in NGA curatorial files).

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1947 Prima mostra Nazionale Antiquaria. Quattrocento Pitturi inedite, Organizzazione Manifestazioni Artistiche, Venice, 1947, no. 23, fig. 12.

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Paolo di Giovanni Fei  
Sienese, c. 1335/1345 - 1411

## *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*

1398-1399

tempera on wood transferred to hardboard

painted surface: 146.1 × 140.3 cm (57 1/2 × 55 1/4 in.)

overall: 147.2 × 140.3 cm (57 15/16 × 55 1/4 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.4

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### ENTRY

The legend of the childhood of Mary, mother of Jesus, had been formed at a very early date, as shown by the apocryphal Gospel of James, or Protoevangelium of James (second–third century), which for the first time recounted events in the life of Mary before the Annunciation. The iconography of the presentation of the Virgin that spread in Byzantine art was based on this source. In the West, the episodes of the birth and childhood of the Virgin were known instead through another, later apocryphal source of the eighth–ninth century, attributed to the Evangelist Matthew.[1] According to this account of her childhood, Mary, on reaching the age of three, was taken by her parents, together with offerings, to the Temple of Jerusalem, so that she could be educated there. The child ascended the flight of fifteen steps of the temple to enter the sacred building, where she would continue to live, fed by an angel, until she reached the age of fourteen.[2] The legend linked the child's ascent to the temple and the flight of fifteen steps in front of it with the number of Gradual Psalms.[3] The image of so long a flight of steps does not in general appear in fourteenth-century Sienese painting, which instead follows other details of the narrative of the Pseudo-Matthew: it describes the surprise of those present on seeing the infant girl spontaneously ascend the steps on her own and shows the high priest Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist (haloed), welcoming the child.[4] The other girls who are being brought up in the temple are represented in a separate zone. One endeavor to which Sienese painters, on the other hand, paid constant attention was that of expressing the splendor of Solomon's Temple, generally represented as a grand and complex building. The

importance of the event was further underlined by the presence of ever more numerous onlookers.

The painting now in the National Gallery of Art appeared in the London exhibition in 1928 as a work by Bartolo di Fredi, an attribution perhaps proposed by Bernard Berenson, who privately confirmed it in 1951.[5] William Suida and Fern Rusk Shapley accepted this opinion in their catalog of the Kress Collection (NGA 1956), commenting that “the attribution to Bartolo...is not likely to be doubted.”[6] That attribution was reaffirmed in the 1959 catalog of the Gallery and by Jaqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne (1965).[7] As early as 1951, however, Millard Meiss broke ranks, identifying the hand of Paolo di Giovanni Fei in the painting.[8] All the more recent literature, apart from the above-cited exceptions, recognizes Meiss’s proposal as correct, including Berenson’s own posthumous edition of *Italian Pictures* (1968).[9] Confirmation of the attribution came with the discovery that the panel now in Washington comes from Siena Cathedral; documents of 1398–1399 record payments made to Paolo di Giovanni Fei that undoubtedly refer to this painting.[10] The various inventories of the cathedral later described it as “*tauola dipenta colla Ripresentationi al Tempio di Nostra Donna et di sancto Pietro et di sancto Paulo et di più altri sancti e sancte*” (a painted panel with the Presentation of Our Lady and with Saint Peter and Saint Paul and many other saints).[11] It remained on the altar of the chapel of San Pietro at least until 1482 and probably until the early 1580s (see *Provenance*).

The composition of Paolo’s altarpiece would have followed the scheme prescribed for the altarpieces of the various chapels in the cathedral, a church dedicated to the Virgin: namely, a scene representing a Marian feast at the center, flanked by full-length, standing saints in the lateral panels, including the titular of the altar. As we know from the example of other polyptychs with a provenance from the cathedral, the saints were portrayed one on each side. Moreover, the polyptychs, in contrast to the present appearance of *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, were always enriched with gables comprising half-figure images of other saints above the main register. Though none of these components of Paolo’s altarpiece have yet been identified, there seems no reason to doubt their existence.[12]

The documents, therefore, not only confirm the attribution of the panel in the National Gallery of Art to Paolo di Giovanni Fei but also reveal that it is the fragment of a larger complex. It remains uncertain, however, whether Paolo was the sole author of the dispersed polyptych. According to another piece of

documentary evidence dating to 1393, in fact, another painter, Bartolo di Fredi, received a payment “per la tavola d’altare di San Pietro che fa.”[13] According to some, this means that the execution of the polyptych had already begun in 1392–1393, but for some reason Bartolo’s work was not completed. So the commission was then apparently transferred to Paolo. It was believed in the past that the lost laterals of our Presentation could be identified in two panels by Bartolo di Fredi representing Saint Peter and Saint Paul, but the hypothesis was then shown to be mistaken.[14] So, in this case, the problem of the collaboration between the two Sieneese painters still remains open.[15]

Paolo’s painting in Washington has always met with a flattering reception from art historians. Millard Meiss (1951) hailed it as an “important panel”; Enzo Carli (1979), as one of the masterpieces of late-fourteenth-century Sieneese painting (“uno dei capolavori della pittura senese del tardo Trecento”); while the Dutch expert on Sieneese painting, Henk van Os (1990), described it as “a magnificent painting.”[16] Michael Mallory (1965) was the first to recognize its identity with the documented panel by Paolo di Giovanni Fei in Siena Cathedral. He also subjected it to a meticulous stylistic and iconographic analysis. He observed inter alia that “the series of spaces that the artist has opened up beyond the figures is more complex than anything that he attempted in the Nativity [that is, in the other polyptych by the artist similarly having a scene thronged with figures at the center, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena] or in the Visitation [that is, in the scene frescoed by Paolo in the church of San Francesco, also in Siena], and at the same time the architecture is rendered accurately enough so that we can understand the plan of this church with its polygonal apse and vaulted chapels.” The Washington Presentation, Mallory concluded, “is the most ambitious and successful Sieneese painting of the late Trecento as regards interior setting.”[17]

To illustrate the scene of the entry of the child Mary into the temple, Paolo must have followed an illustrious model, now lost: the one painted by *Pietro* and Ambrogio Lorenzetti as part of a Marian sequence on the facade of the Ospedale della Scala, opposite the cathedral, in 1335.[18] We do not know whether Paolo had been contractually obliged—as Sano di Pietro would be a half-century later [19]—to reproduce the Lorenzettian composition in his panel. Many elements that it holds in common with Sano di Pietro’s version of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple (now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana),[20] and with the many other variations on the theme produced by Sieneese painters in the second half of the fourteenth century and early fifteenth century,[21] do suggest that he followed the same

prototype, albeit with some liberties. The model in question showed Mary at the top of the flight of stairs within an elaborate architectural structure, frontally placed, with one or two priests welcoming her. The child's arms were humbly crossed over her breast, but she was shown looking backward towards her mother. Behind the priests, at the center, an altar with a golden ciborium (presumably intended to represent the Ark of the Covenant) could be glimpsed in the background, while further to the right was placed the group of girls who would be Mary's companions during her years in the temple. Placed in the foreground to the left were Mary's mother and a group of women, and on the other side a group of men including two elderly bearded Jews disputing with each other.[22] Another model that the artist must have had in mind in his work was *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple* [fig. 1] painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti for the altar of San Crescenzo in Siena Cathedral (now in the Uffizi, Florence).[23] In conformity with this latter work, Paolo gives the Temple of Jerusalem a different appearance from that seen in the various versions of the theme painted by other Siennese painters. Following the lost fresco on the hospital facade, those painters describe the temple as a circular-plan building, whereas Paolo shows it as an imposing Gothic church with a nave and two aisles: an innovative feature that shows his intention—and capacity—to renovate the tradition.

Perhaps the most original aspect of his composition, however, is its color: in contrast to the mainly dark colors enlivened by large splashes of deep red proposed by his predecessors, Paolo has adopted an altogether brighter, sunnier palette to represent the light-flooded interior of the temple, its polygonal apse pierced by a ring of double-lancet windows, its blue-gray stonework articulated with pink stringcourses. The colors of the architecture are matched by those of the various groups of onlookers that throng the interior, almost all of them wearing light-colored clothing: salmon pink, light blue, sage green. On the other hand, Paolo is parsimonious in his use of brilliant colors such as cinnabar red. It should also be pointed out that in his scene the middle distance is as densely inhabited as the foreground; it contains not only the principal group of Mary and Zacharias but also the crowd of girls assembled in a kind of raised singing gallery at the right [fig. 2]. Other innovative features of Paolo's scene are some apparently minor inventions, such as the two foreshortened heads closing off the back of the composition at either side—the heads of young women standing in the background and craning their necks in order to better view the sacred event—thus emphasizing the spaciousness of the scene. The detail—as spontaneous as a snapshot—of the kneeling woman seen from the back in the foreground to the left, half-hidden by

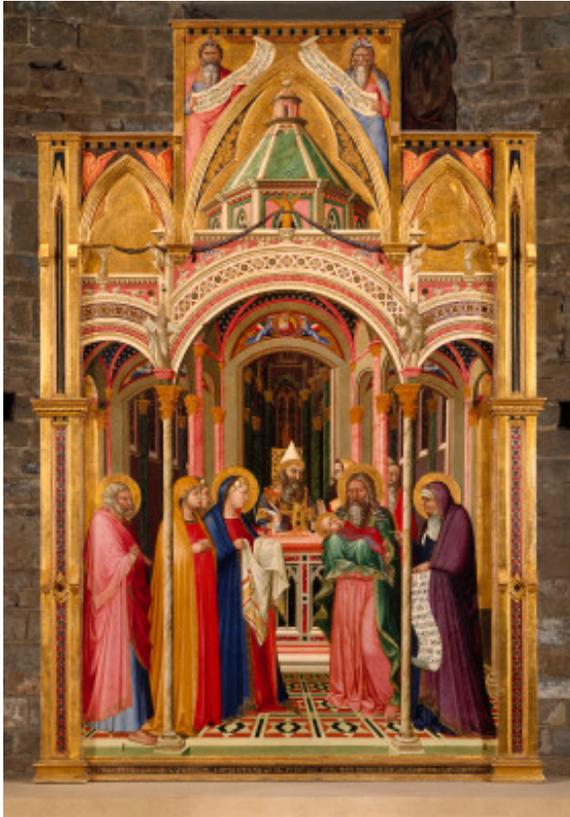
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the pillar against which the Solomonic column of the lost original frame would have been superimposed, develops a motif with which the painter had already experimented, for example in *The Birth of the Virgin* in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena.[24] The *trouvaillie* of placing two children in the foreground, silhouetted against the light-flooded flight of steps, with the evident function of providing a kind of repoussoir, also anticipated a motif of which the International Gothic painters of the following generation would be fond. Not even in this phase of his full maturity, however, was the painter apparently willing to forego the solemn, dreamy, and in general impenetrable facial masks that usually characterize his paintings. Yet he skillfully exploits the expressive potential of the large and nervous hands of his figures to express the resolution, wonder, or doubt of his protagonists. In conclusion, it can be said that the scene proposed by the painter epitomizes and at the same time renews the experiences of a whole century of Sienese figurative culture, projecting them towards what was about to be born in the new century.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *The Presentation of Christ in the Temple*, 1342, tempera on panel, Uffizi, Florence.  
Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 2** Detail of girls in the singing gallery, Paolo di Giovanni Fei, *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, 1398–1399, tempera on panel transferred to hardboard, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**NOTES**

- [1] The apocryphal text has the title *De Ortu Beatae Mariae et Infantia Salvatoris*; on the origin of the legend and on its sources see Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1964–1965), 2:112–128.
- [2] Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1964–1965), 2:128–134.
- [3] Gertrud Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh,

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1966–1990), 4, pt. 2: 68. On the fifteen Gradual Psalms (Psalms 120–134), see Frank L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London and New York, 1958), 578.

- [4] Gertrud Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 4, pt. 2:67–68.
- [5] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:176.
- [6] National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1956), 28.
- [7] National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 35; Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, *Iconographie de l'enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1964–1965), 2:30 n. 1.
- [8] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 28.
- [9] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:130.
- [10] Vittorio Lusini, *Il Duomo di Siena* (Siena, 1911), 321 n. 2, and Provenance, note 1.
- [11] Quoted by Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 124.
- [12] On the compositional scheme prescribed for altarpieces in Siena Cathedral, beginning with that of Sant'Ansano painted by Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in 1333 (now in the Uffizi, Florence) and continuing through the fourteenth century, see Kavin Frederick, "A Program of Altarpieces for the Siena Cathedral," *The Rutgers Art Review* 4 (1983): 18–38; Hendrik W. van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function*, vol. 2, 1344–1460 (Groningen, 1990), 99–139. The only one of these altarpieces to retain the paintings of its upper register (except for the one originally at its center) is that for the altar of Sant'Ansano, with busts of prophets in its gable panels, but it does not seem justified to suppose that in this respect the polyptychs of the cathedral were any different from the altarpieces of the main Sienese churches. In fact, in recent times the existence of gable panels has been conjectured both for the polyptych of San Vittore painted by Bartolomeo Bulgarini (Italian, c. 1300 - 1378) around 1351 and now divided among the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts; the Statens Museum for Kunst in Copenhagen; and other collections. See Elisabeth H. Beatson, Norman E. Muller, and Judith B. Steinhoff, "The St. Victor Altarpiece in Siena Cathedral: A Reconstruction," *The Art Bulletin* 68 (1986): 610–631; Judith Steinhoff-Morrison, *Bartolomeo Bulgarini and Sienese Painting of the Mid-Fourteenth*

*Century*, 2 vols. (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1990), 2: fig. 20h. For that of San Crescenzo, painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in 1342, of which the main panel is now in the Uffizi, Florence, see Sonia Chiodo, "Attorno a un dipinto inedito di Ambrogio Lorenzetti," *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 1–6; Erling S. Skaug, "Two New Paintings by Ambrogio Lorenzetti: Technical Criteria and the Complexity of Chronology," *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 7–17. Andrea De Marchi made the point that the carpenter Paolo Bindi, having realized the wooden structure for the polyptych that Ambrogio Lorenzetti had been commissioned to paint, was paid for constructing not only the predella but also the "cholonne" and the "civori" (possibly to be interpreted as gables); Andrea De Marchi, "La tavola d'altare," in *Storia delle arti in Toscana: Il Trecento*, ed. Max Seidel (Florence, 2004), 29.

- [13] Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 2:37; Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 428; Monica Butzek, "Chronologie," in *Die Kirchen von Siena*, vol. 3, *Der Dom S. Maria Assunta*, bk. 1, *Architektur*, pt. 1, ed. Walter Haas and Dethard von Winterfeld (Munich, 2006), 98. Commenting on this information, Michael Mallory observed, "probably the document...is designating a panel depicting St. Peter rather than one made for the chapel of S. Pietro, or possibly it refers to an altarpiece for the chapel that [Bartolo di] Fredi did actually execute, but which was moved or destroyed," and he added, "it is even possible that [Bartolo di] Fredi did begin the triptych from which the *Presentation of the Virgin* remains, but that his work was executed on one of the missing panels." See Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 128. In the view of the present writer, this latter hypothesis seems the more plausible; in any case, it should be recalled that only one of the chapels in the cathedral was dedicated to Saint Peter.
- [14] Hendrik W. van Os, "Tradition and Innovation in Some Altarpieces by Bartolo di Fredi," *The Art Bulletin* 67 (1985): 50–66; Gaudenz Freuler, "Bartolo di Fredis Altar für die Annunziata-Kapelle in S. Francesco in Montalcino," *Pantheon* 43 (1985): 21. For a correction of the proposal, see Gaudenz Freuler, *Bartolo di Fredi Cini: Ein Beitrag zur sienesischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Disentis, 1994), 341.
- [15] Recently it was conjectured that the payment to Bartolo referred not to the altarpiece but to the tabernacle commissioned in 1380 to hold the statue of the saint, and destined for the same altar; Monica Butzek, "Chronologie," in *Die Kirchen von Siena*, vol. 3, *Der Dom S. Maria Assunta*, bk. 1, *Architektur*, pt. 1, ed. Walter Haas and Dethard von Winterfeld (Munich, 2006), 99 n. 1285 and 1286. However, as Monica Butzek verbally advised me, she excluded this eventuality.
- [16] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death*

(Princeton, 1951), 28 n. 58; Enzo Carli, *Il Duomo di Siena* (Genoa, 1979), 85; Hendrik W. van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function*, vol. 2, 1344–1460 (Groningen, 1990), 136.

- [17] Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 119.
- [18] Daniela Gallavotti Cavallero, *Lo Spedale di Santa Maria della Scala in Siena: Vicenda di una committenza artistica* (Pisa, 1985), 70–73. The frescoes represented the Birth of the Virgin, the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, the Betrothal, the Return of Mary to the House of Her Parents, and, probably, the Assumption.
- [19] In 1448 it was decided to add a predella to the altarpiece of the “cappella de’ Signori” in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, and it was specified that “vi si debba fare cinque storie di nostra donna alla similitudine di quelle che sonno a capo le porti dello spedale della scala” (five stories of Our Lady should be made copying those that are above the doors of the Hospital of the Scala). See Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 2:256–257. The panels of the predella, now dispersed among various collections, were painted by Sano di Pietro and are to be considered simplified reproductions but substantially faithful to the frescoes of Lorenzetti on the facade of the Ospedale della Scala. See Keith Christiansen, “The Cappella de’ Signori Predella,” in *Painting in Renaissance Siena, 1420–1500*, ed. Keith Christiansen, Laurence B. Kanter, and Carl Brandon Strehlke (New York, 1988), 146–148.
- [20] Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 2, *Il Trecento. Firenze e Siena* (Vatican City, 1987), 48, fig. 99.
- [21] Mallory listed the variants of the compositions. Michael Mallory, *Paolo di Giovanni Fei* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1965), 135–141.
- [22] This motif is less clearly evident in the panel of Sano di Pietro and in the other derivations from the Lorenzettian prototype, where the two old men, busily conversing with each other and in some cases with other figures, are also flanked by Saint Joachim, who dominates the group. Presumably this also was so in the lost fresco of Santa Maria della Scala. The motif of the disputation is particularly conspicuous in *Lippo Vanni’s* fresco of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple in the church of San Leonardo al Lago, and in this respect recalls the National Gallery of Art panel.
- [23] Uffizi, Florence, no. 8346; see Hayden B.J. Maginnis, “Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s Presentation in the Temple,” *Studi di storia dell’arte* 2 (1991): 33–50, and on the position of this important painting in the history of the representation of space in fourteenth-century painting see Miriam Schild Bunim, *Space in Medieval Painting and the Forerunners of Perspective* (New York, 1940), 145–151.

[24] No. 116; cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 179–180, and Veronica Randon, in *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon (Siena, 2005), 55–57.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The original wooden support, of an undetermined number of planks with vertical grain, was removed by William Suhr when the painting was transferred to hardboard and cradled in 1954.[1] Photographs taken before this treatment [fig. 1] show the painting in a nineteenth-century frame that follows the shape of the upper edge; since this format would have been most uncommon in a fourteenth-century altarpiece, it seems likely that the panel was cut out of a larger one of different shape, presumably provided with gables above. The wooden support may have been slightly cropped along all the edges. The panel was prepared with gesso followed by red bole in areas to be gilded. The brocade fabrics were created using sgraffito. The gilded areas were elaborately tooled with twelve different punch marks. Incised lines were used to indicate the contours of the architecture and the placement of the figures. Infrared reflectography at 1.5 to 2.0 microns shows underdrawing, which reveals that both the figures and the architecture were sketched in freely.[2] Paint was applied in the small, discrete brushstrokes typical of tempera, with green underpaint in the flesh areas.

When the panel was stripped of its original frame, the two wooden columns that would have divided the composition into three parts were dismantled and lost; during their removal, the painted columns of the architectural setting, which the framing columns had partially covered, suffered damage in the areas of the bases and capitals [fig. 2]. The paint layer in the areas beneath the two lateral arches is generally well preserved; that beneath the central arch is abraded, and scattered small losses there have been inpainted. There are additional paint losses along the lower edge and to the right side of the left inner column. Lacunae are also present along a crack extending from the center of the lower edge to the left hand of the high priest. Suhr removed a discolored varnish and inpainted the panel when he transferred it in 1954. By 1996, the varnish and inpainting applied by Suhr had discolored. The painting was treated again between 1996 and 1998 to remove this discolored varnish and inpainting.



**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1950, Paolo di Giovanni Fei, *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, 1398–1399, tempera on panel transferred to hardboard, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 2** Photograph during treatment, before inpainting, Paolo di Giovanni Fei, *The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, 1398–1399, tempera on panel transferred to hardboard, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:177.
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Kodak 310-21X focal plane array PtSi camera.

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**PROVENANCE**

Commissioned in 1398<sup>[1]</sup> for the chapel of San Pietro in Siena Cathedral,<sup>[2]</sup> where it remained at least until 1482.<sup>[3]</sup> It is probable, however, that the altarpiece was removed only between 1580 (when a new, richly decorated marble altar was

commissioned for the chapel) and 1582 (when the decoration of the new altar was completed). At this time it was then either consigned to the cathedral's storerooms or sold.[4] H.M. Clark, London, by 1928.[5] Edward Hutton [1874-1969], London.[6] (Wildenstein & Co., New York), by 1950;[7] sold February 1954 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[8] gift 1961 to NGA. [1] Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols., Siena, 1854: 2:37; Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* 1, Siena, 1898: 62; Monica Butzek, "Chronologie," In *Die Kirchen von Siena*, multi-vol., ed. Waltee Haas and Dethard von Winterfeld, vol. 3, part 1.1.2, Munich, 2006: 102. Payments to Paolo di Giovanni Fei "per la tavola di sancto Piero et sancto Pavolo, per sua fatiga e colori" were made, specifies Monica Butzek (2006), between 1398 and April 1399. [2] Pietro Lorenzetti's altarpiece of the *Birth of the Virgin*, also painted for the Cathedral of Siena in 1342 (see Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Marco Lucco, Milan, 1989: 152-154), is surmounted, like *The Presentation of the Virgin* discussed here, by three arches included in a heavy frame. The present appearance of these paintings is misleading, however. Fourteenth-century altarpieces were generally realized on rectangular panels, not silhouetted like these, and integrated above by triangular or trapezoidal gables partially overlapped by the integral frame. See Monika Cämmerer George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder in Trecento*, Strasbourg, 1966: 144-165; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde. Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento*, Berlin, 2001: 43-56. [3] Enzo Carli, *Il Duomo di Siena*, Genoa, 1979: 85-86. [4] On 9 September 1579, the Congrega di San Pietro, patron since 1513 of the chapel dedicated to this saint (the second altar from the entrance in the north aisle), commissioned the stonecutters Girolamo del Turco and Pietro di Benedetto da Prato to realize a new marble structure around the altar. This sculptural decoration was completed in April 1582. It is presumed that between the two dates Paolo's panel, considered antiquated, was removed. See Butzek 2006, 197. [5] *Daily Telegraph Exhibition* 1928, 162. Concerning the unknown whereabouts of the painting between 1582 and 1928, a handwritten note on a photograph of the painting, formerly owned by Bernard Berenson (now in the Biblioteca Berenson at Villa I Tatti, Florence), suggests a provenance from the collection at Corsham Court, Wiltshire, which the British diplomat Sir Paul Methuen (1672–1757) had formed in the eighteenth century, and which, by the mid-nineteenth century, had been enriched with paintings from the collection of the Rev. John Sanford (1777-1855) through the 1844 marriage of Sanford's daughter and sole heir, Anna Horatia Caroline Sanford (1824–1899), to Frederick H.P. Methuen, 2nd baron Methuen (1818-1891). See

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Benedict Nicolson, "The Sanford Collection," *The Burlington Magazine* 98 (1955): 207–214. However, this suggestion appears to be in error. James Methuen-Campbell, who inherited Corsham Court in 1994 and has extensively researched the family collections, kindly reviewed the manuscript material for both the Sanford and Methuen collections, and found no reference to the painting (see his e-mail to Anne Halpern, of 15 February 2012, in NGA curatorial files). The painting also does not appear among those disposed of by Sanford on the occasion of two London sales: a sale by private contract under the auspices of George Yates (24 April 1838, and days following), and a sale at Christie & Manson (9 March 1839). [6] Information given in *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1956. [7] According to the handwritten note on the photograph referenced above (see note 5), the painting was with Wildenstein by October 1950. [8] The bill of sale (copy in NGA curatorial files) is dated 10 February 1954, and was for fourteen paintings, including *Presentation of the Virgin* by Bartolo di Fredi; payments by the foundation continued to March 1957.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1928 Daily Telegraph Exhibition of Antiques and Works of Art, Olympia, London, 1928, no. X1, as by Bartolo di Fredi.

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# Gaddi, Agnolo

Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396

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Grandson of the painter Gaddo di Zanobi, and son of Taddeo Gaddi—disciple of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) and one of the leading exponents of Florentine painting in the mid-fourteenth century—Agnolo probably was trained in his father's shop, and by 1369 he must already have emerged as a recognized master in his own right. In that year he received payments together with a group of artists including Giovanni da Milano, Giotto, and his own brother Giovanni (also a painter but one whose works have not survived) for the now lost decoration in the palace of Pope Urban V in the Vatican.[1] His earliest works, including the triptych dated 1375 now in the Galleria Nazionale in Parma and the fresco fragments in the former monastery of San Domenico del Maglio in Florence, executed according to the documents in 1376,[2] are characterized by harsh color and rather crowded compositions; they are populated by figures of ponderous movement and massive physique, accentuated by the chiaroscuro by which they are modeled. In the early 1380s, evidently by then a well-affirmed artist, Agnolo obtained commissions of particular prestige in his native city: the designs for the sculptures to adorn the façade of the Loggia dei Lanzi; the frescoing of the Castellani Chapel in Santa Croce (stories of Saints Anthony Abbot, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, and Nicholas); and the painting of an altarpiece probably intended for the church of San Miniato al Monte, now divided between the Contini-Bonacossi bequest in the Uffizi, Florence, and the Kisters collection in Kreuzlingen. Other major commissions followed, including further designs for sculptures, this time for Florence Cathedral (1387, 1391);[3] the polyptychs now in the National Gallery of Art and in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (the latter datable to 1387); and the decoration of the choir of Santa Croce (stories of the legend of the Cross), the most extensive pictorial cycle produced in Florence in the later fourteenth century. In particular the frescoes of stories of the Cross, with their representation of this complex subject in a narrative cycle enriched with numerous secondary episodes and a series of vivid observations taken from everyday life, and, not least, their peculiarly sober, nervous, and incisive pictorial style, dominated by the linear component, would exert a decisive and enduring influence on the following generation of Florentine painters.

In the early 1390s Agnolo was active in Prato (frescoes of the Cappella della Cintola and the now lost decoration of the facade of the Duomo, and the fresco now in the Museo di Pittura Murale in the former Convent of San Domenico); these works were completed with the involvement of a large *bottega*.<sup>[4]</sup> But he also painted a crucifix for San Martino at Sesto Fiorentino and continued to obtain prestigious commissions from his hometown (designs for the stained glass of Florence Cathedral, 1394–1395; another altarpiece for San Miniato al Monte).<sup>[5]</sup> In this final phase of his career, likely stimulated by the neo-Giottesque current expressed in the work of various Florentine painters of the period, his compositions show a tendency toward simplification in form and a growing propensity—in conformity with the late-Gothic style of the time—to emphasize refinement in his protagonists' actions. His figures are also modeled now with greater softness and reveal the artist's ability to express inner emotions.

Though his contemporaries considered him the heir of the art of Giotto,<sup>[6]</sup> Agnolo sought to renew the figurative tradition of that great master and his late followers by proposing more varied and animated forms and compositions, and by trying to enliven his images with more dynamic curvilinear contours, new expressive formulae, and an original palette. His art indeed laid the foundation for the late-Gothic renewal of Florentine painting accomplished by his disciples, in particular Gherardo Starnina and Lorenzo Monaco (Florentine, c. 1370 - c. 1425).

[1] Documents published by Alessio Monciatti, *Il Palazzo Vaticano nel medioevo* (Florence, 2005), 317–329.

[2] Ada Labriola, “La decorazione pittorica,” in *L’Oratorio di Santa Caterina: Osservazioni storico-critiche in occasione del restauro*, ed. Maurizio De Vita (Florence, 1998), 57–58 n. 33.

[3] Karl Frey, *Die Loggia dei Lanzi zu Florenz: Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1885), 36–39.

[4] For the documentation relating to the frescoes of the Cappella della Cintola, see Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d’archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d’arte* 14 (1932): 363–369; Marco Ciatti, “Gli affreschi della Cappella della Cintola,” in *La Sacra Cintola nel Duomo di Prato* (Prato, 1995), 163–223. As Margherita Romagnoli recently showed, it was not Agnolo Gaddi, as generally asserted, but a namesake who painted the walls of Palazzo Datini in Prato. See Margherita Romagnoli, “La dimora di un mercante

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pratese nel XIV secolo (parte 2): La decorazione interna di Palazzo Datini,” *Arte cristiana* 97 (2009): 22–24.

[5] For the documents relating to the sculptures and stained-glass windows, see Giuseppe Poggi and Margaret Haines, eds., *Il Duomo di Firenze: Documenti sulla decorazione della chiesa e del campanile, tratti dall'Archivio dell'Opera*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1909; repr. 1988), 1:19 (doc. 112), 93 (doc. 484); for those of the San Miniato altarpiece see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 67.

[6] In the first chapter of his primer on the art of painting, *Il libro dell'arte*, Cennino Cennini attempted to prove the authoritativeness of his text by declaring that he had learned the art of painting from Agnolo Gaddi and was thus in some sense an heir, by direct lineage, of Giotto himself: “fui informato nella detta arte XII anni da Agnolo di Taddeo da Firenze, mio maestro, il quale imparò la detta arte da Taddeo suo padre; il suo padre fu battezzato da Giotto e fu suo discepolo anni ventiquattro” (I was trained in this profession [of painting] for twelve years by Agnolo di Taddeo of Florence, my master; he learned this profession from Taddeo his father; [and] his father was christened by Giotto and was his disciple for twenty-four years). See Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza, 2003), 62–63.

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Agnolo Gaddi  
Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396

## *The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels*

c. 1390

tempera on panel

painted surface: 161 × 79 cm (63 3/8 × 31 1/8 in.)

overall: 163.2 × 79.2 × 0.7 cm (64 1/4 × 31 3/16 × 1/4 in.)

framed: 172.1 × 87.3 × 7.9 cm (67 3/4 × 34 3/8 × 3 1/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.203

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### ENTRY

The iconography of the Coronation of the Virgin, the concluding stage of the glorification of the mother of Christ, developed relatively late in Italian art. The iconographic theme of Mary being crowned Queen of Heaven by her son developed from the concept of her bodily Assumption, recalled in ancient Christian literature from the fourth century onward,[1] but first appearing in pictorial representations no earlier than the twelfth century. The iconography began to spread in Italy from the late thirteenth century, in tandem with the development of theological trends that considered Mary the personification of the Church, mystic bride of Christ.[2] In the following centuries, it is often encountered as the main subject of altarpieces. In Florence, the model most frequently followed was that established by Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in the Baroncelli chapel polyptych in Santa Croce,[3] but a throng of saints was not always placed at the sides of the central representation of the Coronation, as in Giotto's altarpiece. What remained constant in the iconography was the presence of a group of angels, often playing musical instruments,[4] in the foreground of the central panel, and of at least two pairs of saints in the lateral panels.[5]

There seems no reason to doubt that Agnolo Gaddi likewise followed this scheme,[6] even if attempts to identify other panels of the multipart altarpiece of which the Washington painting would have formed the center thus far have not led to convincing results. The present writer previously had argued (Boskovits 1975) that the polyptych of which the Washington *Coronation of the Virgin* formed the central panel also comprised three small gable panels representing the Blessing God the Father, the archangel Gabriel, and the Virgin Annunciate, formerly in the Cook collection in Richmond.[7] Erling Skaug (2004) rightly rejected this hypothesis,[8] suggesting instead that these three panels formed part of Agnolo Gaddi's *Nobili* triptych from Santa Maria degli Angeli, now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. 1039). More recently, Sonia Chiodo (2005) suggested that a figure of Saint Bartholomew (private collection) and two predella panels respectively representing stories of Saint Andrew (Richard L. Feigen collection) and stories of Saint Sylvester (Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art) were originally the companion panels of the Washington *Coronation*.[9] The stories of Saints Andrew and Sylvester undoubtedly were parts of the same predella and are securely attributed to Agnolo Gaddi, but given their size (respectively, 31.8 × 40 and 28 × 37.5 cm) they could hardly have been placed in a predella below a lateral panel that had the same dimensions as *Saint Bartholomew* (92.2 × 28.9 cm without its frame). This latter panel would seem rather too small to have fitted alongside the Washington *Coronation*, bearing in mind the customary proportional relation between central and lateral panels in other polyptychs by Agnolo Gaddi.[10] It may now be conjectured, albeit cautiously, that Gaddi's panel representing Saints Julian, James, and Michael now in Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven [fig. 1], might have belonged to the same altarpiece, both on account of its close stylistic affinity and the presence of no less than three saints in a single panel. The presence of more than two saints in a lateral panel that has a width less than that of the central panel is rare, but this does occur in the laterals of *Coronation* scenes; see, for example, the four saints on each side in a triptych by Giovanni dal Ponte (Musée Condé, Chantilly).[11] Admittedly, the hypothesis is difficult to verify because of the Yale panel's fragmentary nature and poor state of conservation.[12]

As for the artist who painted *The Coronation of the Virgin*, scholars have been unanimous, with the exception of an attribution to Orcagna in the sale catalog of 1934, in identifying the master as Agnolo Gaddi ever since Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti first published it in 1937.[13] On the other hand, views differ concerning the panel's dating. It is placed in the period c. 1370–1380 by the older literature and, with the exception of Fern Rusk Shapley (1979), by the catalogs of the

National Gallery of Art.[14] Beginning with Miklós Boskovits (1968), the date now generally accepted is somewhat later than this, c. 1380–1390; Bruce Cole, in turn, suggested the period c. 1388–1393, pessimistically adding, “There is no way to make further or finer positional distinctions.”[15] Despite such misgivings, some attempt to clarify the sequence of works produced in Gaddi’s *bottega* in the last years of his life will perhaps not be entirely futile.

We may begin by examining the composition that Gaddi adopted for the groups of angels that appear in the foreground in front of the throne of Mary in various altarpieces. In Agnolo’s Berlin triptych, datable to 1387,[16] as in the triptych in Washington (see *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel* [left panel]; *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ* [middle panel]; *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation* [right panel]), the three music-making angels on the left side seem virtually mirror images of the group facing them on the opposite side—in composition, pose, gesture, and details; the only variation is in the musical instruments in the hands of the pair of angels in the foreground. As it can be argued that the Berlin and Washington paintings are chronologically close, we can perhaps infer that this trait is characteristic of a moment in Gaddi’s career. The Coronation discussed here, however, differs from this scheme in various respects. Though the number of angels remains the same, their arrangement and pose differ, each reacting in a different way to the scene of the Coronation [fig. 2]. Even their physique is different: their bodies are longer and more slender; the oval of their faces is more elongated; and their aristocratic features and ecstatic expressions are wholly attuned to and absorbed in the music they play. In comparison with the two above-cited triptychs, their garments, moreover, seem more simplified in design, their draperies less minutely ruffled than before; articulated with deep folds, they confer a certain grandeur on these secondary eyewitnesses of the scene.

In the Gallery’s panel, not only the groups of music-making and chorister angels but also the central protagonists themselves, and the very composition of the scene, display innovative features in comparison with the triptych of 1387. The bodies of Christ and his mother [fig. 3], enthroned side by side in close juxtaposition and bowing their heads to each other, form a single monolithic bloc, integrated below by the two choirs of angels. The closely interwoven group of Mary and Christ recalls the Coronation frescoed by Agnolo Gaddi in the chapel of the Sacro Cingolo in Prato Cathedral,[17] at least with respect to their close

proximity and the arrangement of the wide, undulating folds that furrow their mantles. However, comparison to the cycle of frescoes in Prato, realized with the participation of many studio assistants and, apparently, completed in considerable haste,[18] does not do justice to the far higher quality of the panel being discussed here [19]—the delicate chiaroscuro that models its forms; the subtlety of its color combinations; or the elegance of its facial features, characterized by high cheekbones, elongated pointed noses, and narrow almond eyes. These are characteristics that recall works of the artist's final phase, in particular such passages as that of the mourning saint John the Evangelist in the crucifix of the Pieve di San Martino at Sesto Fiorentino [20] or the two full-length panels of Saints Giovanni Gualberto and Miniato in the Cappella del Crocifisso in San Miniato al Monte in Florence.[21] The latter comparison is especially telling, since that altarpiece was begun in 1394 and probably completed only in the immediate aftermath of the artist's death in 1396.

To judge from the stylistic evidence, *The Coronation of the Virgin* in Washington ought to be placed in the phase of Gaddi's career in which he embarked with ever greater determination on the pursuit of the elegance of form, preciousness of color, and decorative richness typical of the late-Gothic style that was becoming increasingly fashionable in Florence; the panel's surface patterning and elaborate tooling are also indicative of this. Yet the Washington panel shows that Agnolo Gaddi cannot have remained unaware of the alternative current of Florentine painting headed by Niccolò Gerini, which in the years 1385–1400 tried to revive motifs and forms associated with painters of the school of Giotto in the first half of the century.[22] It seems to me reasonable, therefore, to suggest that the Washington Coronation is close in date to the San Miniato altarpiece, dating to c. 1390 or shortly after.

Miklós Boskovits (1935–2011)

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Agnolo Gaddi, *Saints Julian, James, and Michael*, c. 1390, tempera on panel, Yale University Art Gallery, University Purchase from James Jackson Jarves. Image: Yale University Art Gallery



**fig. 2** Detail of angels, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels*, c. 1390, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Christ and Mary, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels*, c. 1390, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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#### NOTES

- [1] Frank L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London and New York, 1958), 96–97.
- [2] On the iconography of the Coronation of the Virgin in general, see Philippe Verdier, *Le couronnement de la Vierge: Les origines et les premiers développements d'un thème iconographique* (Montréal and Paris, 1980); Ulriche Liebl, "Krönung Mariens," in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1991), 3:680–683; and, especially as regards Italian painting, Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay

Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 531–539.

- [3] Giovanni Previtali and Giovanna Ragionieri, *Giotto e la sua bottega*, ed. Alessandro Conti, 3rd ed. (Milan, 1993), pls. 114–115, fig. 354.
- [4] According to Terence Ford, *National Gallery of Art, Washington, Inventory of Music Iconography 1* (New York, 1986), 1, no. 4, the angels in the Gallery painting are playing a lute and a gittern, respectively.
- [5] While Giotto's composition prescribed the presence of far more numerous groups of saints to the sides of the Coronation depicted in the central panel, Florentine triptychs and polyptychs of the fourteenth century often show only two saints to the sides of the scene; cf. the polyptych by Puccio di Simone now divided between the museums of Ghent and Berlin, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 421–429, or that by Giovanni di Tano Fei, dated 1394, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, no. 50.229.2.
- [6] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 90, wrote that the Gallery Coronation “may have originally had side wings, but this is by no means certain.” In fact, no panel of the Coronation of the Virgin that has the form and proportions of the one discussed here can be shown to have been a self-standing, single-panel painting.
- [7] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 303.
- [8] Erling S. Skaug, “Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 245–257.
- [9] Sonia Chiodo, “Gaddi, Agnolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113. See also Gaudenz Freuler, ed., *Manifestatori delle cose miracolose: Arte italiana del '300 e '400 da collezioni in Svizzera e nel Liechtenstein* (Einsiedeln, 1991), 202–203; and Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 26–28.
- [10] For this panel, see Ada Labriola, in *The Alana Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings from the 13th to 15th Century*, ed. Mikós Boskovits (Florence, 2009), 8–11.
- [11] Cf. Richard Fremantle, *Florentine Gothic Painters from Giotto to Masaccio: A Guide to Painting in and near Florence, 1300 to 1450* (London, 1975), fig. 739. On the other hand, three saints appear to the sides of subjects other than the Coronation of the Virgin, as in the case of a triptych by Niccolò Gerini with the Crucifixion in the center, now in the Galleria

dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 3152).

- [12] The Yale panel of Saints Julian, James, and Michael (no. 1871.20) measures 86.8 × 74.6 cm but has been slightly cropped along the sides and more substantially cut along the top and bottom; originally it must have measured between c. 110 and 130 cm in height, thus achieving dimensions that would be consistent with a triptych having the Washington Coronation at its center. The Yale panel is not easy to assess, however, given its present state of conservation. After a nineteenth-century restoration had completely regilded the heavily worn gold ground, including new halos with inscriptions bearing the names of the saints, the painting was subjected to a rather brutal cleaning in 1959, which stripped it of its previous additions and retouches and left visible a heavily abraded paint surface with all its lacunae. Cf. Charles Seymour, *Early Italian Paintings in the Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven and London, 1970), 37–38.
- [13] Christie's, *Pictures and Drawings by Old Masters* (London, June 29, 1934), no. 58; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, "Su Agnolo Gaddi," *Critica d'arte* 2 (1937): 185–189. Apart from the authors cited in the Bibliography, the attribution to Agnolo Gaddi was also confirmed in manuscript opinions by Bernard Berenson, Giuseppe Fiocco, Roberto Longhi, F. Mason Perkins, Wilhelm Suida, Raimond van Marle, and Adolfo Venturi. Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:194–195, reported as the only dissenting voices the hypothesis of Hans Dietrich Gronau, "A Dispersed Florentine Altarpiece and Its Possible Origin," *Proporzioni* 3 (1950): 42, in favor of an anonymous "companion of Agnolo," and the one formulated by the present writer in the early days of his studies on Trecento painting, in 1964, and communicated to the Gallery (letter to Perry Cott, January 14, 1964, in NGA curatorial files). I had at that time proposed to unite the Washington Coronation with a group of paintings isolated by Roberto Salvini, but I have long since come to the conclusion that this group represents paintings belonging to the final phase of activity of Gaddi himself. Cf. Roberto Salvini, "Per la cronologia e per il catalogo di un discepolo di Agnolo Gaddi," *Bollettino d'arte* 29 (1935–1936): 279–294; and Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 295–304.
- [14] Cf. Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:194–195.
- [15] Cf. Miklós Boskovits, "Some Early Works of Agnolo Gaddi," *The Burlington Magazine* 110 (1968): 210 n. 5; and Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 31.
- [16] Erling S. Skaug, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 106–110; Erling S. Skaug, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria

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degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?"  
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- [17] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 32–39; Giuseppe Marchini, *La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato* (Prato, [1975]); Marco Ciatti, "Gli affreschi della Cappella della Cintola," in *La Sacra Cintola nel Duomo di Prato* (Prato, 1995), 163–223.
- [18] Though he admitted the participation of assistants in some scenes, Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 39, was highly positive in his evaluation of the frescoes of the Cappella del Sacro Cingolo: "At Prato there is a harmony between fresco and frame, narrative and background, and figure and architecture.... The style of the Cappella...is, in a word, mature." Yet the crowded compositions of the Sacro Cingolo frescoes often seem somewhat confused, and the individual passages, repetitive in kind and perfunctory in technique, rarely achieve in this cycle the quality of the frescoes in the cappella maggiore of Santa Croce, not to mention Gaddi's most important panel paintings.
- [19] Although the quality of execution is generally high, details like the foreshortened arms of the angels playing their instruments reveal some weaknesses in design.
- [20] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 16–17, 89, pl. 80, though he erroneously cited the painting among "Gaddi's first recognizable works." See also, following its recent restoration, Maria Matilde Simari, ed., *La Croce di Agnolo Gaddi della Pieve di San Martino a Sesto Fiorentino* (Florence, 1995).
- [21] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 123–124; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 51–56, 72, pls. 87–96; Angelo Tartuferi, "Le opere d'arte e la decorazione pittorica della chiesa," in *La Basilica di San Miniato al Monte a Firenze*, ed. Francesco Gurreri, Luciano Berti, and Claudio Leonardi (Florence, 1988), 1986. In contrast to most art historians, Cole did not believe that the documents of 1394–1396 referred to this work and considered it a product of Gaddi's followers.
- [22] On the neo-Giottesque current in Florence that influenced many painters between the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 87–88, 100, 223 n. 37.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden support is a three-member, vertically grained wood panel that Stephen Pichetto cradled in 1935–1936.[1] It was probably thinned to its present thickness of 0.7 cm at that time. Traces of the original barbe still remain along the pointed arch above, indicating the painting would have had an engaged frame. The barbe is not present along the vertical sides and bottom, signifying that the painting was probably cropped slightly in these areas. Originally, the panel may have been of rectangular shape and only later obtained its present form. Evidence of two nail holes at the top of the center board supports this theory, because they most likely corresponded to a batten. A batten would not be necessary in this area, where the arched panel consists of only one board, unless the panel was rectangular and all three boards extended to this height. The panel's shape probably was altered when it was inserted into the nineteenth-century frame still visible in the earlier photo of the painting, taken c. 1934; at the same time, no doubt, the painted surface was cropped slightly along its vertical and horizontal edges. Fine woven fabric, visible in the x-radiographs, was applied between panel and gesso as an interleaf. Lines were incised in the gesso to mark the boundaries between the gilding and paint, and areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole. The crowns and halos were decorated with punched and incised designs. The brocade was created using *sgraffito* technique. The paint is applied with small, discrete brushstrokes, with green undermodeling in the flesh areas.[2] The gold decoration on the drapery is mordant gilded.

The panel has been damaged by woodworm, requiring the replacement of lost wood and strengthening of the joins. Stephen Pichetto removed discolored varnish and inpainted the losses when he applied the cradle in 1935–1936.[3] Twenty years later, in 1955, Mario Modestini removed discolored varnish and inpainted the losses again.[4] Photographs taken before the inpainting process [fig. 1] show considerable damage along the right side join, obliterating the features of the second angel at this side and resulting in narrow losses along that join from the bottom edge to the elbow of Christ. There are also losses in the shoulder and nearer wing of the angel on the extreme right and small inpainted lacunae in the draperies and in the gold ground. The red lake pigments have faded significantly. The varnish is somewhat yellowed, and some of the inpainting has discolored.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, 1955, after cleaning but before inpainting, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels*, c. 1390, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

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- [1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 40. A Cooper photograph (W. 8161) shows the state of the painting at the time of the 1934 auction. The rather rough retouching, evident especially in Christ's tunic and in the profile of the second angel on the right side, proves that the panel had been restored sometime earlier, probably in the late nineteenth century.
- [2] The pigments were analyzed using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). The analysis was performed by the NGA scientific research department (see report dated February 13, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [3] See note 1 above.
- [4] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:195, and several photographs in the NGA curatorial files, taken either during or after Modestini's treatment.
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### PROVENANCE

The Hon. William Keith Rous [1907-1983], Worstead House, Norfolk; (sale, Christie, Manson & Woods, London, 29 June 1934, no. 58, as by Orcagna); purchased by (Giuseppe Bellesi, London)[1] for (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence); sold October 1935 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[2] gift 1939 to NGA. [1] Bellesi worked in London as Contini-Bonacossi's agent in the 1930s. [2] The bill of sale for several paintings, including the Gaddi, is dated 10 October 1935 (copy in NGA curatorial files). The name of the British owner is incorrectly given as the Hon. Keith Bons.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 128.

1940 Arts of the Middle Ages: A Loan Exhibition, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1940, no. 59.

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Agnolo Gaddi  
Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396

## *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*

shortly before 1387

tempera on poplar panel

overall: 204 × 80 cm (80 5/16 × 31 1/2 in.)

Inscription: across the bottom: AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMINUS [TECUM]  
(Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; from Luke 1:28); on the book held by  
the Redeemer in the gable: EGO SUM / A[ET] O PRINCI / PIU[M] [ET] FINIS / EGO  
SUM VI / A. VERITAS / [ET] VITA (I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the  
end, I am the way, the truth, and the life; from John 14:6; Revelations 22:13)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.4.b

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### ENTRY

This panel is the central part of a triptych flanked by two laterals with paired saints (*Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel [left panel]* and *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation [right panel]*). All three panels are topped with similar triangular gables with a painted medallion in the center. The reduction of a five-part altarpiece into a simplified format with the external profile of a triptych may have been suggested to Florentine masters as a consequence of trends that appeared towards the end of the fourteenth century: a greater simplification in composition and a revival of elements of painting from the first half of the Trecento.[1] Agnolo Gaddi followed this trend in several of his works. He demonstrates this in the three panels being discussed here by his deliberate revival of motifs that had been abandoned by most Florentine painters since the mid-fourteenth century. To present the Madonna seated on a throne of Giottesque type,[2] instead of concealing the

structure of the throne with a gold-embroidered cloth of honor as in most paintings realized by masters in the circle of Orcagna, was a sort of archaism at this time. Agnolo scrupulously describes this seat and at the same time exploits its form to create three-dimensional effects. Yet these archaizing motifs are combined with more forward-looking features. Gaddi's progressive adjustment to the innovative late-Gothic taste of his time is thus attested by various aspects of the triptych, such as the pastiglia decoration in the gables, the now lost decoration of the frame,[3] the rich orientalizing carpet that covers the floor,[4] and even the crowded composition of the central panel.

Lionello Venturi published this triptych in 1931 under the name of Gherardo Starnina.[5] This attribution was based on the now discarded theory of scholars who had tried in the first three decades of the century to reconstruct the oeuvre of a putative disciple of Agnolo Gaddi, to whom the conventional name "Madonnenmeister" or "Compagno d' Agnolo" was given and who was later identified with Gherardo Starnina.[6] However, Bernard Berenson recognized that a good part of the work given to the "Compagno d' Agnolo" belongs to Agnolo himself. The studies of Ugo Procacci [7] on Starnina finally put the proposed identification to rest, though it continued to enjoy residual credit for some time to come.[8] In the National Gallery of Art, the altarpiece was cataloged as a work by Agnolo Gaddi, and since the 1960s, art historians have unanimously accepted this attribution.

The present writer proposed that Agnolo Gaddi's altarpiece might have been executed for the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte (Florence),[9] of which the Alberti were patrons and for whose decoration Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds in his will of 1387.[10] The reasons adduced at that time in support of such a hypothesis were, it must be admitted, not quite convincing: referring to the inscription in Saint Benedict's book to the "admonition" (an administrative sanction by the Florentine government) against Alberti in 1387 and his subsequent exile is open to question. Furthermore, I erroneously asserted that Saint Giovanni Gualberto was represented in the painting. The saint to the right of the Virgin is, in fact, Bernard of Clairvaux, but the presence of this saint in the altarpiece is actually a further argument in support of a provenance from the sacristy of San Miniato. Saint Bernard was the patron Saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually *pro anima dicti testatoris* (for the soul of the said testator) in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already by that date been consecrated.[11] The representation

of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Alberti, also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato. As to the fourth saint, Catherine of Alexandria (standing on a broken wheel), she was evidently much venerated in Benedetto's family. This is proved by the fact that, in his will of 1387, he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to the martyr saint of Alexandria (and decorated by a cycle of frescoes illustrating scenes from her life by Spinello Aretino); additionally, his son Bernardo wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor.[12] The Alberti family's veneration of Saint Catherine may have been based on the popular etymology of her name (catherine=*catenuła*) diffused by Jacopo da Varazze in *Legenda aurea*,[13] with reference to the chain represented in the Alberti coats of arms.

Although the provenance from San Miniato remains a hypothesis, it still seems to me a quite plausible one that, if correct, would give us the certainty that by 1830 the triptych was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still *in situ* in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall [fig. 1] made in that year by architect Christoph Robert August Roller (1805–1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Castle Museum Burgdorf, Burgdorf, Switzerland). Unfortunately, the sketch, to which Stefan Weppelmann kindly drew my attention, is very small and certainly not sufficient for the identification of the triptych in the Gallery. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there, as Stefan Weppelmann rightly observed. It was removed and sold presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820.[14]

As for its date, the Gallery's first catalog (1941) cautiously suggested "the last quarter of the XIVth century," while the volume devoted to the Duveen Pictures (1941) proposed an approximate date of c. 1380.[15] More recent publications in general support a time frame within the 1380s, although without explaining the reasons for this proposal. Arguing for a provenance from the sacristy of the Florentine church of San Miniato al Monte, Miklós Boskovits (1975) attempted a more precise dating shortly after the codicil dated 1387 was appended to the testament of Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti, its putative patron.[16] For his part, Bruce Cole (1979) stylistically linked the Gallery triptych with the cycle of frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce in Florence, for which he proposed a date of execution in the years c. 1388–1393.[17] Given the lack of securely datable panels

by Gaddi, with the exception of the composite altarpiece of the Cappella del Crocifisso, still in the church of San Miniato,[18] various scholars have attempted to construct a chronology for the artist based on an analysis of the punched decoration of his work; however, this effort has failed to yield any precise indication for the Washington altarpiece other than a vague association with a relatively late phase in the painter's activity.[19]

In the course of his career, especially between the 1380s and the early 1390s, Agnolo Gaddi produced a number of polyptychs, now in part dismantled and dispersed, of which at least the surviving central panels propose a composition close to that of the triptych discussed here. I refer in particular to *Madonna and Child with Eight Angels* (now united with laterals that did not originally belong to it) in the Contini-Bonacossi bequest to the Uffizi, Florence;[20] *Madonna and Child Surrounded by Eight Angels* in the church of San Lorenzo at Borgo San Lorenzo;[21] the triptych in the Staatliche Museen of Berlin, in which six angels are placed around the throne and a further pair are in the gable;[22] and *Madonna and Child Flanked by Twelve Angels*, now in a private collection in Milan.[23] None of these is securely dated, but the Berlin triptych can in all probability be identified with that formerly on the altar of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, which bore the inscription "An D 1387 Bernardus Cini de Nobilibus fecit fieri hanc cappellam." [24] This gives us a useful point of reference not only for defining a chronological sequence of the paintings in question but also, as we shall see, for the dating of Gaddi's great cycles of Florentine frescoes. Another chronological point of reference, albeit an approximate one, is 1383, the date of the testament of Michele di Vanni Castellani, in which he made bequests for the construction and decoration of a family chapel in Santa Croce, the chapel that would later be frescoed by Agnolo Gaddi.[25] The style of this decoration suggests a period of execution not much later than the will; indeed, most art historians tend to place the execution of the cycle in the years immediately following 1383.

Although successive restorations have now made it difficult to assess, the Borgo San Lorenzo panel [26] seems the earliest of the group. It was perhaps painted even before the frescoes in the Castellani chapel, with which it has affinities in its use of dense shadows in modeling, in the rigid profiles of the angels, and in the deeply channeled and brittle-looking folds of their garments. Between that work and the Nobili triptych now in Berlin can be placed both the Madonna of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest (it too now altered by retouches) and the triptych in the Gallery. In contrast to these latter two, the animated composition of the panel

destined for the Nobili chapel seems to represent a further step forward, in the direction of the more dynamic compositions and the more delicate modeling that characterize the painter's final phase, to which the above-mentioned Madonna surrounded by twelve angels now in a private collection can, I believe, be ascribed.[27]

If such a chronological sequence of the altarpieces executed by Agnolo in the 1380s is plausible, the Gallery triptych ought to date to a period slightly preceding 1387—that is, slightly preceding the execution of the other and more important enterprise promoted by Benedetto di Nerazzo Alberti, the frescoing of the choir in Santa Croce.[28] Various similarities can be identified between passages of that cycle and the Washington triptych, in confirmation of the chronological proximity of the two works: the bust of Saint Andrew [fig. 2] recurs, in similar form, in the scene of the Making of the Cross [fig. 3], in the group of spectators to the extreme right of the fresco, while analogies can also be identified between the other saints of the triptych and the busts of the prophets inserted in the ornamental friezes that articulate the chapel's decoration. Close similarities have also been observed between the lateral saints of the Gallery triptych and the fragments of an altarpiece now in Indianapolis.[29] We have no secure evidence to help us date these fragments, probably the remains of the decoration of the lateral pilasters of a polyptych roughly contemporary with, or perhaps slightly later than, the triptych being discussed here. In conclusion, therefore, the Washington altarpiece exemplifies a stage in the artist's career in which he embarked on the gradual discovery of the innovative features of late-Gothic art. This led him to develop greater elegance in poses, more delicate and harmonious arrangement of draperies, and more spontaneous vitality in the conduct of the angels thronged around the sides of the throne as if drawn magnetically to the child. A clear sign of the innovations of the phase in which Agnolo painted the frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce is also the artist's polychromy: abandoning the somber palette of previous works, he now prefers or utilizes combinations of delicate pastel colors.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** C. A. R. Roller, "Design of the east wall of the sacristy of San Miniato in Florence," from *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Journal of My Trip to Italy in the Years 1829 and 1830), 1:7, June 1830, Rittersaalverein Castle Museum, Burgdorf, Switzerland



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Andrew (left), Agnolo Gaddi, *Madonna and Child with Saints Andrew, Benedict, Bernard, and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, shortly before 1387, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of spectators, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Making of the Cross*, 1385–1390, fresco, Cappella Maggiore, Santa Croce, Florence. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY

## NOTES

- [1] A similar solution—a five-part polyptych reduced to triptych format—in fact appears on the main side of Giotto's Stefaneschi altarpiece (Pinacoteca Vaticana, no. 40.120) and later (probably at a date close to 1340) in the fragment of a triptych by Jacopo del Casentino now in a private collection; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 7, *The Biadaiolo Illuminator, Master of the Dominican Effigies* (New York, 1957), pl. xlix. About 1365, Matteo di Pacino revived this scheme in an altarpiece of similar structure now in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 8463); see Michela Palmeri, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 174–181. Perhaps a few years later in date is another triptych of similar format, attributed to the Master of San Lucchese near Poggibonsi, destroyed in 1944; reproduced in Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 2," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1050, as a work by Jacopo di Cione. Another altarpiece of the same format is the triptych painted by the Master of the Misericordia and Niccolò Gerini in collaboration, now in the church of Sant'Andrea at Montespertoli near Florence; reproduced in Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, *Giovanni del Biondo*, pt. 2 (New York, 1969), pl. xlv, as workshop of Giovanni del Biondo, probably executed around 1380.
- [2] The throne is similar to the one that appears in the polyptych signed by Giotto now in the Museo Civico Nazionale in Bologna (no. 284). Thrones of this type, with a high, triangular-topped backrest but of simple structure and convincingly drawn in perspective, appear in the early 1360s in Giovanni da Milano's polyptych now in the Museo Civico at Prato; in the fragmentary polyptych by Cenni di Francesco, dated 1370, in the church of San Cristofano a Perticaia near Florence; in the polyptych by Pietro Nelli and Niccolò Gerini in the pieve at Impruneta, dated 1375; and thereafter ever more frequently in the last quarter of the century. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pls. 86 and 61.
- [3] On the original decoration of the frame, cf. Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 50–64. The fashion of covering the gable zones of altarpieces with pastiglia ornamental motifs in relief before they were gilded began to spread from Orcagna's shop in the second half of the Trecento.
- [4] The sumptuous decoration, with pairs of facing animals, of the brocaded

fabrics used to cover the throne of the Madonna or the floor on which the saints stand is a phenomenon characteristic of Florentine painting in the second half of the fourteenth century, especially in paintings of the circle of Orcagna, but also in panels produced in the bottega of Agnolo Gaddi. Cf. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 283, 316, 341.

[5] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52.

[6] Oskar Wulff (1907) coined this unfortunate conventional name. Osvald Sirén (1914–1915) later altered it to “Compagno d’Agnolo,” and shortly thereafter he formulated a hypothesis identifying this artist with Gherardo Starnina (1916, 51–53). See Oskar Wulff, “Der Madonnenmeister: Ein sienesisch–florentinische Trecentist,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 20 (1907): 195–210, 227–236; Osvald Sirén, “Early Italian Pictures, the University Museum, Göttingen (Conclusion),” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 26 (1914): 107–114; Osvald Sirén, ed., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures in the Jarves Collection Belonging to Yale University* (New Haven and London, 1916), 51–53.

The proposal was accepted by Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 565–573, and some other authors in the following decade.

[7] Referring to the group of paintings usually cited under the name “Compagno d’Agnolo,” Bernard Berenson wrote: “Una delle più singolari aberrazioni della critica recente è stata quella di attribuire tutte queste Madonne allo Starnina; ma non è necessario perdere il tempo a dissipare errori che il tempo stesso disperderà” (One of the most singular aberrations of modern criticism is that of attributing all these Madonnas to Starnina; but it is not necessary to waste time dissipating errors that time itself will dissipate). See Bernard Berenson, “Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 3,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1303. After the discovery of the remains of the cycle of Starnina’s documented frescoes in the church of the Carmine in Florence, the hypothesis of the anonymous master’s identification with Starnina was gradually abandoned. See Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 15 (1933): 151–190; Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 331–384.

[8] The triptych now in the National Gallery of Art evidently came to Duveen Brothers accompanied by expertises from Robert Langton Douglas and Osvald Sirén, both supporting the attribution to Starnina; see Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25. Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Wilhelm R. Valentiner (1933), and Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951) also accepted that attribution. Roberto Salvini (1935–1936), not accepting the identification Gherardo Starnina=Compagno d’Agnolo, attributed the painting to the latter. Cf.

Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, ed., *The Sixteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters: Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century* (Detroit, 1933), no. 11; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:2351; and Roberto Salvini, "Per la cronologia e per il catalogo di un discepolo di Agnolo Gaddi," *Bollettino d'arte* 29 (1935–1936): 287.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118–121.
- [10] On Benedetto Alberti's will, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:187. The codicil in question was attached to the will drawn up in 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract). In it the testator already instructed that "si facessi dipignere la Sagrestia di San Miniato al Monte con gli Armadi et Finestra et affreschi" (that the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte should be painted [and provided] with cupboards, [stained glass] window, and frescoes); Giovanni Felice Berti, *Cenni storico-artistici per servire di guida ed illustrazione alla insigne Basilica di S. Minato al Monte e di alcuni dintorni presso Firenze* (Florence, 1850), 156. So, when Alberti ten years later made testamentary provision that the "sacrestia ecclesiae sancti Miniatis ad Montem de prope Florentiam compleatur et compleri et perfici debeant picturis, armariis, coro, fenestra vitrea, altari et aliis necessariis" (the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte of Florence should be completed and perfected with paintings, cupboards, a choir stall, stained glass window, an altar, and all other necessary things), this decoration might already have been planned and perhaps even in part realized. Ada Labriola and Federica Baldini accepted the provenance of the Gallery's panels from the sacristy of San Miniato in Ada Labriola, "La decorazione pittorica," in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina: Osservazioni storico-critiche in occasione del restauro*, ed. Maurizio De Vita (Florence, 1998), 52; Federica Baldini, in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina all'Antella e i suoi pittori*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2009), 159.
- [11] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [12] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [13] Jacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols. (Florence, 1998), 2:1205.
- [14] See "Regesto dell'Abbazia fiorentina di San Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117–135. See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.

- [15] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 69; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25.
- [16] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118.
- [17] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–26.
- [18] Even the dating of this work, for the most part identified with the altarpiece for which Agnolo was paid between 1394 and 1396, has been questioned. What is certain is that payments were made to Agnolo during those years for “la tavola di San Miniato a Monte.” In 1396, however, because the artist had died in the meantime, his brother Zanobi received the balance; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 65, 67. No doubt correctly, art historians generally have assumed that the documents refer to the altarpiece placed on the altar of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto in San Miniato, which has come down to us with its components rearranged. Originally, the panels of the polyptych representing the stories of Christ and full-length figures of Saint Giovanni Gualberto and Saint Minias formed an ensemble that must have contained at the center the much-venerated crucifix, which, according to legend, had spoken to Saint Giovanni Gualberto. When the crucifix was transferred to the Vallombrosans of Santa Trinita in Florence in 1671, the painted panels were rearranged in such a way as to fill the gap created by its removal. Though Cole (1977, 51–56) contested the identification of the existing altarpiece of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto with that cited in the documents, his opinion met with little support. Cole argued instead that the documented painting should be identified with the triptych of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest now in the Uffizi, Florence. But this latter painting has existed in its present form only since the 1930s, when the dispersed panels of two different altarpieces were arbitrarily cobbled together during an unscrupulous restoration; cf. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 51–56; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 66, 216 n. 85, 298; Gaudenz Freuler, ed., *Manifestatori delle cose miracolose: Arte italiana del '300 e '400 da collezioni in Svizzera e nel Liechtenstein* (Einsiedeln, 1991), 204; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 228. Freuler, however, believed that at least the two laterals of the Contini-Bonacossi polyptych formed part of the altarpiece documented in 1394–1396.
- [19] Among the punch marks used by Agnolo, Erling Skaug (1994) especially observed two that can be identified in Taddeo Gaddi’s triptych dated 1334, now in the Staatlichen Museen of Berlin. Skaug inserted the National Gallery of Art painting in the late phase of Agnolo Gaddi. Both the investigations of Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) and the later analysis of Skaug himself (2004) largely

concurrent, however, in suggesting that the very same punches were used throughout the artist's career. See Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:260–264; 2: punch chart 8.2; Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 100, 244, 283, 290, 322, 481; Erling S. Skaug, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 245, 254–255. Some of the punch marks found in the Washington triptych also appear in the later San Miniato altarpiece, documented in 1394–1396 (on which see note 18 above), while others had already been used in *Coronation of the Virgin* in the London National Gallery, generally considered an early work by the artist.

[20] Osvald Sirén, "Addenda und Errata in meinem Giottino-Buch," *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1908): 1122–1123, published the central panel with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi and stated its present whereabouts as the Masi collection in Capannoli (Pisa). It is very probable, therefore, that the painting has a provenance either from Pisa or from Capannoli itself, a spa (at present a resort) in the district of Pisa that used to belong to Piero Gambacorti, the governor of Pisa, who owned a castle there; see Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico della Toscana, contenente la descrizione di tutti i luoghi del Granducato, Ducato di Lucca, Garfagnana e Lunigiana*, 11 vols. (Florence, 1833–1849), 1:452. The provenance of the laterals now attached to this painting is unknown; all we know is that in 1952 they were the property of Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, who, according to Cole, had purchased them in Rome prior to 1931. Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 747–748; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76. Contini then commissioned special frames to be made for them, similar to the original frame of the Madonna from Capannoli. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 298, dated the latter to c. 1380–1385, while Cole, as we have seen, considered the recomposed triptych to be genuine and associated it with the two documents of 1394–1396. Caterina Caneva, in *Gli Uffizi: Catalogo generale*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1980), 277, dated the execution of the whole altarpiece to 1375–1380; Ada Labriola, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1998), 51:146, to the 1380s; while Sonia Chiodo, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113, mentioned it as a "late work."

[21] Boskovits's proposal (1975, 117, 296) to attribute the Borgo San Lorenzo

Madonna to Agnolo and to date it to 1380–1385 has in substance been accepted by the more recent literature; cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 117, 296; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:261; Maria Matilde Simari, “Il Mugello,” in *Il Mugello, la Valdiseve e la Romagna fiorentina*, ed. Cristina Acidini and Anna Benvenuti Papi (Milan, 2000), 56. A modern (nineteenth- or twentieth-century) copy of this painting, attributed to Agnolo himself, was with Wildenstein & Co. in New York in 1954; see Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 114.

[22] The predella of the painting, now in the Louvre, Paris, has been recognized as that formerly in the Nobili chapel at Santa Maria degli Angeli and dated to 1387–1388 on the basis of information derived from the sources by Hans Dietrich Gronau, “The Earliest Works of Lorenzo Monaco, 2,” *The Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 569 (1950): 217–222. Federico Zeri cautiously conjectured that the predella belonged to the triptych now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and Bruce Cole more firmly accepted this proposal. See Federico Zeri, “Investigations into the Early Period of Lorenzo Monaco, 1,” *The Burlington Magazine* 106 (1964): 554–558; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 75, 84–87. For a recent résumé of the problems relating to a reconstruction of the altarpiece, see Erling S. Skaug, “Note sulle decorazione a punzone e i dipinti su tavola di Lorenzo Monaco,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 106–110; see also note 23 below.

[23] The painting, which measures 150 × 87 cm, was illustrated in *Servizio per le ricerche delle opere rubate, Bollettino* 17 (1994): 60, published by the special police unit of the Carabinieri devoted to the recovery of stolen works of art, formerly with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi. Later, the reported theft of the painting was shown to be mistaken, and the work was republished by Gaudenz Freuler, “Gli inizi di Lorenzo Monaco miniatore,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 80, with the same attribution. The variety of the angels’ poses, the softness of the modeling, and the motif of angels supporting the crown over Mary’s head (which recurs in paintings of Gaddi’s late phase) in any case suggest a late dating, probably in the last decade of the century.

[24] Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, no. 1039; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76, 84–87. Attributed to the school of Agnolo Gaddi by Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco* (Strasbourg, 1905), 41, it was reinstated as an autograph work by Gaddi himself by Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an*

*Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. For the lost inscriptions, see Dillian Gordon, *The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings, National Gallery Catalogues* (London, 2003), 197 n. 3.

- [25] See Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 78–79, and, concerning the will of Michele Castellani, 61, doc. 7. Attributed by Vasari and by much of the later art-historical literature to Gherardo Starnina, the mural paintings in the chapel were attributed by Berenson to Agnolo Gaddi, at least “in great part.” See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. More recent studies have in general accepted this view, though some art historians believe that they detect the hand of various assistants of Agnolo in the cycle. Cole (1977, 14–15) thought that “three masters” worked in the chapel with some degree of autonomy: the anonymous master of the stories of Saints Nicholas and Anthony, the equally anonymous master of the scenes from the life of the Baptist, and Agnolo Gaddi himself, who, Cole argued, executed part of the lunette of Zacharias and the stories of Saint John the Evangelist.
- [26] The Borgo San Lorenzo panel was extensively retouched in 1864 and then restored c. 1920; see Francesco Niccolai, *Mugello e Val di Sieve: Guida topografica storico-artistica illustrata* (Borgo S. Lorenzo, 1914), 430. Since then it has been subjected to at least two other restorations. The alterations in the appearance of the painting following these treatments are documented in photographs nos. 886, 68589, and 93950 of the Soprintendenza in Florence.
- [27] The close resemblance between the passage with the blessing Christ child seated on his mother’s lap and the fresco by Agnolo Gaddi now in the Museo di Pittura Murale in Prato suggests that the two paintings are close in date, presumably contemporary with the painter’s documented activity in Prato in the years 1391–1394. For the fresco in Prato, see Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), fig. 260; for the documents in question, see Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d’archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d’arte* 14 (1932): 355–376; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 63–65.
- [28] We have no secure documentary evidence for the dating of the frescoes in question. Roberto Salvini, *L’arte di Agnolo Gaddi* (Florence, 1936), 31–85, considered them to predate the decoration of the Castellani chapel, but the more recent art historical literature in general indicates 1387 as the *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the cycle; Sonia Chiodo, “Gaddi, Agnolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113. The fact is that while Benedetto degli Alberti in his testament dictated in 1377 indicated Santa Croce (where his family had the patronage of the *cappella maggiore*)

as the place where he wished to be buried, he made no mention of the realization of the frescoes in this chapel in the codicil added to his will ten years later, when he made testamentary provision for the funding of other artistic enterprises; for the text of the codicil, which also cites the relevant passage from the testament of 1377, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:186–194. It seems logical to infer from this evidence that at the time the codicil was added the mural decoration of the chapel had already been finished and that everything was ready for Benedetto's burial. In my view, however, the stylistic evidence suggests a later, or more protracted, date for the very demanding enterprise of frescoing the chapel, which could have begun c. 1385 but could well have been prolonged for years due to the political setbacks that struck the family. Accordingly, the present writer suggests the date 1385–1390; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 297; and Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–27, c. 1388–1393. In dating the frescoes in the choir, various stylistic features should be borne in mind: the more complex and crowded compositions; the more elaborate language of gesture; the numerous genre details; and the tendency towards a softening of the forms, modeled with light tonal passages of chiaroscuro. These features all suggest that the cycle of the *cappella maggiore* in Santa Croce is stylistically more advanced than the decoration of the Castellani chapel (executed, as we have seen, sometime after 1383), but no doubt antecedent to the frescoes in the Cappella della Cintola in Prato Cathedral, for which the painter received payments in 1392–1394. See Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d'archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d'arte* 14 (1932): 363–369.

- [29] Clowes collection, Indianapolis Museum of Art: Ian Fraser et al., *A Catalogue of the Clowes Collection*, Indianapolis Museum of Art Bulletin (Indianapolis, 1973), 6. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 27, rightly observed the “very close stylistic and positional relationship with the Washington saints,” deducing from this affinity that “both works were in the artist's shop at the same time.” Perhaps it would be permissible to speak of the reuse of the same model employed for the Washington triptych in another similar and slightly later triptych, of which the panels now in Indianapolis formed part. I suspect, however, that the Indianapolis panels belonged to the triptych of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, the Florentine church of the Camaldolese order (see notes 21 and 23 above). In fact, the lost framing pilasters of the triptych now in Berlin could have contained, to judge from their measurements, two of the Indianapolis panels superimposed on each side. It is also worth pointing out that the paintings in the American museum come—like the Berlin triptych—from the Solly collection, and that the white habit with which Saint Benedict and the other monk immersed in reading are portrayed would have been very suitable to adorn a chapel in a church

belonging to the Camaldolese order (a reformed branch of the Benedictines). Laurence Kanter informs me that he is about to publish further evidence for identifying the Indianapolis saints and their counterparts at the University of Gottingen as the front and lateral faces of the framing pilasters of the Nobili altarpiece, together with the missing pilaster base from the altarpiece predella.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel, along with its companions *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel* [left panel] and *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation* [right panel], are formed from vertically oriented poplar planks.[1] *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned* are formed of three vertical planks each, with narrower strips of wood flanking the central plank, while *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine* is formed of two boards of equal width, joined vertically between the two saints. The main panels of the altarpiece are 4 to 4.5 cm thick; the frame supplies an additional thickness of 2.7 to 2.9 cm for the flat molding and 2.3 cm for the dentil molding. On the reverse, the panels are reinforced with modern horizontal battens set into grooves. The two absent original battens, spanning all three panels, were placed along the bottom and just below the base of the gabled tops of each panel, as is clear from the remains of large nails used to attach them that are visible in the x-radiographs. The frame, which consists of an additional plank of wood that completely covers the gable portion of the panels, contains *pastiglia* decoration. The columns dividing the central and lateral panels and flanking the outer edge of the laterals are missing, as well as the freestanding cusped arches originally lining the ogival arches of the panels. The wooden support is covered by a gesso ground spread over a fabric interlayer. Incised lines in the gesso outline the figures and the fold lines in the drapery. The gold ground was applied over a red bole preparation. The halos are decorated by stamped and engraved motifs as well as stippling.

Outlines of areas to be painted and drapery fold lines were further delineated with brushed underdrawing, which is visible with infrared reflectography.[2] The paint is mostly egg tempera, but select pigments are bound with glue.[3] Flesh areas are painted with the traditional underlayer of green. The pattern of the orientalizing carpet on which the figures stand was transferred from a stencil to the paint applied over burnished gold.[4] The wings of the seraphim are decorated using

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*sgraffito* to reveal the gold underlayer. The edges of the figures' robes are decorated with mordant gilding.

All three panels retain their original thickness. This one has two major splits, one running from the lower edge into the mantle of the Virgin, the other diagonally across the wing of the uppermost right-hand angel. *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* has cracks caused by the removal of the original intermediate frame. *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine* has a split at the lower edge and another in the frame to the left of and above the Virgin Annunciate in the gable medallion. Worm tunneling is present in all three panels, but it is most extensive in the side planks of *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned* as well as in the gables of all three panels. There is minor abrasion of the paint film in the faces and hands, but otherwise the painted surface is in fine condition. The red lakes of the robes of Saint Catherine, the kneeling angels, and the Christ child have faded slightly, and the Virgin's blue robe is worn. The altarpiece underwent conservation treatment between 1988 and 1991,[5] in the course of which the now lost intermediate columns between the three panels were reconstructed.[6] Also during this treatment, some of the fold lines in the Virgin's robe were recreated.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed cross-sections of the panel. The wood of the panel was identified as poplar and the integral frame as linden (*tiglio*). A nonoriginal strip along the bottom was identified as spruce (see report dated November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using amino acid analysis in conjunction with high-performance liquid chromatography, cross-sections, and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry, and identified both egg and glue binders (see reports dated August 23, 1989, and November 22, 1991, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Report dated January 9, 1989, in NGA conservation files. Brigitte Klesse pointed out that the same pattern, with minor modifications, was also used in Gaddi's triptych now in the Berlin gallery (no. 1039); see Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 316.
- [5] At the time of this treatment, the NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), amino

acid analysis in conjunction with high performance liquid chromatography, gas chromatography in conjunction with mass-spectrometry, x-ray diffraction, and microscopy of cross-sections (see reports dated February 13, 1989; January 23, 1990; November 22, 1991; August 6, 1990; August 22, 1990; October 17, 1990; August 2, 1991; August 23, 1989; and November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).

- [6] The reconstruction was based on marks on the panel as well as research into comparable structures still intact. See Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 35–65. The altarpiece must have been treated prior to 1988, probably in the first half of the twentieth century, because the crockets on the top side of the frame, which are visible in Lionello Venturi's reproduction, had already disappeared prior to the 1988 treatment. Cf. Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably in the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte, Florence, from whence the triptych may have been removed shortly after 1830.[1] Bertram Ashburnham [1797-1878], 4th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place, Battle, Sussex;[2] by inheritance to his son, Bertram Ashburnham [1840-1913], 5th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place; by inheritance to his daughter, Lady Mary Catherine Charlotte Ashburnham [1890-1953], Ashburnham Place; (Robert Langton Douglas, London);[3] purchased 19 June 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[5] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370-1400*, Florence, 1975: 118-121, proposed this provenance. The Alberti family were patrons of the church, and Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds for its decoration in a codicil dated 1387 that was appended to his will of 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract); see Luigi Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze. Genealogia, storia e documenti*, Florence, 1869: 2:187. Three of the four saints depicted in the side panels are associated with the Alberti family, providing further argument in support of the proposed provenance. Although in 1975 Boskovits

erroneously asserted that Saint John Gualbert was represented in the altarpiece to the right of the Virgin, he corrected this in the NGA systematic catalogue by identifying the saint instead as Bernard of Clairvaux, the patron saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually for his soul in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already been consecrated (see Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino*, Florence, 2003: 381). The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Albert also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato, and Catherine of Alexandria, shown standing on a broken wheel, was evidently much venerated in the Alberti family. In Benedetto's will he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to Catherine, and his son, Bernardo, wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor (see Weppelmann 2003). Although this provenance remains a hypothesis, it still seems a quite plausible one that, if correct, would provide the certainty that by 1830 the altarpiece was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still in place in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall made in that year by Christoph Roller (1805-1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienschen Reise* (Burgdorfer Heimatsmuseum, Burgdorf, Switzerland). Unfortunately, the sketch, kindly brought to the attention of Miklós Boskovits by Stefan Weppelmann, is very small and not sufficient for identifying the Gallery's painting. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there (Weppelmann 2003, 184). It was removed and sold, presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820; see "Regesto dell' Abbazia fiorentina di S. Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117-135. [2] The collection, formed originally by George, 3rd earl of Ashburnham, was enlarged by his son, Bertram, after whose death no further paintings were added. See *The Ashburnham Collections. Part I. Catalogue of Paintings and Drawings ...*, Sotheby's, London, sale of 24 June 1953: 3-4. [3] According to Denis Sutton ("Robert Langton Douglas. Part III," *Apollo* 109 (1979): 452, Douglas was in contact with the Ashburnham family around 1919. See also letter from Douglas to Fowles dated 1 May 1941, Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: box 244, reel 299. [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422. The painting was first entered in the Duveen "X-Book" (number X 149) as by Starnina, but this was crossed out and replaced with the attribution

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"Agnelo [sic] Gaddi." [5] The original Duveen Brothers invoice is in the Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, Box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files. The painting is listed as by Gherardo Starnina, influenced by Agnolo Gaddi, with the additional note that Bernard Berenson gave the painting to Gaddi.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1933 Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1933, no. 11, repro., as Altarpiece by Gherardo Starnina.

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Agnolo Gaddi  
Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396

# *Madonna and Child with Saints Andrew, Benedict, Bernard, and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels [entire triptych]*

shortly before 1387

tempera on poplar panel

left panel (overall): 197 × 80 cm (77 9/16 × 31 1/2 in.)

middle panel (overall): 204 × 80 cm (80 5/16 × 31 1/2 in.)

right panel (overall): 194.6 × 80 cm (76 5/8 × 31 1/2 in.)

Inscription: left panel, across the bottom below the saints: S. ANDREAS AP[OSTO]L[U]S; S. BENEDICTUS ABBAS; left panel, on the book held by St. Benedict: AUSCU / LTA.O/ FILI.PR / ECEPTA / .MAGIS / [T]RI.ET.IN / CLINA.AUREM / CORDIS.T / UI[ET]A[D]MONITIONE / M.PII.PA / TRIS.LI / BENTE / R.EXCIP / E.ET.EF[FICACITER COMPLE] (Harken, O son, to the precepts of the master and incline the ear of your heart and willingly receive the admonition of the pious father and efficiently);<sup>[1]</sup> middle panel, across the bottom: AVE MARIA GRATIA PLENA DOMINUS [TECUM] (Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; from Luke 1:28); middle panel, on the book held by the Redeemer in the gable: EGO SUM / A[ET] O PRINCI / PIU[M] [ET] FINIS / EGO SUM VI / A. VERITAS / [ET] VITA (I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, I am the way, the truth, and the life; from John 14:6; Revelations 22:13); right panel, across the bottom under the saints: S. BERNARDUS DOCTOR; S. K[A]TERINA VIRGO

[1] This is the incipit of the Rule of the Benedictine Order; see Sancti Benedicti Regula, in Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, 221 vols., Paris, 1844-1864: 66:215-932.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.4.a-c

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## ENTRY

This triptych consists of two laterals with paired saints and a central panel with the Madonna and Child. All three panels are topped with similar triangular gables with a painted medallion in the center. The reduction of a five-part altarpiece into a simplified format with the external profile of a triptych may have been suggested to Florentine masters as a consequence of trends that appeared towards the end of the fourteenth century: a greater simplification in composition and a revival of elements of painting from the first half of the Trecento.[1] Agnolo Gaddi followed this trend in several of his works. He demonstrates this in the three panels being discussed here by his deliberate revival of motifs that had been abandoned by most Florentine painters since the mid-fourteenth century. To present the Madonna seated on a throne of Giottesque type,[2] instead of concealing the structure of the throne with a gold-embroidered cloth of honor as in most paintings realized by masters in the circle of Orcagna, was a sort of archaism at this time. Agnolo scrupulously describes this seat and at the same time exploits its form to create three-dimensional effects. Yet these archaizing motifs are combined with more forward-looking features. Gaddi's progressive adjustment to the innovative late Gothic taste of his time is thus attested by various aspects of the triptych, such as the *pastiglia* decoration in the gables, the now lost decoration of the frame,[3] the rich orientalizing carpet that covers the floor,[4] and even the crowded composition of the central panel.

Lionello Venturi published this triptych in 1931 under the name of Gherardo Starnina.[5] This attribution was based on the now discarded theory of scholars who had tried in the first three decades of the century to reconstruct the oeuvre of a putative disciple of Agnolo Gaddi, to whom the conventional name "Madonnenmeister" or "Compagno d' Agnolo" was given and who was later identified with Gherardo Starnina.[6] However, Bernard Berenson recognized that a good part of the work given to the "Compagno d' Agnolo" belongs to Agnolo himself. The studies of Ugo Procacci [7] on Starnina finally put the proposed identification to rest, though it continued to enjoy residual credit for some time to come.[8] In the National Gallery of Art, the altarpiece was cataloged as a work by Agnolo Gaddi, and since the 1960s, art historians have unanimously accepted this attribution.

The present writer proposed that Agnolo Gaddi's altarpiece might have been executed for the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte (Florence),[9] of which the Alberti were patrons and for whose decoration Benedetto di Nerozzo

Alberti left funds in his will of 1387.[10] The reasons adduced at that time in support of such a hypothesis were, it must be admitted, not quite convincing: referring to the inscription in Saint Benedict's book to the "admonition" (an administrative sanction by the Florentine government) against Alberti in 1387 and his subsequent exile is open to question. Furthermore, I erroneously asserted that Saint Giovanni Gualberto was represented in the painting. The saint to the right of the Virgin is, in fact, Bernard of Clairvaux, but the presence of this saint in the altarpiece is actually a further argument in support of a provenance from the sacristy of San Miniato. Saint Bernard was the patron Saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually *pro anima dicti testatoris* (for the soul of the said testator) in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already by that date been consecrated.[11] The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Alberti, also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato. As to the fourth saint, Catherine of Alexandria (standing on a broken wheel), she was evidently much venerated in Benedetto's family. This is proved by the fact that, in his will of 1387, he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to the martyr saint of Alexandria (and decorated by a cycle of frescoes illustrating scenes from her life by Spinello Aretino); additionally, his son Bernardo wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor.[12] The Alberti family's veneration of Saint Catherine may have been based on the popular etymology of her name (catherine=*catenuła*) diffused by Jacopo da Varazze in *Legenda aurea*,[13] with reference to the chain represented in the Alberti coats of arms.

Although the provenance from San Miniato remains a hypothesis, it still seems to me a quite plausible one that, if correct, would give us the certainty that by 1830 the triptych was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still *in situ* in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall [fig. 1] made in that year by architect Christoph Robert August Roller (1805–1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Castle Museum Burgdorf, Burgdorf, Switzerland).

Unfortunately, the sketch, to which Stefan Weppelmann kindly drew my attention, is very small and certainly not sufficient for the identification of the triptych in the Gallery. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there, as Stefan Weppelmann rightly observed. It was removed and sold presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820.[14]

As for its date, the Gallery's first catalog (1941) cautiously suggested "the last quarter of the XIVth century," while the volume devoted to the Duveen Pictures (1941) proposed an approximate date of c. 1380.[15] More recent publications in general support a time frame within the 1380s, although without explaining the reasons for this proposal. Arguing for a provenance from the sacristy of the Florentine church of San Miniato al Monte, Miklós Boskovits (1975) attempted a more precise dating shortly after the codicil dated 1387 was appended to the testament of Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti, its putative patron.[16] For his part, Bruce Cole (1979) stylistically linked the Gallery triptych with the cycle of frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce in Florence, for which he proposed a date of execution in the years c. 1388–1393.[17] Given the lack of securely datable panels by Gaddi, with the exception of the composite altarpiece of the Cappella del Crocifisso, still in the church of San Miniato,[18] various scholars have attempted to construct a chronology for the artist based on an analysis of the punched decoration of his work; however, this effort has failed to yield any precise indication for the Washington altarpiece other than a vague association with a relatively late phase in the painter's activity.[19]

In the course of his career, especially between the 1380s and the early 1390s, Agnolo Gaddi produced a number of polyptychs, now in part dismantled and dispersed, of which at least the surviving central panels propose a composition close to that of the triptych discussed here. I refer in particular to *Madonna and Child with Eight Angels* (now united with laterals that did not originally belong to it) in the Contini-Bonacossi bequest to the Uffizi, Florence;[20] *Madonna and Child Surrounded by Eight Angels* in the church of San Lorenzo at Borgo San Lorenzo;[21] the triptych in the Staatliche Museen of Berlin, in which six angels are placed around the throne and a further pair are in the gable;[22] and *Madonna and Child Flanked by Twelve Angels*, now in a private collection in Milan.[23] None of these is securely dated, but the Berlin triptych can in all probability be identified with that formerly on the altar of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, which bore the inscription "An D 1387 Bernardus Cini de Nobilibus fecit fieri hanc cappellam."[24] This gives us a useful point of reference not only for defining a chronological sequence of the paintings in question but also, as we shall see, for the dating of Gaddi's great cycles of Florentine frescoes. Another chronological point of reference, albeit an approximate one, is 1383, the date of the testament of Michele di Vanni Castellani, in which he made bequests for the construction and decoration of a family chapel in Santa Croce, the chapel that would later be

frescoed by Agnolo Gaddi.[25] The style of this decoration suggests a period of execution not much later than the will; indeed, most art historians tend to place the execution of the cycle in the years immediately following 1383.

Although successive restorations have now made it difficult to assess, the Borgo San Lorenzo panel [26] seems the earliest of the group. It was perhaps painted even before the frescoes in the Castellani chapel, with which it has affinities in its use of dense shadows in modeling, in the rigid profiles of the angels, and in the deeply channeled and brittle-looking folds of their garments. Between that work and the Nobili triptych now in Berlin can be placed both the Madonna of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest (it too now altered by retouches) and the triptych in the Gallery. In contrast to these latter two, the animated composition of the panel destined for the Nobili chapel seems to represent a further step forward, in the direction of the more dynamic compositions and the more delicate modeling that characterize the painter's final phase, to which the above-mentioned Madonna surrounded by twelve angels now in a private collection can, I believe, be ascribed.[27]

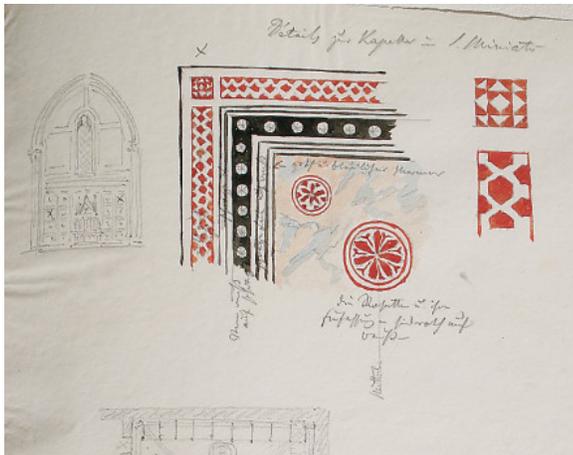
If such a chronological sequence of the altarpieces executed by Agnolo in the 1380s is plausible, the Gallery triptych ought to date to a period slightly preceding 1387—that is, slightly preceding the execution of the other and more important enterprise promoted by Benedetto di Nerazzo Alberti, the frescoing of the choir in Santa Croce.[28] Various similarities can be identified between passages of that cycle and the Washington triptych, in confirmation of the chronological proximity of the two works: the bust of Saint Andrew [fig. 2] recurs, in similar form, in the scene of the Making of the Cross [fig. 3], in the group of spectators to the extreme right of the fresco, while analogies can also be identified between the other saints of the triptych and the busts of the prophets inserted in the ornamental friezes that articulate the chapel's decoration. Close similarities have also been observed between the lateral saints of the Gallery triptych and the fragments of an altarpiece now in Indianapolis.[29] We have no secure evidence to help us date these fragments, probably the remains of the decoration of the lateral pilasters of a polyptych roughly contemporary with, or perhaps slightly later than, the triptych being discussed here. In conclusion, therefore, the Washington altarpiece exemplifies a stage in the artist's career in which he embarked on the gradual discovery of the innovative features of late Gothic art. This led him to develop greater elegance in poses, more delicate and harmonious arrangement of draperies, and more spontaneous vitality in the conduct of the angels thronged

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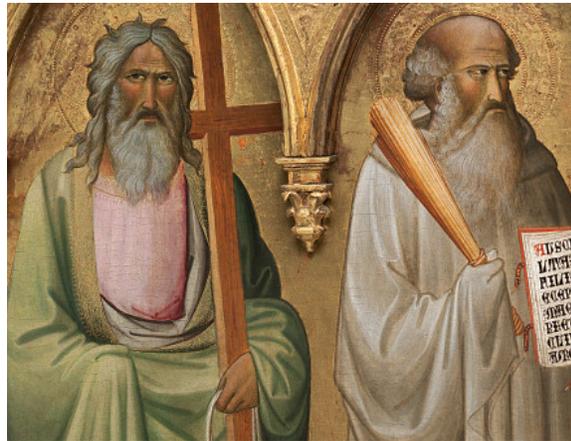
around the sides of the throne as if drawn magnetically to the child. A clear sign of the innovations of the phase in which Agnolo painted the frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce is also the artist's polychromy: abandoning the somber palette of previous works, he now prefers or utilizes combinations of delicate pastel colors.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** C. A. R. Roller, "Design of the east wall of the sacristy of San Miniato in Florence," from *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Journal of My Trip to Italy in the Years 1829 and 1830), 1:7, June 1830, Rittersaalverein Castle Museum, Burgdorf, Switzerland



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Andrew (left), Agnolo Gaddi, *Madonna and Child with Saints Andrew, Benedict, Bernard, and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, shortly before 1387, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of spectators, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Making of the Cross*, 1385–1390, fresco, Cappella Maggiore, Santa Croce, Florence. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY

## NOTES

- [1] A similar solution—a five-part polyptych reduced to triptych format—in fact appears on the main side of Giotto's Stefaneschi altarpiece (Pinacoteca Vaticana, no. 40.120) and later (probably at a date close to 1340) in the fragment of a triptych by Jacopo del Casentino now in a private collection; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 7, *The Biadaiolo Illuminator, Master of the Dominican Effigies* (New York, 1957), pl. xlix. About 1365, Matteo di Pacino revived this scheme in an altarpiece of similar structure now in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 8463); see Michela Palmeri, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 174–181. Perhaps a few years later in date is another triptych of similar format, attributed to the Master of San Lucchese near Poggibonsi, destroyed in 1944; reproduced in Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 2," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1050, as a work by Jacopo di Cione. Another altarpiece of the same format is the triptych painted by the Master of the Misericordia and Niccolò Gerini in collaboration, now in the church of Sant'Andrea at Montespertoli near Florence; reproduced in Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, *Giovanni del Biondo*, pt. 2 (New York, 1969), pl. xlv, as workshop of Giovanni del Biondo, probably executed around 1380.
- [2] The throne is similar to the one that appears in the polyptych signed by Giotto now in the Museo Civico Nazionale in Bologna (no. 284). Thrones of this type, with a high, triangular-topped backrest but of simple structure and convincingly drawn in perspective, appear in the early 1360s in Giovanni da Milano's polyptych now in the Museo Civico at Prato; in the fragmentary polyptych by Cenni di Francesco, dated 1370, in the church of San Cristofano a Perticaia near Florence; in the polyptych by Pietro Nelli and Niccolò Gerini in the pieve at Impruneta, dated 1375; and thereafter ever more frequently in the last quarter of the century. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pls. 86 and 61.
- [3] On the original decoration of the frame, cf. Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 50–64. The fashion of covering the gable zones of altarpieces with pastiglia ornamental motifs in relief before they were gilded began to spread from Orcagna's shop in the second half of the Trecento.
- [4] The sumptuous decoration, with pairs of facing animals, of the brocaded

fabrics used to cover the throne of the Madonna or the floor on which the saints stand is a phenomenon characteristic of Florentine painting in the second half of the fourteenth century, especially in paintings of the circle of Orcagna, but also in panels produced in the bottega of Agnolo Gaddi. Cf. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 283, 316, 341.

- [5] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52.
- [6] Oskar Wulff (1907) coined this unfortunate conventional name. Osvald Sirén (1914–1915) later altered it to “Compagno d’Agnolo,” and shortly thereafter he formulated a hypothesis identifying this artist with Gherardo Starnina (1916, 51–53). See Oskar Wulff, “Der Madonnenmeister: Ein sienesisch–florentinische Trecentist,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 20 (1907): 195–210, 227–236; Osvald Sirén, “Early Italian Pictures, the University Museum, Göttingen (Conclusion),” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 26 (1914): 107–114; Osvald Sirén, ed., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures in the Jarves Collection Belonging to Yale University* (New Haven and London, 1916), 51–53.

The proposal was accepted by Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 565–573, and some other authors in the following decade.

- [7] Referring to the group of paintings usually cited under the name “Compagno d’Agnolo,” Bernard Berenson wrote: “Una delle più singolari aberrazioni della critica recente è stata quella di attribuire tutte queste Madonne allo Starnina; ma non è necessario perdere il tempo a dissipare errori che il tempo stesso disperderà” (One of the most singular aberrations of modern criticism is that of attributing all these Madonnas to Starnina; but it is not necessary to waste time dissipating errors that time itself will dissipate). See Bernard Berenson, “Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 3,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1303. After the discovery of the remains of the cycle of Starnina’s documented frescoes in the church of the Carmine in Florence, the hypothesis of the anonymous master’s identification with Starnina was gradually abandoned. See Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 15 (1933): 151–190; Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 331–384.
- [8] The triptych now in the National Gallery of Art evidently came to Duveen Brothers accompanied by expertises from Robert Langton Douglas and Osvald Sirén, both supporting the attribution to Starnina; see Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25. Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Wilhelm R. Valentiner (1933), and Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951) also accepted that attribution. Roberto Salvini (1935–1936), not accepting the identification Gherardo Starnina=Compagno d’Agnolo, attributed the painting to the latter. Cf.

Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, ed., *The Sixteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters: Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century* (Detroit, 1933), no. 11; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:2351; and Roberto Salvini, "Per la cronologia e per il catalogo di un discepolo di Agnolo Gaddi," *Bollettino d'arte* 29 (1935–1936): 287.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118–121.
- [10] On Benedetto Alberti's will, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:187. The codicil in question was attached to the will drawn up in 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract). In it the testator already instructed that "si facessi dipignere la Sagrestia di San Miniato al Monte con gli Armadi et Finestra et affreschi" (that the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte should be painted [and provided] with cupboards, [stained glass] window, and frescoes); Giovanni Felice Berti, *Cenni storico-artistici per servire di guida ed illustrazione alla insigne Basilica di S. Minato al Monte e di alcuni dintorni presso Firenze* (Florence, 1850), 156. So, when Alberti ten years later made testamentary provision that the "sacrestia ecclesiae sancti Miniatis ad Montem de prope Florentiam compleatur et compleri et perfici debeant picturis, armariis, coro, fenestra vitrea, altari et aliis necessariis" (the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte of Florence should be completed and perfected with paintings, cupboards, a choir stall, stained glass window, an altar, and all other necessary things), this decoration might already have been planned and perhaps even in part realized. Ada Labriola and Federica Baldini accepted the provenance of the Gallery's panels from the sacristy of San Miniato in Ada Labriola, "La decorazione pittorica," in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina: Osservazioni storico-critiche in occasione del restauro*, ed. Maurizio De Vita (Florence, 1998), 52; Federica Baldini, in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina all'Antella e i suoi pittori*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2009), 159.
- [11] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [12] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [13] Jacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols. (Florence, 1998), 2:1205.
- [14] See "Regesto dell'Abbazia fiorentina di San Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117–135. See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.

- [15] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 69; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25.
- [16] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118.
- [17] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–26.
- [18] Even the dating of this work, for the most part identified with the altarpiece for which Agnolo was paid between 1394 and 1396, has been questioned. What is certain is that payments were made to Agnolo during those years for “la tavola di San Miniato a Monte.” In 1396, however, because the artist had died in the meantime, his brother Zanobi received the balance; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 65, 67. No doubt correctly, art historians generally have assumed that the documents refer to the altarpiece placed on the altar of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto in San Miniato, which has come down to us with its components rearranged. Originally, the panels of the polyptych representing the stories of Christ and full-length figures of Saint Giovanni Gualberto and Saint Minias formed an ensemble that must have contained at the center the much-venerated crucifix, which, according to legend, had spoken to Saint Giovanni Gualberto. When the crucifix was transferred to the Vallombrosans of Santa Trinita in Florence in 1671, the painted panels were rearranged in such a way as to fill the gap created by its removal. Though Cole (1977, 51–56) contested the identification of the existing altarpiece of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto with that cited in the documents, his opinion met with little support. Cole argued instead that the documented painting should be identified with the triptych of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest now in the Uffizi, Florence. But this latter painting has existed in its present form only since the 1930s, when the dispersed panels of two different altarpieces were arbitrarily cobbled together during an unscrupulous restoration; cf. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 51–56; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 66, 216 n. 85, 298; Gaudenz Freuler, ed., *Manifestatori delle cose miracolose: Arte italiana del '300 e '400 da collezioni in Svizzera e nel Liechtenstein* (Einsiedeln, 1991), 204; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 228. Freuler, however, believed that at least the two laterals of the Contini-Bonacossi polyptych formed part of the altarpiece documented in 1394–1396.
- [19] Among the punch marks used by Agnolo, Erling Skaug (1994) especially observed two that can be identified in Taddeo Gaddi’s triptych dated 1334, now in the Staatlichen Museen of Berlin. Skaug inserted the National Gallery of Art painting in the late phase of Agnolo Gaddi. Both the investigations of Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) and the later analysis of Skaug himself (2004) largely

concurrent, however, in suggesting that the very same punches were used throughout the artist's career. See Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:260–264; 2: punch chart 8.2; Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 100, 244, 283, 290, 322, 481; Erling S. Skaug, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 245, 254–255. Some of the punch marks found in the Washington triptych also appear in the later San Miniato altarpiece, documented in 1394–1396 (on which see note 18 above), while others had already been used in *Coronation of the Virgin* in the London National Gallery, generally considered an early work by the artist.

[20] Osvald Sirén, "Addenda und Errata in meinem Giottino-Buch," *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1908): 1122–1123, published the central panel with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi and stated its present whereabouts as the Masi collection in Capannoli (Pisa). It is very probable, therefore, that the painting has a provenance either from Pisa or from Capannoli itself, a spa (at present a resort) in the district of Pisa that used to belong to Piero Gambacorti, the governor of Pisa, who owned a castle there; see Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico della Toscana, contenente la descrizione di tutti i luoghi del Granducato, Ducato di Lucca, Garfagnana e Lunigiana*, 11 vols. (Florence, 1833–1849), 1:452. The provenance of the laterals now attached to this painting is unknown; all we know is that in 1952 they were the property of Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, who, according to Cole, had purchased them in Rome prior to 1931. Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 747–748; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76. Contini then commissioned special frames to be made for them, similar to the original frame of the Madonna from Capannoli. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 298, dated the latter to c. 1380–1385, while Cole, as we have seen, considered the recomposed triptych to be genuine and associated it with the two documents of 1394–1396. Caterina Caneva, in *Gli Uffizi: Catalogo generale*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1980), 277, dated the execution of the whole altarpiece to 1375–1380; Ada Labriola, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1998), 51:146, to the 1380s; while Sonia Chiodo, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113, mentioned it as a "late work."

[21] Boskovits's proposal (1975, 117, 296) to attribute the Borgo San Lorenzo

Madonna to Agnolo and to date it to 1380–1385 has in substance been accepted by the more recent literature; cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 117, 296; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:261; Maria Matilde Simari, “Il Mugello,” in *Il Mugello, la Valdiseve e la Romagna fiorentina*, ed. Cristina Acidini and Anna Benvenuti Papi (Milan, 2000), 56. A modern (nineteenth- or twentieth-century) copy of this painting, attributed to Agnolo himself, was with Wildenstein & Co. in New York in 1954; see Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 114.

[22] The predella of the painting, now in the Louvre, Paris, has been recognized as that formerly in the Nobili chapel at Santa Maria degli Angeli and dated to 1387–1388 on the basis of information derived from the sources by Hans Dietrich Gronau, “The Earliest Works of Lorenzo Monaco, 2,” *The Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 569 (1950): 217–222. Federico Zeri cautiously conjectured that the predella belonged to the triptych now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and Bruce Cole more firmly accepted this proposal. See Federico Zeri, “Investigations into the Early Period of Lorenzo Monaco, 1,” *The Burlington Magazine* 106 (1964): 554–558; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 75, 84–87. For a recent résumé of the problems relating to a reconstruction of the altarpiece, see Erling S. Skaug, “Note sulle decorazione a punzone e i dipinti su tavola di Lorenzo Monaco,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 106–110; see also note 23 below.

[23] The painting, which measures 150 × 87 cm, was illustrated in *Servizio per le ricerche delle opere rubate, Bollettino* 17 (1994): 60, published by the special police unit of the Carabinieri devoted to the recovery of stolen works of art, formerly with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi. Later, the reported theft of the painting was shown to be mistaken, and the work was republished by Gaudenz Freuler, “Gli inizi di Lorenzo Monaco miniatore,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 80, with the same attribution. The variety of the angels’ poses, the softness of the modeling, and the motif of angels supporting the crown over Mary’s head (which recurs in paintings of Gaddi’s late phase) in any case suggest a late dating, probably in the last decade of the century.

[24] Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, no. 1039; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76, 84–87. Attributed to the school of Agnolo Gaddi by Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco* (Strasbourg, 1905), 41, it was reinstated as an autograph work by Gaddi himself by Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an*

*Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. For the lost inscriptions, see Dillian Gordon, *The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings, National Gallery Catalogues* (London, 2003), 197 n. 3.

- [25] See Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 78–79, and, concerning the will of Michele Castellani, 61, doc. 7. Attributed by Vasari and by much of the later art-historical literature to Gherardo Starnina, the mural paintings in the chapel were attributed by Berenson to Agnolo Gaddi, at least “in great part.” See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. More recent studies have in general accepted this view, though some art historians believe that they detect the hand of various assistants of Agnolo in the cycle. Cole (1977, 14–15) thought that “three masters” worked in the chapel with some degree of autonomy: the anonymous master of the stories of Saints Nicholas and Anthony, the equally anonymous master of the scenes from the life of the Baptist, and Agnolo Gaddi himself, who, Cole argued, executed part of the lunette of Zacharias and the stories of Saint John the Evangelist.
- [26] The Borgo San Lorenzo panel was extensively retouched in 1864 and then restored c. 1920; see Francesco Niccolai, *Mugello e Val di Sieve: Guida topografica storico-artistica illustrata* (Borgo S. Lorenzo, 1914), 430. Since then it has been subjected to at least two other restorations. The alterations in the appearance of the painting following these treatments are documented in photographs nos. 886, 68589, and 93950 of the Soprintendenza in Florence.
- [27] The close resemblance between the passage with the blessing Christ child seated on his mother’s lap and the fresco by Agnolo Gaddi now in the Museo di Pittura Murale in Prato suggests that the two paintings are close in date, presumably contemporary with the painter’s documented activity in Prato in the years 1391–1394. For the fresco in Prato, see Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), fig. 260; for the documents in question, see Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d’archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d’arte* 14 (1932): 355–376; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 63–65.
- [28] We have no secure documentary evidence for the dating of the frescoes in question. Roberto Salvini, *L’arte di Agnolo Gaddi* (Florence, 1936), 31–85, considered them to predate the decoration of the Castellani chapel, but the more recent art historical literature in general indicates 1387 as the *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the cycle; Sonia Chiodo, “Gaddi, Agnolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113. The fact is that while Benedetto degli Alberti in his testament dictated in 1377 indicated Santa Croce (where his family had the patronage of the *cappella maggiore*)

as the place where he wished to be buried, he made no mention of the realization of the frescoes in this chapel in the codicil added to his will ten years later, when he made testamentary provision for the funding of other artistic enterprises; for the text of the codicil, which also cites the relevant passage from the testament of 1377, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:186–194. It seems logical to infer from this evidence that at the time the codicil was added the mural decoration of the chapel had already been finished and that everything was ready for Benedetto's burial. In my view, however, the stylistic evidence suggests a later, or more protracted, date for the very demanding enterprise of frescoing the chapel, which could have begun c. 1385 but could well have been prolonged for years due to the political setbacks that struck the family. Accordingly, the present writer suggests the date 1385–1390; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 297; and Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–27, c. 1388–1393. In dating the frescoes in the choir, various stylistic features should be borne in mind: the more complex and crowded compositions; the more elaborate language of gesture; the numerous genre details; and the tendency towards a softening of the forms, modeled with light tonal passages of chiaroscuro. These features all suggest that the cycle of the *cappella maggiore* in Santa Croce is stylistically more advanced than the decoration of the Castellani chapel (executed, as we have seen, sometime after 1383), but no doubt antecedent to the frescoes in the Cappella della Cintola in Prato Cathedral, for which the painter received payments in 1392–1394. See Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d'archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d'arte* 14 (1932): 363–369.

- [29] Clowes collection, Indianapolis Museum of Art: Ian Fraser et al., *A Catalogue of the Clowes Collection*, Indianapolis Museum of Art Bulletin (Indianapolis, 1973), 6. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 27, rightly observed the “very close stylistic and positional relationship with the Washington saints,” deducing from this affinity that “both works were in the artist's shop at the same time.” Perhaps it would be permissible to speak of the reuse of the same model employed for the Washington triptych in another similar and slightly later triptych, of which the panels now in Indianapolis formed part. I suspect, however, that the Indianapolis panels belonged to the triptych of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, the Florentine church of the Camaldolese order (see notes 21 and 23 above). In fact, the lost framing pilasters of the triptych now in Berlin could have contained, to judge from their measurements, two of the Indianapolis panels superimposed on each side. It is also worth pointing out that the paintings in the American museum come—like the Berlin triptych—from the Solly collection, and that the white habit with which Saint Benedict and the other monk immersed in reading are portrayed would have been very suitable to adorn a chapel in a church

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belonging to the Camaldolese order (a reformed branch of the Benedictines). Laurence Kanter informs me that he is about to publish further evidence for identifying the Indianapolis saints and their counterparts at the University of Gottingen as the front and lateral faces of the framing pilasters of the Nobili altarpiece, together with the missing pilaster base from the altarpiece predella.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This altarpiece is formed from vertically oriented poplar planks.[1] *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel [left panel]* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]* are formed of three vertical planks each, with narrower strips of wood flanking the central plank, while *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation [right panel]* is formed of two boards of equal width, joined vertically between the two saints. The main panels of the altarpiece are 4 to 4.5 cm thick; the frame supplies an additional thickness of 2.7 to 2.9 cm for the flat molding and 2.3 cm for the dentil molding. On the reverse, the panels are reinforced with modern horizontal battens set into grooves. The two absent original battens, spanning all three panels, were placed along the bottom and just below the base of the gabled tops of each panel, as is clear from the remains of large nails used to attach them that are visible in the x-radiographs. The frame, which consists of an additional plank of wood that completely covers the gable portion of the panels, contains *pastiglia* decoration. The columns dividing the central and lateral panels and flanking the outer edge of the laterals are missing, as well as the freestanding cusped arches originally lining the ogival arches of the panels. The wooden support is covered by a gesso ground spread over a fabric interlayer. Incised lines in the gesso outline the figures and the fold lines in the drapery. The gold ground was applied over a red bole preparation. The halos are decorated by stamped and engraved motifs as well as stippling.

Outlines of areas to be painted and drapery fold lines were further delineated with brushed underdrawing, which is visible with infrared reflectography.[2] The paint is mostly egg tempera, but select pigments are bound with glue.[3] Flesh areas are painted with the traditional underlayer of green. The pattern of the orientalizing carpet on which the figures stand was transferred from a stencil to the paint applied over burnished gold.[4] The wings of the seraphim are decorated

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using sgraffito to reveal the gold underlayer. The edges of the figures' robes are decorated with mordant gilding.

All three panels retain their original thickness. *Madonna and Child Enthroned* has two major splits, one running from the lower edge into the mantle of the Virgin, the other diagonally across the wing of the uppermost right-hand angel. This panel has cracks caused by the removal of the original intermediate frame. *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine* has a split at the lower edge and another in the frame to the left of and above the Virgin Annunciate in the gable medallion. Worm tunneling is present in all three panels, but it is most extensive in the side planks of *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, as well as in the gables of all three panels. There is minor abrasion of the paint film in the faces and hands, but otherwise the painted surface is in fine condition. The red lakes of the robes of Saint Catherine, the kneeling angels, and the Christ child have faded slightly, and the Virgin's blue robe is worn. The altarpiece underwent conservation treatment between 1988 and 1991,[5] in the course of which the now lost intermediate columns between the three panels were reconstructed.[6] Also during this treatment, some of the fold lines in the Virgin's robe were recreated.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed cross-sections of the panel. The wood of the panel was identified as poplar and the integral frame as linden (*tiglio*). A nonoriginal strip along the bottom was identified as spruce (see report dated November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using amino acid analysis in conjunction with high-performance liquid chromatography, cross-sections, and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry, and identified both egg and glue binders (see reports dated August 23, 1989, and November 22, 1991, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Report dated January 9, 1989, in NGA conservation files. Brigitte Klesse pointed out that the same pattern, with minor modifications, was also used in Gaddi's triptych now in the Berlin gallery (no. 1039); see Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 316.
- [5] At the time of this treatment, the NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), amino

acid analysis in conjunction with high performance liquid chromatography, gas chromatography in conjunction with mass-spectrometry, x-ray diffraction, and microscopy of cross-sections (see reports dated February 13, 1989; January 23, 1990; November 22, 1991; August 6, 1990; August 22, 1990; October 17, 1990; August 2, 1991; August 23, 1989; and November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).

- [6] The reconstruction was based on marks on the panel as well as research into comparable structures still intact. See Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 35–65. The altarpiece must have been treated prior to 1988, probably in the first half of the twentieth century, because the crockets on the top side of the frame, which are visible in Lionello Venturi's reproduction, had already disappeared prior to the 1988 treatment. Cf. Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably in the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte, Florence, from whence the triptych may have been removed shortly after 1830.[1] Bertram Ashburnham [1797-1878], 4th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place, Battle, Sussex;[2] by inheritance to his son, Bertram Ashburnham [1840-1913], 5th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place; by inheritance to his daughter, Lady Mary Catherine Charlotte Ashburnham [1890-1953], Ashburnham Place; (Robert Langton Douglas, London);[3] purchased 19 June 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[5] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370-1400*, Florence, 1975: 118-121, proposed this provenance. The Alberti family were patrons of the church, and Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds for its decoration in a codicil dated 1387 that was appended to his will of 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract); see Luigi Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze. Genealogia, storia e documenti*, Florence, 1869: 2:187. Three of the four saints depicted in the side panels are associated with the Alberti family, providing further argument in support of the proposed provenance. Although in 1975 Boskovits

erroneously asserted that Saint John Gualbert was represented in the altarpiece to the right of the Virgin, he corrected this in the NGA systematic catalogue by identifying the saint instead as Bernard of Clairvaux, the patron saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually for his soul in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already been consecrated (see Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino*, Florence, 2003: 381). The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Albert also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato, and Catherine of Alexandria, shown standing on a broken wheel, was evidently much venerated in the Alberti family. In Benedetto's will he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to Catherine, and his son, Bernardo, wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor (see Weppelmann 2003). Although this provenance remains a hypothesis, it still seems a quite plausible one that, if correct, would provide the certainty that by 1830 the altarpiece was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still in place in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall made in that year by Christoph Roller (1805-1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienschen Reise* (Burgdorfer Heimatsmuseum, Burgdorf, Switzerland). Unfortunately, the sketch, kindly brought to the attention of Miklós Boskovits by Stefan Weppelmann, is very small and not sufficient for identifying the Gallery's painting. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there (Weppelmann 2003, 184). It was removed and sold, presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820; see "Regesto dell' Abbazia fiorentina di S. Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117-135. [2] The collection, formed originally by George, 3rd earl of Ashburnham, was enlarged by his son, Bertram, after whose death no further paintings were added. See *The Ashburnham Collections. Part I. Catalogue of Paintings and Drawings ...*, Sotheby's, London, sale of 24 June 1953: 3-4. [3] According to Denis Sutton ("Robert Langton Douglas. Part III," *Apollo* 109 (1979): 452, Douglas was in contact with the Ashburnham family around 1919. See also letter from Douglas to Fowles dated 1 May 1941, Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: box 244, reel 299. [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422. The painting was first entered in the Duveen "X-Book" (number X 149) as by Starnina, but this was crossed out and replaced with the attribution

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"Agnelo [sic] Gaddi." [5] The original Duveen Brothers invoice is in the Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, Box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files. The painting is listed as by Gherardo Starnina, influenced by Agnolo Gaddi, with the additional note that Bernard Berenson gave the painting to Gaddi.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1933 Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1933, no. 11, repro., as Altarpiece by Gherardo Starnina.

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Agnolo Gaddi  
Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396

## *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel [left panel]*

shortly before 1387

tempera on poplar panel

overall: 197 × 80 cm (77 9/16 × 31 1/2 in.)

Inscription: across the bottom below the saints: S. ANDREAS AP[OSTO]L[U]S; S. BENEDICTUS ABBAS; on the book held by St. Benedict: AUSCU / LTA.O/ FILI.PR / ECEPTA / .MAGIS / [T]RI.ET.IN / CLINA.AUREM / CORDIS.T / UI[ET]A[D]MONITIONE / M.PII.PA / TRIS.LI / BENTE / R.EXCIP / E.ET.EF[FICACITER COMPLE] (Harken, O son, to the precepts of the master and incline the ear of your heart and willingly receive the admonition of the pious father and efficiently) [1]

[1] This is the incipit of the Rule of the Benedictine Order; see Sancti Benedicti Regula, in Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, 221 vols., Paris, 1844-1864: 66:215-932.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.4.a

### ENTRY

This panel is part of a triptych that consists of two laterals with paired saints (this panel and *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation [right panel]*) and a central panel with the Madonna and Child (*Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*). All three panels are topped with similar triangular gables with a painted medallion in the center. The reduction of a five-part altarpiece into a simplified format with the external profile of a triptych may have been suggested to Florentine masters as a consequence of trends that appeared towards the end of the fourteenth century: a greater simplification in composition and a revival of

elements of painting from the first half of the Trecento.[1] Agnolo Gaddi followed this trend in several of his works. He demonstrates this in the three panels being discussed here by his deliberate revival of motifs that had been abandoned by most Florentine painters since the mid-fourteenth century. To present the Madonna seated on a throne of Giottesque type,[2] instead of concealing the structure of the throne with a gold-embroidered cloth of honor as in most paintings realized by masters in the circle of Orcagna, was a sort of archaism at this time. Agnolo scrupulously describes this seat and at the same time exploits its form to create three-dimensional effects. Yet these archaizing motifs are combined with more forward-looking features. Gaddi's progressive adjustment to the innovative late-Gothic taste of his time is thus attested by various aspects of the triptych, such as the pastiglia decoration in the gables, the now lost decoration of the frame,[3] the rich orientalizing carpet that covers the floor,[4] and even the crowded composition of the central panel.

Lionello Venturi published this triptych in 1931 under the name of Gherardo Starnina.[5] This attribution was based on the now discarded theory of scholars who had tried in the first three decades of the century to reconstruct the oeuvre of a putative disciple of Agnolo Gaddi, to whom the conventional name "Madonnenmeister" or "Compagno d' Agnolo" was given and who was later identified with Gherardo Starnina.[6] However, Bernard Berenson recognized that a good part of the work given to the "Compagno d' Agnolo" belongs to Agnolo himself. The studies of Ugo Procacci [7] on Starnina finally put the proposed identification to rest, though it continued to enjoy residual credit for some time to come.[8] In the National Gallery of Art, the altarpiece was cataloged as a work by Agnolo Gaddi, and since the 1960s, art historians have unanimously accepted this attribution.

The present writer proposed that Agnolo Gaddi's altarpiece might have been executed for the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte (Florence),[9] of which the Alberti were patrons and for whose decoration Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds in his will of 1387.[10] The reasons adduced at that time in support of such a hypothesis were, it must be admitted, not quite convincing: referring to the inscription in Saint Benedict's book to the "admonition" (an administrative sanction by the Florentine government) against Alberti in 1387 and his subsequent exile is open to question. Furthermore, I erroneously asserted that Saint Giovanni Gualberto was represented in the painting. The saint to the right of the Virgin is, in fact, Bernard of Clairvaux, but the presence of this saint in the altarpiece is actually

a further argument in support of a provenance from the sacristy of San Miniato. Saint Bernard was the patron Saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually *pro anima dicti testatoris* (for the soul of the said testator) in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already by that date been consecrated.[11] The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Alberti, also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato. As to the fourth saint, Catherine of Alexandria (standing on a broken wheel), she was evidently much venerated in Benedetto's family. This is proved by the fact that, in his will of 1387, he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to the martyr saint of Alexandria (and decorated by a cycle of frescoes illustrating scenes from her life by Spinello Aretino); additionally, his son Bernardo wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor.[12] The Alberti family's veneration of Saint Catherine may have been based on the popular etymology of her name (catherine=*catenuola*) diffused by Jacopo da Varazze in *Legenda aurea*,[13] with reference to the chain represented in the Alberti coats of arms.

Although the provenance from San Miniato remains a hypothesis, it still seems to me a quite plausible one that, if correct, would give us the certainty that by 1830 the triptych was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still *in situ* in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall [fig. 1] made in that year by architect Christoph Robert August Roller (1805–1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Castle Museum Burgdorf, Burgdorf, Switzerland).

Unfortunately, the sketch, to which Stefan Weppelmann kindly drew my attention, is very small and certainly not sufficient for the identification of the triptych in the Gallery. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there, as Stefan Weppelmann rightly observed. It was removed and sold presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820.[14]

As for its date, the Gallery's first catalog (1941) cautiously suggested "the last quarter of the XIVth century," while the volume devoted to the Duveen Pictures (1941) proposed an approximate date of c. 1380.[15] More recent publications in general support a time frame within the 1380s, although without explaining the reasons for this proposal. Arguing for a provenance from the sacristy of the Florentine church of San Miniato al Monte, Miklós Boskovits (1975) attempted a

more precise dating shortly after the codicil dated 1387 was appended to the testament of Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti, its putative patron.[16] For his part, Bruce Cole (1979) stylistically linked the Gallery triptych with the cycle of frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce in Florence, for which he proposed a date of execution in the years c. 1388–1393.[17] Given the lack of securely datable panels by Gaddi, with the exception of the composite altarpiece of the Cappella del Crocifisso, still in the church of San Miniato,[18] various scholars have attempted to construct a chronology for the artist based on an analysis of the punched decoration of his work; however, this effort has failed to yield any precise indication for the Washington altarpiece other than a vague association with a relatively late phase in the painter's activity.[19]

In the course of his career, especially between the 1380s and the early 1390s, Agnolo Gaddi produced a number of polyptychs, now in part dismantled and dispersed, of which at least the surviving central panels propose a composition close to that of the triptych discussed here. I refer in particular to *Madonna and Child with Eight Angels* (now united with laterals that did not originally belong to it) in the Contini-Bonacossi bequest to the Uffizi, Florence;[20] *Madonna and Child Surrounded by Eight Angels* in the church of San Lorenzo at Borgo San Lorenzo;[21] the triptych in the Staatliche Museen of Berlin, in which six angels are placed around the throne and a further pair are in the gable;[22] and *Madonna and Child Flanked by Twelve Angels*, now in a private collection in Milan.[23] None of these is securely dated, but the Berlin triptych can in all probability be identified with that formerly on the altar of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, which bore the inscription “An D 1387 Bernardus Cini de Nobilibus fecit fieri hanc cappellam.”[24] This gives us a useful point of reference not only for defining a chronological sequence of the paintings in question but also, as we shall see, for the dating of Gaddi's great cycles of Florentine frescoes. Another chronological point of reference, albeit an approximate one, is 1383, the date of the testament of Michele di Vanni Castellani, in which he made bequests for the construction and decoration of a family chapel in Santa Croce, the chapel that would later be frescoed by Agnolo Gaddi.[25] The style of this decoration suggests a period of execution not much later than the will; indeed, most art historians tend to place the execution of the cycle in the years immediately following 1383.

Although successive restorations have now made it difficult to assess, the Borgo San Lorenzo panel [26] seems the earliest of the group. It was perhaps painted even before the frescoes in the Castellani chapel, with which it has affinities in its

use of dense shadows in modeling, in the rigid profiles of the angels, and in the deeply channeled and brittle-looking folds of their garments. Between that work and the Nobili triptych now in Berlin can be placed both the Madonna of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest (it too now altered by retouches) and the triptych in the Gallery. In contrast to these latter two, the animated composition of the panel destined for the Nobili chapel seems to represent a further step forward, in the direction of the more dynamic compositions and the more delicate modeling that characterize the painter's final phase, to which the above-mentioned Madonna surrounded by twelve angels now in a private collection can, I believe, be ascribed.[27]

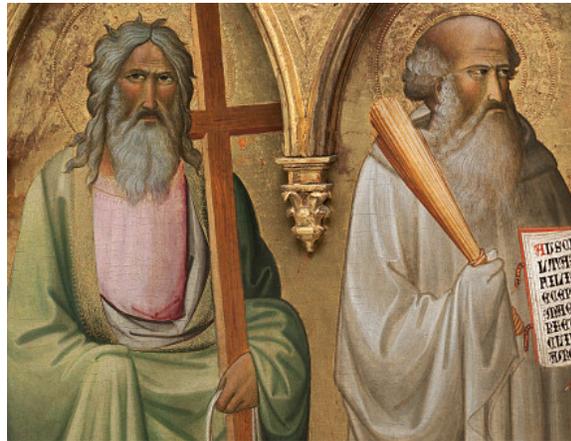
If such a chronological sequence of the altarpieces executed by Agnolo in the 1380s is plausible, the Gallery triptych ought to date to a period slightly preceding 1387—that is, slightly preceding the execution of the other and more important enterprise promoted by Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti, the frescoing of the choir in Santa Croce.[28] Various similarities can be identified between passages of that cycle and the Washington triptych, in confirmation of the chronological proximity of the two works: the bust of Saint Andrew [fig. 2] recurs, in similar form, in the scene of the Making of the Cross [fig. 3], in the group of spectators to the extreme right of the fresco, while analogies can also be identified between the other saints of the triptych and the busts of the prophets inserted in the ornamental friezes that articulate the chapel's decoration. Close similarities have also been observed between the lateral saints of the Gallery triptych and the fragments of an altarpiece now in Indianapolis.[29] We have no secure evidence to help us date these fragments, probably the remains of the decoration of the lateral pilasters of a polyptych roughly contemporary with, or perhaps slightly later than, the triptych being discussed here. In conclusion, therefore, the Washington altarpiece exemplifies a stage in the artist's career in which he embarked on the gradual discovery of the innovative features of late-Gothic art. This led him to develop greater elegance in poses, more delicate and harmonious arrangement of draperies, and more spontaneous vitality in the conduct of the angels thronged around the sides of the throne as if drawn magnetically to the child. A clear sign of the innovations of the phase in which Agnolo painted the frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce is also the artist's polychromy: abandoning the somber palette of previous works, he now prefers or utilizes combinations of delicate pastel colors.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** C. A. R. Roller, "Design of the east wall of the sacristy of San Miniato in Florence," from *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Journal of My Trip to Italy in the Years 1829 and 1830), 1:7, June 1830, Rittersaalverein Castle Museum, Burgdorf, Switzerland



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Andrew (left), Agnolo Gaddi, *Madonna and Child with Saints Andrew, Benedict, Bernard, and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, shortly before 1387, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of spectators, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Making of the Cross*, 1385–1390, fresco, Cappella Maggiore, Santa Croce, Florence. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY

## NOTES

- [1] A similar solution—a five-part polyptych reduced to triptych format—in fact appears on the main side of Giotto's Stefaneschi altarpiece (Pinacoteca Vaticana, no. 40.120) and later (probably at a date close to 1340) in the fragment of a triptych by Jacopo del Casentino now in a private collection; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 7, *The Biadaiolo Illuminator, Master of the Dominican Effigies* (New York, 1957), pl. xlix. About 1365, Matteo di Pacino revived this scheme in an altarpiece of similar structure now in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 8463); see Michela Palmeri, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 174–181. Perhaps a few years later in date is another triptych of similar format, attributed to the Master of San Lucchese near Poggibonsi, destroyed in 1944; reproduced in Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 2," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1050, as a work by Jacopo di Cione. Another altarpiece of the same format is the triptych painted by the Master of the Misericordia and Niccolò Gerini in collaboration, now in the church of Sant'Andrea at Montespertoli near Florence; reproduced in Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, *Giovanni del Biondo*, pt. 2 (New York, 1969), pl. xlv, as workshop of Giovanni del Biondo, probably executed around 1380.
- [2] The throne is similar to the one that appears in the polyptych signed by Giotto now in the Museo Civico Nazionale in Bologna (no. 284). Thrones of this type, with a high, triangular-topped backrest but of simple structure and convincingly drawn in perspective, appear in the early 1360s in Giovanni da Milano's polyptych now in the Museo Civico at Prato; in the fragmentary polyptych by Cenni di Francesco, dated 1370, in the church of San Cristofano a Perticaia near Florence; in the polyptych by Pietro Nelli and Niccolò Gerini in the pieve at Impruneta, dated 1375; and thereafter ever more frequently in the last quarter of the century. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pls. 86 and 61.
- [3] On the original decoration of the frame, cf. Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 50–64. The fashion of covering the gable zones of altarpieces with pastiglia ornamental motifs in relief before they were gilded began to spread from Orcagna's shop in the second half of the Trecento.
- [4] The sumptuous decoration, with pairs of facing animals, of the brocaded

fabrics used to cover the throne of the Madonna or the floor on which the saints stand is a phenomenon characteristic of Florentine painting in the second half of the fourteenth century, especially in paintings of the circle of Orcagna, but also in panels produced in the bottega of Agnolo Gaddi. Cf. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 283, 316, 341.

- [5] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52.
- [6] Oskar Wulff (1907) coined this unfortunate conventional name. Osvald Sirén (1914–1915) later altered it to “Compagno d’Agnolo,” and shortly thereafter he formulated a hypothesis identifying this artist with Gherardo Starnina (1916, 51–53). See Oskar Wulff, “Der Madonnenmeister: Ein sienesisch–florentinische Trecentist,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 20 (1907): 195–210, 227–236; Osvald Sirén, “Early Italian Pictures, the University Museum, Göttingen (Conclusion),” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 26 (1914): 107–114; Osvald Sirén, ed., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures in the Jarves Collection Belonging to Yale University* (New Haven and London, 1916), 51–53.

The proposal was accepted by Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 565–573, and some other authors in the following decade.

- [7] Referring to the group of paintings usually cited under the name “Compagno d’Agnolo,” Bernard Berenson wrote: “Una delle più singolari aberrazioni della critica recente è stata quella di attribuire tutte queste Madonne allo Starnina; ma non è necessario perdere il tempo a dissipare errori che il tempo stesso disperderà” (One of the most singular aberrations of modern criticism is that of attributing all these Madonnas to Starnina; but it is not necessary to waste time dissipating errors that time itself will dissipate). See Bernard Berenson, “Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 3,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1303. After the discovery of the remains of the cycle of Starnina’s documented frescoes in the church of the Carmine in Florence, the hypothesis of the anonymous master’s identification with Starnina was gradually abandoned. See Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 15 (1933): 151–190; Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 331–384.
- [8] The triptych now in the National Gallery of Art evidently came to Duveen Brothers accompanied by expertises from Robert Langton Douglas and Osvald Sirén, both supporting the attribution to Starnina; see Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25. Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Wilhelm R. Valentiner (1933), and Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951) also accepted that attribution. Roberto Salvini (1935–1936), not accepting the identification Gherardo Starnina=Compagno d’Agnolo, attributed the painting to the latter. Cf.

Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, ed., *The Sixteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters: Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century* (Detroit, 1933), no. 11; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:2351; and Roberto Salvini, "Per la cronologia e per il catalogo di un discepolo di Agnolo Gaddi," *Bollettino d'arte* 29 (1935–1936): 287.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118–121.
- [10] On Benedetto Alberti's will, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:187. The codicil in question was attached to the will drawn up in 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract). In it the testator already instructed that "si facessi dipignere la Sagrestia di San Miniato al Monte con gli Armadi et Finestra et affreschi" (that the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte should be painted [and provided] with cupboards, [stained glass] window, and frescoes); Giovanni Felice Berti, *Cenni storico-artistici per servire di guida ed illustrazione alla insigne Basilica di S. Minato al Monte e di alcuni dintorni presso Firenze* (Florence, 1850), 156. So, when Alberti ten years later made testamentary provision that the "sacrestia ecclesiae sancti Miniatis ad Montem de prope Florentiam compleatur et compleri et perfici debeant picturis, armariis, coro, fenestra vitrea, altari et aliis necessariis" (the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte of Florence should be completed and perfected with paintings, cupboards, a choir stall, stained glass window, an altar, and all other necessary things), this decoration might already have been planned and perhaps even in part realized. Ada Labriola and Federica Baldini accepted the provenance of the Gallery's panels from the sacristy of San Miniato in Ada Labriola, "La decorazione pittorica," in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina: Osservazioni storico-critiche in occasione del restauro*, ed. Maurizio De Vita (Florence, 1998), 52; Federica Baldini, in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina all'Antella e i suoi pittori*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2009), 159.
- [11] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [12] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [13] Jacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols. (Florence, 1998), 2:1205.
- [14] See "Regesto dell'Abbazia fiorentina di San Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117–135. See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.

- [15] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 69; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25.
- [16] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118.
- [17] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–26.
- [18] Even the dating of this work, for the most part identified with the altarpiece for which Agnolo was paid between 1394 and 1396, has been questioned. What is certain is that payments were made to Agnolo during those years for “la tavola di San Miniato a Monte.” In 1396, however, because the artist had died in the meantime, his brother Zanobi received the balance; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 65, 67. No doubt correctly, art historians generally have assumed that the documents refer to the altarpiece placed on the altar of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto in San Miniato, which has come down to us with its components rearranged. Originally, the panels of the polyptych representing the stories of Christ and full-length figures of Saint Giovanni Gualberto and Saint Minias formed an ensemble that must have contained at the center the much-venerated crucifix, which, according to legend, had spoken to Saint Giovanni Gualberto. When the crucifix was transferred to the Vallombrosans of Santa Trinita in Florence in 1671, the painted panels were rearranged in such a way as to fill the gap created by its removal. Though Cole (1977, 51–56) contested the identification of the existing altarpiece of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto with that cited in the documents, his opinion met with little support. Cole argued instead that the documented painting should be identified with the triptych of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest now in the Uffizi, Florence. But this latter painting has existed in its present form only since the 1930s, when the dispersed panels of two different altarpieces were arbitrarily cobbled together during an unscrupulous restoration; cf. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 51–56; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 66, 216 n. 85, 298; Gaudenz Freuler, ed., *Manifestatori delle cose miracolose: Arte italiana del '300 e '400 da collezioni in Svizzera e nel Liechtenstein* (Einsiedeln, 1991), 204; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 228. Freuler, however, believed that at least the two laterals of the Contini-Bonacossi polyptych formed part of the altarpiece documented in 1394–1396.
- [19] Among the punch marks used by Agnolo, Erling Skaug (1994) especially observed two that can be identified in Taddeo Gaddi’s triptych dated 1334, now in the Staatlichen Museen of Berlin. Skaug inserted the National Gallery of Art painting in the late phase of Agnolo Gaddi. Both the investigations of Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) and the later analysis of Skaug himself (2004) largely

concurrent, however, in suggesting that the very same punches were used throughout the artist's career. See Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:260–264; 2: punch chart 8.2; Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 100, 244, 283, 290, 322, 481; Erling S. Skaug, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 245, 254–255. Some of the punch marks found in the Washington triptych also appear in the later San Miniato altarpiece, documented in 1394–1396 (on which see note 18 above), while others had already been used in *Coronation of the Virgin* in the London National Gallery, generally considered an early work by the artist.

[20] Osvald Sirén, "Addenda und Errata in meinem Giottino-Buch," *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1908): 1122–1123, published the central panel with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi and stated its present whereabouts as the Masi collection in Capannoli (Pisa). It is very probable, therefore, that the painting has a provenance either from Pisa or from Capannoli itself, a spa (at present a resort) in the district of Pisa that used to belong to Piero Gambacorti, the governor of Pisa, who owned a castle there; see Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico della Toscana, contenente la descrizione di tutti i luoghi del Granducato, Ducato di Lucca, Garfagnana e Lunigiana*, 11 vols. (Florence, 1833–1849), 1:452. The provenance of the laterals now attached to this painting is unknown; all we know is that in 1952 they were the property of Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, who, according to Cole, had purchased them in Rome prior to 1931. Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 747–748; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76. Contini then commissioned special frames to be made for them, similar to the original frame of the Madonna from Capannoli. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 298, dated the latter to c. 1380–1385, while Cole, as we have seen, considered the recomposed triptych to be genuine and associated it with the two documents of 1394–1396. Caterina Caneva, in *Gli Uffizi: Catalogo generale*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1980), 277, dated the execution of the whole altarpiece to 1375–1380; Ada Labriola, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1998), 51:146, to the 1380s; while Sonia Chiodo, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113, mentioned it as a "late work."

[21] Boskovits's proposal (1975, 117, 296) to attribute the Borgo San Lorenzo Madonna to Agnolo and to date it to 1380–1385 has in substance been

accepted by the more recent literature; cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 117, 296; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:261; Maria Matilde Simari, “Il Mugello,” in *Il Mugello, la Valdiseve e la Romagna fiorentina*, ed. Cristina Acidini and Anna Benvenuti Papi (Milan, 2000), 56. A modern (nineteenth- or twentieth-century) copy of this painting, attributed to Agnolo himself, was with Wildenstein & Co. in New York in 1954; see Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 114.

- [22] The predella of the painting, now in the Louvre, Paris, has been recognized as that formerly in the Nobili chapel at Santa Maria degli Angeli and dated to 1387–1388 on the basis of information derived from the sources by Hans Dietrich Gronau, “The Earliest Works of Lorenzo Monaco, 2,” *The Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 569 (1950): 217–222. Federico Zeri cautiously conjectured that the predella belonged to the triptych now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and Bruce Cole more firmly accepted this proposal. See Federico Zeri, “Investigations into the Early Period of Lorenzo Monaco, 1,” *The Burlington Magazine* 106 (1964): 554–558; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 75, 84–87. For a recent résumé of the problems relating to a reconstruction of the altarpiece, see Erling S. Skaug, “Note sulle decorazione a punzone e i dipinti su tavola di Lorenzo Monaco,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 106–110; see also note 23 below.
- [23] The painting, which measures 150 × 87 cm, was illustrated in *Servizio per le ricerche delle opere rubate*, *Bollettino* 17 (1994): 60, published by the special police unit of the Carabinieri devoted to the recovery of stolen works of art, formerly with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi. Later, the reported theft of the painting was shown to be mistaken, and the work was republished by Gaudenz Freuler, “Gli inizi di Lorenzo Monaco miniatore,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 80, with the same attribution. The variety of the angels’ poses, the softness of the modeling, and the motif of angels supporting the crown over Mary’s head (which recurs in paintings of Gaddi’s late phase) in any case suggest a late dating, probably in the last decade of the century.
- [24] Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, no. 1039; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76, 84–87. Attributed to the school of Agnolo Gaddi by Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco* (Strasbourg, 1905), 41, it was reinstated as an autograph work by Gaddi himself by Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. For the lost inscriptions, see Dillian

Gordon, *The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings, National Gallery Catalogues* (London, 2003), 197 n. 3.

- [25] See Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 78–79, and, concerning the will of Michele Castellani, 61, doc. 7. Attributed by Vasari and by much of the later art-historical literature to Gherardo Starnina, the mural paintings in the chapel were attributed by Berenson to Agnolo Gaddi, at least “in great part.” See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. More recent studies have in general accepted this view, though some art historians believe that they detect the hand of various assistants of Agnolo in the cycle. Cole (1977, 14–15) thought that “three masters” worked in the chapel with some degree of autonomy: the anonymous master of the stories of Saints Nicholas and Anthony, the equally anonymous master of the scenes from the life of the Baptist, and Agnolo Gaddi himself, who, Cole argued, executed part of the lunette of Zacharias and the stories of Saint John the Evangelist.
- [26] The Borgo San Lorenzo panel was extensively retouched in 1864 and then restored c. 1920; see Francesco Niccolai, *Mugello e Val di Sieve: Guida topografica storico-artistica illustrata* (Borgo S. Lorenzo, 1914), 430. Since then it has been subjected to at least two other restorations. The alterations in the appearance of the painting following these treatments are documented in photographs nos. 886, 68589, and 93950 of the Soprintendenza in Florence.
- [27] The close resemblance between the passage with the blessing Christ child seated on his mother’s lap and the fresco by Agnolo Gaddi now in the Museo di Pittura Murale in Prato suggests that the two paintings are close in date, presumably contemporary with the painter’s documented activity in Prato in the years 1391–1394. For the fresco in Prato, see Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), fig. 260; for the documents in question, see Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d’archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d’arte* 14 (1932): 355–376; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 63–65.
- [28] We have no secure documentary evidence for the dating of the frescoes in question. Roberto Salvini, *L’arte di Agnolo Gaddi* (Florence, 1936), 31–85, considered them to predate the decoration of the Castellani chapel, but the more recent art historical literature in general indicates 1387 as the *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the cycle; Sonia Chiodo, “Gaddi, Agnolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113. The fact is that while Benedetto degli Alberti in his testament dictated in 1377 indicated Santa Croce (where his family had the patronage of the *cappella maggiore*) as the place where he wished to be buried, he made no mention of the

realization of the frescoes in this chapel in the codicil added to his will ten years later, when he made testamentary provision for the funding of other artistic enterprises; for the text of the codicil, which also cites the relevant passage from the testament of 1377, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:186–194. It seems logical to infer from this evidence that at the time the codicil was added the mural decoration of the chapel had already been finished and that everything was ready for Benedetto's burial. In my view, however, the stylistic evidence suggests a later, or more protracted, date for the very demanding enterprise of frescoing the chapel, which could have begun c. 1385 but could well have been prolonged for years due to the political setbacks that struck the family. Accordingly, the present writer suggests the date 1385–1390; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 297; and Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–27, c. 1388–1393. In dating the frescoes in the choir, various stylistic features should be borne in mind: the more complex and crowded compositions; the more elaborate language of gesture; the numerous genre details; and the tendency towards a softening of the forms, modeled with light tonal passages of chiaroscuro. These features all suggest that the cycle of the *cappella maggiore* in Santa Croce is stylistically more advanced than the decoration of the Castellani chapel (executed, as we have seen, sometime after 1383), but no doubt antecedent to the frescoes in the Cappella della Cintola in Prato Cathedral, for which the painter received payments in 1392–1394. See Giuseppe Poggi, "Appunti d'archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi," *Rivista d'arte* 14 (1932): 363–369.

- [29] Clowes collection, Indianapolis Museum of Art: Ian Fraser et al., *A Catalogue of the Clowes Collection*, Indianapolis Museum of Art Bulletin (Indianapolis, 1973), 6. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 27, rightly observed the "very close stylistic and positional relationship with the Washington saints," deducing from this affinity that "both works were in the artist's shop at the same time." Perhaps it would be permissible to speak of the reuse of the same model employed for the Washington triptych in another similar and slightly later triptych, of which the panels now in Indianapolis formed part. I suspect, however, that the Indianapolis panels belonged to the triptych of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, the Florentine church of the Camaldolese order (see notes 21 and 23 above). In fact, the lost framing pilasters of the triptych now in Berlin could have contained, to judge from their measurements, two of the Indianapolis panels superimposed on each side. It is also worth pointing out that the paintings in the American museum come—like the Berlin triptych—from the Solly collection, and that the white habit with which Saint Benedict and the other monk immersed in reading are portrayed would have been very suitable to adorn a chapel in a church belonging to the Camaldolese order (a reformed branch of the

Benedictines). Laurence Kanter informs me that he is about to publish further evidence for identifying the Indianapolis saints and their counterparts at the University of Gottingen as the front and lateral faces of the framing pilasters of the Nobili altarpiece, together with the missing pilaster base from the altarpiece predella.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel, along with its companions *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]* and *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation [right panel]*, are formed from vertically oriented poplar planks.[1] *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned* are formed of three vertical planks each, with narrower strips of wood flanking the central plank, while *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine* is formed of two boards of equal width, joined vertically between the two saints. The main panels of the altarpiece are 4 to 4.5 cm thick; the frame supplies an additional thickness of 2.7 to 2.9 cm for the flat molding and 2.3 cm for the dentil molding. On the reverse, the panels are reinforced with modern horizontal battens set into grooves. The two absent original battens, spanning all three panels, were placed along the bottom and just below the base of the gabled tops of each panel, as is clear from the remains of large nails used to attach them that are visible in the x-radiographs. The frame, which consists of an additional plank of wood that completely covers the gable portion of the panels, contains *pastiglia* decoration. The columns dividing the central and lateral panels and flanking the outer edge of the laterals are missing, as well as the freestanding cusped arches originally lining the ogival arches of the panels. The wooden support is covered by a gesso ground spread over a fabric interlayer. Incised lines in the gesso outline the figures and the fold lines in the drapery. The gold ground was applied over a red bole preparation. The halos are decorated by stamped and engraved motifs as well as stippling.

Outlines of areas to be painted and drapery fold lines were further delineated with brushed underdrawing, which is visible with infrared reflectography.[2] The paint is mostly egg tempera, but select pigments are bound with glue.[3] Flesh areas are painted with the traditional underlayer of green. The pattern of the orientalizing carpet on which the figures stand was transferred from a stencil to the paint applied over burnished gold.[4] The wings of the seraphim are decorated using

*sgraffito* to reveal the gold underlayer. The edges of the figures' robes are decorated with mordant gilding.

All three panels retain their original thickness. *Madonna and Child Enthroned* has two major splits, one running from the lower edge into the mantle of the Virgin, the other diagonally across the wing of the uppermost right-hand angel. This panel has cracks caused by the removal of the original intermediate frame. *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine* has a split at the lower edge and another in the frame to the left of and above the Virgin Annunciate in the gable medallion. Worm tunneling is present in all three panels, but it is most extensive in the side planks of *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned*, as well as in the gables of all three panels. There is minor abrasion of the paint film in the faces and hands, but otherwise the painted surface is in fine condition. The red lakes of the robes of Saint Catherine, the kneeling angels, and the Christ child have faded slightly, and the Virgin's blue robe is worn. The altarpiece underwent conservation treatment between 1988 and 1991,[5] in the course of which the now lost intermediate columns between the three panels were reconstructed.[6] Also during this treatment, some of the fold lines in the Virgin's robe were recreated.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed cross-sections of the panel. The wood of the panel was identified as poplar and the integral frame as linden (*tiglio*). A nonoriginal strip along the bottom was identified as spruce (see report dated November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using amino acid analysis in conjunction with high-performance liquid chromatography, cross-sections, and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry, and identified both egg and glue binders (see reports dated August 23, 1989, and November 22, 1991, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Report dated January 9, 1989, in NGA conservation files. Brigitte Klesse pointed out that the same pattern, with minor modifications, was also used in Gaddi's triptych now in the Berlin gallery (no. 1039); see Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 316.
- [5] At the time of this treatment, the NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), amino

acid analysis in conjunction with high performance liquid chromatography, gas chromatography in conjunction with mass-spectrometry, x-ray diffraction, and microscopy of cross-sections (see reports dated February 13, 1989; January 23, 1990; November 22, 1991; August 6, 1990; August 22, 1990; October 17, 1990; August 2, 1991; August 23, 1989; and November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).

- [6] The reconstruction was based on marks on the panel as well as research into comparable structures still intact. See Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 35–65. The altarpiece must have been treated prior to 1988, probably in the first half of the twentieth century, because the crockets on the top side of the frame, which are visible in Lionello Venturi's reproduction, had already disappeared prior to the 1988 treatment. Cf. Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably in the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte, Florence, from whence the triptych may have been removed shortly after 1830.[1] Bertram Ashburnham [1797-1878], 4th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place, Battle, Sussex;[2] by inheritance to his son, Bertram Ashburnham [1840-1913], 5th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place; by inheritance to his daughter, Lady Mary Catherine Charlotte Ashburnham [1890-1953], Ashburnham Place; (Robert Langton Douglas, London);[3] purchased 19 June 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[5] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370-1400*, Florence, 1975: 118-121, proposed this provenance. The Alberti family were patrons of the church, and Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds for its decoration in a codicil dated 1387 that was appended to his will of 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract); see Luigi Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze. Genealogia, storia e documenti*, Florence, 1869: 2:187. Three of the four saints depicted in the side panels are associated with the Alberti family, providing further argument in support of the proposed provenance. Although in 1975 Boskovits

erroneously asserted that Saint John Gualbert was represented in the altarpiece to the right of the Virgin, he corrected this in the NGA systematic catalogue by identifying the saint instead as Bernard of Clairvaux, the patron saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually for his soul in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already been consecrated (see Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino*, Florence, 2003: 381). The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Albert also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato, and Catherine of Alexandria, shown standing on a broken wheel, was evidently much venerated in the Alberti family. In Benedetto's will he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to Catherine, and his son, Bernardo, wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor (see Weppelmann 2003). Although this provenance remains a hypothesis, it still seems a quite plausible one that, if correct, would provide the certainty that by 1830 the altarpiece was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still in place in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall made in that year by Christoph Roller (1805-1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienschen Reise* (Burgdorfer Heimatsmuseum, Burgdorf, Switzerland). Unfortunately, the sketch, kindly brought to the attention of Miklós Boskovits by Stefan Weppelmann, is very small and not sufficient for identifying the Gallery's painting. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there (Weppelmann 2003, 184). It was removed and sold, presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820; see "Regesto dell' Abbazia fiorentina di S. Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117-135. [2] The collection, formed originally by George, 3rd earl of Ashburnham, was enlarged by his son, Bertram, after whose death no further paintings were added. See *The Ashburnham Collections. Part I. Catalogue of Paintings and Drawings ...*, Sotheby's, London, sale of 24 June 1953: 3-4. [3] According to Denis Sutton ("Robert Langton Douglas. Part III," *Apollo* 109 (1979): 452, Douglas was in contact with the Ashburnham family around 1919. See also letter from Douglas to Fowles dated 1 May 1941, Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: box 244, reel 299. [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422. The painting was first entered in the Duveen "X-Book" (number X 149) as by Starnina, but this was crossed out and replaced with the attribution

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

"Agnelo [sic] Gaddi." [5] The original Duveen Brothers invoice is in the Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, Box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files. The painting is listed as by Gherardo Starnina, influenced by Agnolo Gaddi, with the additional note that Bernard Berenson gave the painting to Gaddi.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1933 Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1933, no. 11, repro., as Altarpiece by Gherardo Starnina.

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Agnolo Gaddi  
Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396

## *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation [right panel]*

shortly before 1387

tempera on poplar panel

overall: 194.6 × 80 cm (76 5/8 × 31 1/2 in.)

Inscription: across the bottom under the saints: S. BERNARDUS DOCTOR; S. K[A]TERINA VIRGO

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.4.c

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### ENTRY

This panel is part of a triptych that consists of two laterals with paired saints (this panel and *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel [left panel]*) and a central panel with the Madonna and Child (*Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*). All three panels are topped with similar triangular gables with a painted medallion in the center. The reduction of a five-part Altarpiece into a simplified format with the external profile of a triptych may have been suggested to Florentine masters as a consequence of trends that appeared towards the end of the fourteenth century: a greater simplification in composition and a revival of elements of painting from the first half of the Trecento.[1] Agnolo Gaddi followed this trend in several of his works. He demonstrates this in the three panels being discussed here by his deliberate revival of motifs that had been abandoned by most Florentine painters since the mid-fourteenth century. To present the Madonna seated on a throne of Giottesque type,[2] instead of concealing the structure of the throne with a gold-embroidered cloth of honor as in most paintings realized by masters in the circle of Orcagna, was a sort of archaism at this time. Agnolo scrupulously describes this seat and at the same time exploits its form to create three-dimensional effects. Yet these

archaizing motifs are combined with more forward-looking features. Gaddi's progressive adjustment to the innovative late-Gothic taste of his time is thus attested by various aspects of the triptych, such as the pastiglia decoration in the gables, the now lost decoration of the frame,[3] the rich orientalizing carpet that covers the floor,[4] and even the crowded composition of the central panel.

Lionello Venturi published this triptych in 1931 under the name of Gherardo Starnina.[5] This attribution was based on the now discarded theory of scholars who had tried in the first three decades of the century to reconstruct the oeuvre of a putative disciple of Agnolo Gaddi, to whom the conventional name "Madonnenmeister" or "Compagno d' Agnolo" was given and who was later identified with Gherardo Starnina.[6] However, Bernard Berenson recognized that a good part of the work given to the "Compagno d' Agnolo" belongs to Agnolo himself. The studies of Ugo Procacci [7] on Starnina finally put the proposed identification to rest, though it continued to enjoy residual credit for some time to come.[8] In the National Gallery of Art, the altarpiece was cataloged as a work by Agnolo Gaddi, and since the 1960s, art historians have unanimously accepted this attribution.

The present writer proposed that Agnolo Gaddi's altarpiece might have been executed for the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte (Florence),[9] of which the Alberti were patrons and for whose decoration Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds in his will of 1387.[10] The reasons adduced at that time in support of such a hypothesis were, it must be admitted, not quite convincing: referring to the inscription in Saint Benedict's book to the "admonition" (an administrative sanction by the Florentine government) against Alberti in 1387 and his subsequent exile is open to question. Furthermore, I erroneously asserted that Saint Giovanni Gualberto was represented in the painting. The saint to the right of the Virgin is, in fact, Bernard of Clairvaux, but the presence of this saint in the altarpiece is actually a further argument in support of a provenance from the sacristy of San Miniato. Saint Bernard was the patron Saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually *pro anima dicti testatoris* (for the soul of the said testator) in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already by that date been consecrated.[11] The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Alberti, also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato. As to the fourth saint, Catherine of Alexandria (standing on a broken wheel), she was evidently much venerated in Benedetto's family. This is proved by the fact that, in his will of 1387,

he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to the martyr saint of Alexandria (and decorated by a cycle of frescoes illustrating scenes from her life by Spinello Aretino); additionally, his son Bernardo wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor.[12] The Alberti family's veneration of Saint Catherine may have been based on the popular etymology of her name (catherine=*catenuła*) diffused by Jacopo da Varazze in *Legenda aurea*,[13] with reference to the chain represented in the Alberti coats of arms.

Although the provenance from San Miniato remains a hypothesis, it still seems to me a quite plausible one that, if correct, would give us the certainty that by 1830 the triptych was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still *in situ* in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall [fig. 1] made in that year by architect Christoph Robert August Roller (1805–1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Castle Museum Burgdorf, Burgdorf, Switzerland).

Unfortunately, the sketch, to which Stefan Weppelmann kindly drew my attention, is very small and certainly not sufficient for the identification of the triptych in the Gallery. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there, as Stefan Weppelmann rightly observed. It was removed and sold presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820.[14]

As for its date, the Gallery's first catalog (1941) cautiously suggested "the last quarter of the XIVth century," while the volume devoted to the Duveen Pictures (1941) proposed an approximate date of c. 1380.[15] More recent publications in general support a time frame within the 1380s, although without explaining the reasons for this proposal. Arguing for a provenance from the sacristy of the Florentine church of San Miniato al Monte, Miklós Boskovits (1975) attempted a more precise dating shortly after the codicil dated 1387 was appended to the testament of Benedetto di Nerozzo degli Alberti, its putative patron.[16] For his part, Bruce Cole (1979) stylistically linked the Gallery triptych with the cycle of frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce in Florence, for which he proposed a date of execution in the years c. 1388–1393.[17] Given the lack of securely datable panels by Gaddi, with the exception of the composite altarpiece of the Cappella del Crocifisso, still in the church of San Miniato,[18] various scholars have attempted to construct a chronology for the artist based on an analysis of the punched decoration of his work; however, this effort has failed to yield any precise

indication for the Washington altarpiece other than a vague association with a relatively late phase in the painter's activity.[19]

In the course of his career, especially between the 1380s and the early 1390s, Agnolo Gaddi produced a number of polyptychs, now in part dismantled and dispersed, of which at least the surviving central panels propose a composition close to that of the triptych discussed here. I refer in particular to *Madonna and Child with Eight Angels* (now united with laterals that did not originally belong to it) in the Contini-Bonacossi bequest to the Uffizi, Florence;[20] *Madonna and Child Surrounded by Eight Angels* in the church of San Lorenzo at Borgo San Lorenzo;[21] the triptych in the Staatliche Museen of Berlin, in which six angels are placed around the throne and a further pair are in the gable;[22] and *Madonna and Child Flanked by Twelve Angels*, now in a private collection in Milan.[23] None of these is securely dated, but the Berlin triptych can in all probability be identified with that formerly on the altar of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, which bore the inscription "An D 1387 Bernardus Cini de Nobilibus fecit fieri hanc cappellam." [24] This gives us a useful point of reference not only for defining a chronological sequence of the paintings in question but also, as we shall see, for the dating of Gaddi's great cycles of Florentine frescoes. Another chronological point of reference, albeit an approximate one, is 1383, the date of the testament of Michele di Vanni Castellani, in which he made bequests for the construction and decoration of a family chapel in Santa Croce, the chapel that would later be frescoed by Agnolo Gaddi.[25] The style of this decoration suggests a period of execution not much later than the will; indeed, most art historians tend to place the execution of the cycle in the years immediately following 1383.

Although successive restorations have now made it difficult to assess, the Borgo San Lorenzo panel [26] seems the earliest of the group. It was perhaps painted even before the frescoes in the Castellani chapel, with which it has affinities in its use of dense shadows in modeling, in the rigid profiles of the angels, and in the deeply channeled and brittle-looking folds of their garments. Between that work and the Nobili triptych now in Berlin can be placed both the Madonna of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest (it too now altered by retouches) and the triptych in the Gallery. In contrast to these latter two, the animated composition of the panel destined for the Nobili chapel seems to represent a further step forward, in the direction of the more dynamic compositions and the more delicate modeling that characterize the painter's final phase, to which the above-mentioned Madonna surrounded by twelve angels now in a private collection can, I believe, be

ascribed.[27]

If such a chronological sequence of the altarpieces executed by Agnolo in the 1380s is plausible, the Gallery triptych ought to date to a period slightly preceding 1387—that is, slightly preceding the execution of the other and more important enterprise promoted by Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti, the frescoing of the choir in Santa Croce.[28] Various similarities can be identified between passages of that cycle and the Washington triptych, in confirmation of the chronological proximity of the two works: the bust of Saint Andrew [fig. 2] recurs, in similar form, in the scene of the Making of the Cross [fig. 3], in the group of spectators to the extreme right of the fresco, while analogies can also be identified between the other saints of the triptych and the busts of the prophets inserted in the ornamental friezes that articulate the chapel's decoration. Close similarities have also been observed between the lateral saints of the Gallery triptych and the fragments of an altarpiece now in Indianapolis.[29] We have no secure evidence to help us date these fragments, probably the remains of the decoration of the lateral pilasters of a polyptych roughly contemporary with, or perhaps slightly later than, the triptych being discussed here. In conclusion, therefore, the Washington altarpiece exemplifies a stage in the artist's career in which he embarked on the gradual discovery of the innovative features of late-Gothic art. This led him to develop greater elegance in poses, more delicate and harmonious arrangement of draperies, and more spontaneous vitality in the conduct of the angels thronged around the sides of the throne as if drawn magnetically to the child. A clear sign of the innovations of the phase in which Agnolo painted the frescoes in the choir of Santa Croce is also the artist's polychromy: abandoning the somber palette of previous works, he now prefers or utilizes combinations of delicate pastel colors.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** C. A. R. Roller, "Design of the east wall of the sacristy of San Miniato in Florence," from *Tagebuch einer italienischen Reise* (Journal of My Trip to Italy in the Years 1829 and 1830), 1:7, June 1830, Rittersaalverein Castle Museum, Burgdorf, Switzerland



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Andrew (left), Agnolo Gaddi, *Madonna and Child with Saints Andrew, Benedict, Bernard, and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, shortly before 1387, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of spectators, Agnolo Gaddi, *The Making of the Cross*, 1385–1390, fresco, Cappella Maggiore, Santa Croce, Florence. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY

## NOTES

- [1] A similar solution—a five-part polyptych reduced to triptych format—in fact appears on the main side of Giotto's Stefaneschi altarpiece (Pinacoteca Vaticana, no. 40.120) and later (probably at a date close to 1340) in the fragment of a triptych by Jacopo del Casentino now in a private collection; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 7, *The Biadaiolo Illuminator, Master of the Dominican Effigies* (New York, 1957), pl. xlix. About 1365, Matteo di Pacino revived this scheme in an altarpiece of similar structure now in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 8463); see Michela Palmeri, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 174–181. Perhaps a few years later in date is another triptych of similar format, attributed to the Master of San Lucchese near Poggibonsi, destroyed in 1944; reproduced in Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 2," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1050, as a work by Jacopo di Cione. Another altarpiece of the same format is the triptych painted by the Master of the Misericordia and Niccolò Gerini in collaboration, now in the church of Sant'Andrea at Montespertoli near Florence; reproduced in Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 5, *Giovanni del Biondo*, pt. 2 (New York, 1969), pl. xlv, as workshop of Giovanni del Biondo, probably executed around 1380.
- [2] The throne is similar to the one that appears in the polyptych signed by Giotto now in the Museo Civico Nazionale in Bologna (no. 284). Thrones of this type, with a high, triangular-topped backrest but of simple structure and convincingly drawn in perspective, appear in the early 1360s in Giovanni da Milano's polyptych now in the Museo Civico at Prato; in the fragmentary polyptych by Cenni di Francesco, dated 1370, in the church of San Cristofano a Perticaia near Florence; in the polyptych by Pietro Nelli and Niccolò Gerini in the pieve at Impruneta, dated 1375; and thereafter ever more frequently in the last quarter of the century. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), pls. 86 and 61.
- [3] On the original decoration of the frame, cf. Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 50–64. The fashion of covering the gable zones of altarpieces with pastiglia ornamental motifs in relief before they were gilded began to spread from Orcagna's shop in the second half of the Trecento.
- [4] The sumptuous decoration, with pairs of facing animals, of the brocaded

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fabrics used to cover the throne of the Madonna or the floor on which the saints stand is a phenomenon characteristic of Florentine painting in the second half of the fourteenth century, especially in paintings of the circle of Orcagna, but also in panels produced in the bottega of Agnolo Gaddi. Cf. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 283, 316, 341.

[5] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52.

[6] Oskar Wulff (1907) coined this unfortunate conventional name. Osvald Sirén (1914–1915) later altered it to “Compagno d’Agnolo,” and shortly thereafter he formulated a hypothesis identifying this artist with Gherardo Starnina (1916, 51–53). See Oskar Wulff, “Der Madonnenmeister: Ein sienesisch–florentinische Trecentist,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 20 (1907): 195–210, 227–236; Osvald Sirén, “Early Italian Pictures, the University Museum, Göttingen (Conclusion),” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 26 (1914): 107–114; Osvald Sirén, ed., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures in the Jarves Collection Belonging to Yale University* (New Haven and London, 1916), 51–53.

The proposal was accepted by Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 565–573, and some other authors in the following decade.

[7] Referring to the group of paintings usually cited under the name “Compagno d’Agnolo,” Bernard Berenson wrote: “Una delle più singolari aberrazioni della critica recente è stata quella di attribuire tutte queste Madonne allo Starnina; ma non è necessario perdere il tempo a dissipare errori che il tempo stesso disperderà” (One of the most singular aberrations of modern criticism is that of attributing all these Madonnas to Starnina; but it is not necessary to waste time dissipating errors that time itself will dissipate). See Bernard Berenson, “Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 3,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 1303. After the discovery of the remains of the cycle of Starnina’s documented frescoes in the church of the Carmine in Florence, the hypothesis of the anonymous master’s identification with Starnina was gradually abandoned. See Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 15 (1933): 151–190; Ugo Procacci, “Gherardo Starnina,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 331–384.

[8] The triptych now in the National Gallery of Art evidently came to Duveen Brothers accompanied by expertises from Robert Langton Douglas and Osvald Sirén, both supporting the attribution to Starnina; see Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25. Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Wilhelm R. Valentiner (1933), and Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951) also accepted that attribution. Roberto Salvini (1935–1936), not accepting the identification Gherardo Starnina=Compagno d’Agnolo, attributed the painting to the latter. Cf.

Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, ed., *The Sixteenth Loan Exhibition of Old Masters: Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century* (Detroit, 1933), no. 11; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:2351; and Roberto Salvini, "Per la cronologia e per il catalogo di un discepolo di Agnolo Gaddi," *Bollettino d'arte* 29 (1935–1936): 287.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118–121.
- [10] On Benedetto Alberti's will, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:187. The codicil in question was attached to the will drawn up in 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract). In it the testator already instructed that "si facessi dipignere la Sagrestia di San Miniato al Monte con gli Armadi et Finestra et affreschi" (that the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte should be painted [and provided] with cupboards, [stained glass] window, and frescoes); Giovanni Felice Berti, *Cenni storico-artistici per servire di guida ed illustrazione alla insigne Basilica di S. Minato al Monte e di alcuni dintorni presso Firenze* (Florence, 1850), 156. So, when Alberti ten years later made testamentary provision that the "sacrestia ecclesiae sancti Miniatis ad Montem de prope Florentiam compleatur et compleri et perfici debeant picturis, armariis, coro, fenestra vitrea, altari et aliis necessariis" (the sacristy of San Miniato al Monte of Florence should be completed and perfected with paintings, cupboards, a choir stall, stained glass window, an altar, and all other necessary things), this decoration might already have been planned and perhaps even in part realized. Ada Labriola and Federica Baldini accepted the provenance of the Gallery's panels from the sacristy of San Miniato in Ada Labriola, "La decorazione pittorica," in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina: Osservazioni storico-critiche in occasione del restauro*, ed. Maurizio De Vita (Florence, 1998), 52; Federica Baldini, in *L'Oratorio di Santa Caterina all'Antella e i suoi pittori*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2009), 159.
- [11] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [12] See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.
- [13] Jacopo da Varazze, *Legenda aurea*, ed. Giovanni Paolo Maggioni, 2 vols. (Florence, 1998), 2:1205.
- [14] See "Regesto dell'Abbazia fiorentina di San Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117–135. See Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino und die toskanische Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Florence, 2003), 381.

- [15] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 69; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), nos. 24–25.
- [16] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 118.
- [17] Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–26.
- [18] Even the dating of this work, for the most part identified with the altarpiece for which Agnolo was paid between 1394 and 1396, has been questioned. What is certain is that payments were made to Agnolo during those years for “la tavola di San Miniato a Monte.” In 1396, however, because the artist had died in the meantime, his brother Zanobi received the balance; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 65, 67. No doubt correctly, art historians generally have assumed that the documents refer to the altarpiece placed on the altar of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto in San Miniato, which has come down to us with its components rearranged. Originally, the panels of the polyptych representing the stories of Christ and full-length figures of Saint Giovanni Gualberto and Saint Minias formed an ensemble that must have contained at the center the much-venerated crucifix, which, according to legend, had spoken to Saint Giovanni Gualberto. When the crucifix was transferred to the Vallombrosans of Santa Trinita in Florence in 1671, the painted panels were rearranged in such a way as to fill the gap created by its removal. Though Cole (1977, 51–56) contested the identification of the existing altarpiece of the crucifix of Saint Giovanni Gualberto with that cited in the documents, his opinion met with little support. Cole argued instead that the documented painting should be identified with the triptych of the Contini-Bonacossi bequest now in the Uffizi, Florence. But this latter painting has existed in its present form only since the 1930s, when the dispersed panels of two different altarpieces were arbitrarily cobbled together during an unscrupulous restoration; cf. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 51–56; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 66, 216 n. 85, 298; Gaudenz Freuler, ed., *Manifestatori delle cose miracolose: Arte italiana del '300 e '400 da collezioni in Svizzera e nel Liechtenstein* (Einsiedeln, 1991), 204; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 228. Freuler, however, believed that at least the two laterals of the Contini-Bonacossi polyptych formed part of the altarpiece documented in 1394–1396.
- [19] Among the punch marks used by Agnolo, Erling Skaug (1994) especially observed two that can be identified in Taddeo Gaddi’s triptych dated 1334, now in the Staatlichen Museen of Berlin. Skaug inserted the National Gallery of Art painting in the late phase of Agnolo Gaddi. Both the investigations of Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) and the later analysis of Skaug himself (2004) largely

concurrent, however, in suggesting that the very same punches were used throughout the artist's career. See Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:260–264; 2: punch chart 8.2; Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 100, 244, 283, 290, 322, 481; Erling S. Skaug, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Santa Maria degli Angeli Altarpiece of 1388: Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco?" *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 48 (2004): 245, 254–255. Some of the punch marks found in the Washington triptych also appear in the later San Miniato altarpiece, documented in 1394–1396 (on which see note 18 above), while others had already been used in *Coronation of the Virgin* in the London National Gallery, generally considered an early work by the artist.

[20] Osvald Sirén, "Addenda und Errata in meinem Giottino-Buch," *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1908): 1122–1123, published the central panel with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi and stated its present whereabouts as the Masi collection in Capannoli (Pisa). It is very probable, therefore, that the painting has a provenance either from Pisa or from Capannoli itself, a spa (at present a resort) in the district of Pisa that used to belong to Piero Gambacorti, the governor of Pisa, who owned a castle there; see Emanuele Repetti, *Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico della Toscana, contenente la descrizione di tutti i luoghi del Granducato, Ducato di Lucca, Garfagnana e Lunigiana*, 11 vols. (Florence, 1833–1849), 1:452. The provenance of the laterals now attached to this painting is unknown; all we know is that in 1952 they were the property of Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, who, according to Cole, had purchased them in Rome prior to 1931. Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 747–748; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76. Contini then commissioned special frames to be made for them, similar to the original frame of the Madonna from Capannoli. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 298, dated the latter to c. 1380–1385, while Cole, as we have seen, considered the recomposed triptych to be genuine and associated it with the two documents of 1394–1396. Caterina Caneva, in *Gli Uffizi: Catalogo generale*, 2nd ed. (Florence, 1980), 277, dated the execution of the whole altarpiece to 1375–1380; Ada Labriola, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1998), 51:146, to the 1380s; while Sonia Chiodo, "Gaddi, Agnolo," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113, mentioned it as a "late work."

[21] Boskovits's proposal (1975, 117, 296) to attribute the Borgo San Lorenzo

Madonna to Agnolo and to date it to 1380–1385 has in substance been accepted by the more recent literature; cf. Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 117, 296; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:261; Maria Matilde Simari, “Il Mugello,” in *Il Mugello, la Valdiseve e la Romagna fiorentina*, ed. Cristina Acidini and Anna Benvenuti Papi (Milan, 2000), 56. A modern (nineteenth- or twentieth-century) copy of this painting, attributed to Agnolo himself, was with Wildenstein & Co. in New York in 1954; see Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 114.

[22] The predella of the painting, now in the Louvre, Paris, has been recognized as that formerly in the Nobili chapel at Santa Maria degli Angeli and dated to 1387–1388 on the basis of information derived from the sources by Hans Dietrich Gronau, “The Earliest Works of Lorenzo Monaco, 2,” *The Burlington Magazine* 92, no. 569 (1950): 217–222. Federico Zeri cautiously conjectured that the predella belonged to the triptych now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and Bruce Cole more firmly accepted this proposal. See Federico Zeri, “Investigations into the Early Period of Lorenzo Monaco, 1,” *The Burlington Magazine* 106 (1964): 554–558; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 75, 84–87. For a recent résumé of the problems relating to a reconstruction of the altarpiece, see Erling S. Skaug, “Note sulle decorazione a punzone e i dipinti su tavola di Lorenzo Monaco,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 106–110; see also note 23 below.

[23] The painting, which measures 150 × 87 cm, was illustrated in *Servizio per le ricerche delle opere rubate, Bollettino* 17 (1994): 60, published by the special police unit of the Carabinieri devoted to the recovery of stolen works of art, formerly with an attribution to Agnolo Gaddi. Later, the reported theft of the painting was shown to be mistaken, and the work was republished by Gaudenz Freuler, “Gli inizi di Lorenzo Monaco miniatore,” in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 80, with the same attribution. The variety of the angels’ poses, the softness of the modeling, and the motif of angels supporting the crown over Mary’s head (which recurs in paintings of Gaddi’s late phase) in any case suggest a late dating, probably in the last decade of the century.

[24] Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, no. 1039; see Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 76, 84–87. Attributed to the school of Agnolo Gaddi by Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco* (Strasbourg, 1905), 41, it was reinstated as an autograph work by Gaddi himself by Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an*

*Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. For the lost inscriptions, see Dillian Gordon, *The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings, National Gallery Catalogues* (London, 2003), 197 n. 3.

- [25] See Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 78–79, and, concerning the will of Michele Castellani, 61, doc. 7. Attributed by Vasari and by much of the later art-historical literature to Gherardo Starnina, the mural paintings in the chapel were attributed by Berenson to Agnolo Gaddi, at least “in great part.” See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 213. More recent studies have in general accepted this view, though some art historians believe that they detect the hand of various assistants of Agnolo in the cycle. Cole (1977, 14–15) thought that “three masters” worked in the chapel with some degree of autonomy: the anonymous master of the stories of Saints Nicholas and Anthony, the equally anonymous master of the scenes from the life of the Baptist, and Agnolo Gaddi himself, who, Cole argued, executed part of the lunette of Zacharias and the stories of Saint John the Evangelist.
- [26] The Borgo San Lorenzo panel was extensively retouched in 1864 and then restored c. 1920; see Francesco Niccolai, *Mugello e Val di Sieve: Guida topografica storico-artistica illustrata* (Borgo S. Lorenzo, 1914), 430. Since then it has been subjected to at least two other restorations. The alterations in the appearance of the painting following these treatments are documented in photographs nos. 886, 68589, and 93950 of the Soprintendenza in Florence.
- [27] The close resemblance between the passage with the blessing Christ child seated on his mother’s lap and the fresco by Agnolo Gaddi now in the Museo di Pittura Murale in Prato suggests that the two paintings are close in date, presumably contemporary with the painter’s documented activity in Prato in the years 1391–1394. For the fresco in Prato, see Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), fig. 260; for the documents in question, see Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d’archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d’arte* 14 (1932): 355–376; Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 63–65.
- [28] We have no secure documentary evidence for the dating of the frescoes in question. Roberto Salvini, *L’arte di Agnolo Gaddi* (Florence, 1936), 31–85, considered them to predate the decoration of the Castellani chapel, but the more recent art historical literature in general indicates 1387 as the *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the cycle; Sonia Chiodo, “Gaddi, Agnolo,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2005), 47:113. The fact is that while Benedetto degli Alberti in his testament dictated in 1377 indicated Santa Croce (where his family had the patronage of the *cappella maggiore*)

as the place where he wished to be buried, he made no mention of the realization of the frescoes in this chapel in the codicil added to his will ten years later, when he made testamentary provision for the funding of other artistic enterprises; for the text of the codicil, which also cites the relevant passage from the testament of 1377, see Luigi Passerini, ed., *Gli Alberti di Firenze: Genealogia, storia e documenti*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1869), 2:186–194. It seems logical to infer from this evidence that at the time the codicil was added the mural decoration of the chapel had already been finished and that everything was ready for Benedetto's burial. In my view, however, the stylistic evidence suggests a later, or more protracted, date for the very demanding enterprise of frescoing the chapel, which could have begun c. 1385 but could well have been prolonged for years due to the political setbacks that struck the family. Accordingly, the present writer suggests the date 1385–1390; Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370–1400* (Florence, 1975), 297; and Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 21–27, c. 1388–1393. In dating the frescoes in the choir, various stylistic features should be borne in mind: the more complex and crowded compositions; the more elaborate language of gesture; the numerous genre details; and the tendency towards a softening of the forms, modeled with light tonal passages of chiaroscuro. These features all suggest that the cycle of the *cappella maggiore* in Santa Croce is stylistically more advanced than the decoration of the Castellani chapel (executed, as we have seen, sometime after 1383), but no doubt antecedent to the frescoes in the Cappella della Cintola in Prato Cathedral, for which the painter received payments in 1392–1394. See Giuseppe Poggi, “Appunti d'archivio: La Cappella del Sacro Cingolo nel Duomo di Prato e gli affreschi di Agnolo Gaddi,” *Rivista d'arte* 14 (1932): 363–369.

- [29] Clowes collection, Indianapolis Museum of Art: Ian Fraser et al., *A Catalogue of the Clowes Collection*, Indianapolis Museum of Art Bulletin (Indianapolis, 1973), 6. Bruce Cole, *Agnolo Gaddi* (Oxford, 1977), 27, rightly observed the “very close stylistic and positional relationship with the Washington saints,” deducing from this affinity that “both works were in the artist's shop at the same time.” Perhaps it would be permissible to speak of the reuse of the same model employed for the Washington triptych in another similar and slightly later triptych, of which the panels now in Indianapolis formed part. I suspect, however, that the Indianapolis panels belonged to the triptych of the Nobili chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, the Florentine church of the Camaldolese order (see notes 21 and 23 above). In fact, the lost framing pilasters of the triptych now in Berlin could have contained, to judge from their measurements, two of the Indianapolis panels superimposed on each side. It is also worth pointing out that the paintings in the American museum come—like the Berlin triptych—from the Solly collection, and that the white habit with which Saint Benedict and the other monk immersed in reading are portrayed would have been very suitable to adorn a chapel in a church

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belonging to the Camaldolese order (a reformed branch of the Benedictines). Laurence Kanter informs me that he is about to publish further evidence for identifying the Indianapolis saints and their counterparts at the University of Gottingen as the front and lateral faces of the framing pilasters of the Nobili altarpiece, together with the missing pilaster base from the altarpiece predella.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel, along with its companions *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel* [left panel] and *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ* [middle panel], are formed from vertically oriented poplar planks.[1] The two companion panels are formed of three vertical planks each, with narrower strips of wood flanking the central plank, while the panel of this work is formed of two boards of equal width, joined vertically between the two saints. The main panels of the altarpiece are 4 to 4.5 cm thick; the frame supplies an additional thickness of 2.7 to 2.9 cm for the flat molding and 2.3 cm for the dentil molding. On the reverse, the panels are reinforced with modern horizontal battens set into grooves. The two absent original battens, spanning all three panels, were placed along the bottom and just below the base of the gabled tops of each panel, as is clear from the remains of large nails used to attach them that are visible in the x-radiographs. The frame, which consists of an additional plank of wood that completely covers the gable portion of the panels, contains *pastiglia* decoration. The columns dividing the central and lateral panels and flanking the outer edge of the laterals are missing, as well as the freestanding cusped arches originally lining the ogival arches of the panels. The wooden support is covered by a gesso ground spread over a fabric interlayer. Incised lines in the gesso outline the figures and the fold lines in the drapery. The gold ground was applied over a red bole preparation. The halos are decorated by stamped and engraved motifs as well as stippling.

Outlines of areas to be painted and drapery fold lines were further delineated with brushed underdrawing, which is visible with infrared reflectography.[2] The paint is mostly egg tempera, but select pigments are bound with glue.[3] Flesh areas are painted with the traditional underlayer of green. The pattern of the orientalizing carpet on which the figures stand was transferred from a stencil to the paint applied over burnished gold.[4] The wings of the seraphim are decorated using

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*sgraffito* to reveal the gold underlayer. The edges of the figures' robes are decorated with mordant gilding.

All three panels retain their original thickness. *Madonna and Child Enthroned* has two major splits, one running from the lower edge into the mantle of the Virgin, the other diagonally across the wing of the uppermost right-hand angel. *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* has cracks caused by the removal of the original intermediate frame. *Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine* has a split at the lower edge and another in the frame to the left of and above the Virgin Annunciate in the gable medallion. Worm tunneling is present in all three panels, but it is most extensive in the side planks of *Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict* and *Madonna and Child Enthroned* as well as in the gables of all three panels. There is minor abrasion of the paint film in the faces and hands, but otherwise the painted surface is in fine condition. The red lakes of the robes of Saint Catherine, the kneeling angels, and the Christ child have faded slightly, and the Virgin's blue robe is worn. The altarpiece underwent conservation treatment between 1988 and 1991,[5] in the course of which the now lost intermediate columns between the three panels were reconstructed.[6] Also during this treatment, some of the fold lines in the Virgin's robe were recreated.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed cross-sections of the panel. The wood of the panel was identified as poplar and the integral frame as linden (*tiglio*). A nonoriginal strip along the bottom was identified as spruce (see report dated November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Kodak 310-21X PtSi camera.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using amino acid analysis in conjunction with high-performance liquid chromatography, cross-sections, and gas chromatography in conjunction with mass spectrometry, and identified both egg and glue binders (see reports dated August 23, 1989, and November 22, 1991, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Report dated January 9, 1989, in NGA conservation files. Brigitte Klesse pointed out that the same pattern, with minor modifications, was also used in Gaddi's triptych now in the Berlin gallery (no. 1039); see Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 316.
- [5] At the time of this treatment, the NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), amino

acid analysis in conjunction with high performance liquid chromatography, gas chromatography in conjunction with mass-spectrometry, x-ray diffraction, and microscopy of cross-sections (see reports dated February 13, 1989; January 23, 1990; November 22, 1991; August 6, 1990; August 22, 1990; October 17, 1990; August 2, 1991; August 23, 1989; and November 22, 1990, in NGA conservation files).

- [6] The reconstruction was based on marks on the panel as well as research into comparable structures still intact. See Mary B. Bustin, "Recalling the Past: Evidence for the Original Construction of Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels by Agnolo Gaddi," *Studies in the History of Art: Conservation Research* 57 (1996–1997): 35–65. The altarpiece must have been treated prior to 1988, probably in the first half of the twentieth century, because the crockets on the top side of the frame, which are visible in Lionello Venturi's reproduction, had already disappeared prior to the 1988 treatment. Cf. Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 52; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 63.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably in the sacristy of the church of San Miniato al Monte, Florence, from whence the triptych may have been removed shortly after 1830.[1] Bertram Ashburnham [1797-1878], 4th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place, Battle, Sussex;[2] by inheritance to his son, Bertram Ashburnham [1840-1913], 5th earl of Ashburnham, Ashburnham Place; by inheritance to his daughter, Lady Mary Catherine Charlotte Ashburnham [1890-1953], Ashburnham Place; (Robert Langton Douglas, London);[3] purchased 19 June 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[5] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] Miklós Boskovits, *Pittura fiorentina alla vigilia del Rinascimento, 1370-1400*, Florence, 1975: 118-121, proposed this provenance. The Alberti family were patrons of the church, and Benedetto di Nerozzo Alberti left funds for its decoration in a codicil dated 1387 that was appended to his will of 1377 (now lost and known only from a seventeenth-century abstract); see Luigi Passerini, *Gli Alberti di Firenze. Genealogia, storia e documenti*, Florence, 1869: 2:187. Three of the four saints depicted in the side panels are associated with the Alberti family, providing further argument in support of the proposed provenance. Although in 1975 Boskovits

erroneously asserted that Saint John Gualbert was represented in the altarpiece to the right of the Virgin, he corrected this in the NGA systematic catalogue by identifying the saint instead as Bernard of Clairvaux, the patron saint of Benedetto Alberti's son Bernardo, who in his will dated 1389 left money for masses to be celebrated annually for his soul in the family chapel in San Miniato, which had evidently already been consecrated (see Stefan Weppelmann, *Spinello Aretino*, Florence, 2003: 381). The representation of Saint Andrew, who was the patron saint of a predeceased son of Benedetto Albert also links the altarpiece to the sacristy of San Miniato, and Catherine of Alexandria, shown standing on a broken wheel, was evidently much venerated in the Alberti family. In Benedetto's will he bequeathed money for the decoration of an oratory near Florence (Santa Caterina dell'Antella) dedicated to Catherine, and his son, Bernardo, wished to build a monastery and a church in her honor (see Weppelmann 2003). Although this provenance remains a hypothesis, it still seems a quite plausible one that, if correct, would provide the certainty that by 1830 the altarpiece was still on the altar of the sacristy. An altarpiece can apparently be seen still in place in a sketch of the sacristy's altar wall made in that year by Christoph Roller (1805-1858), in his *Tagebuch einer italienschen Reise* (Burgdorfer Heimatsmuseum, Burgdorf, Switzerland). Unfortunately, the sketch, kindly brought to the attention of Miklós Boskovits by Stefan Weppelmann, is very small and not sufficient for identifying the Gallery's painting. What may be said for certain is only that an altarpiece composed of five panels stood on the altar of the sacristy of San Miniato in 1830, but by 1836 this altarpiece was no longer there (Weppelmann 2003, 184). It was removed and sold, presumably by the Pia Opera degli Esercizi Spirituali, which had owned the furniture and decorations of the church since 1820; see "Regesto dell' Abbazia fiorentina di S. Miniato," *La Graticola* 4 (1976): 117-135. [2] The collection, formed originally by George, 3rd earl of Ashburnham, was enlarged by his son, Bertram, after whose death no further paintings were added. See *The Ashburnham Collections. Part I. Catalogue of Paintings and Drawings ...*, Sotheby's, London, sale of 24 June 1953: 3-4. [3] According to Denis Sutton ("Robert Langton Douglas. Part III," *Apollo* 109 (1979): 452, Douglas was in contact with the Ashburnham family around 1919. See also letter from Douglas to Fowles dated 1 May 1941, Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: box 244, reel 299. [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422. The painting was first entered in the Duveen "X-Book" (number X 149) as by Starnina, but this was crossed out and replaced with the attribution

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"Agnelo [sic] Gaddi." [5] The original Duveen Brothers invoice is in the Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, Box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files. The painting is listed as by Gherardo Starnina, influenced by Agnolo Gaddi, with the additional note that Bernard Berenson gave the painting to Gaddi.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1933 Italian Paintings of the XIV to XVI Century, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1933, no. 11, repro., as Altarpiece by Gherardo Starnina.

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# Giotto

Also known as

Giotto di Bondone

Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337

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## BIOGRAPHY

An artist who played a decisive role in the development of Italian painting in his century and beyond (his works were studied and copied by masters of the stature of Masaccio and Michelangelo), Giotto was probably born in Florence c. 1265.[1] According to the earlier sources, he was a disciple of Cimabue (c. 1240–1302). His earliest works, such as the painted crucifix in Santa Maria Novella and the *Maestà* formerly in San Giorgio alla Costa and now in the Museo Diocesano, both in Florence, and especially his biblical frescoes in the upper church of the basilica of San Francesco at Assisi, reveal the strong influence of the Roman school, both contemporary and classical.[2] It seems reasonable to suppose, therefore, that the young Giotto, a well-established painter by the time he presumably executed the abovementioned paintings (1290–1295), had spent a period of formation or apprenticeship in Rome. By the mid-1290s (although some scholars believe it to be somewhat earlier, and others later) he was commissioned to paint the cycle of stories of Saint Francis, again in the basilica at Assisi, and then to compose the great mosaic of the *Navicella* in the old Saint Peter's at the Vatican. In c. 1300, Giotto returned once again to Assisi to fresco the Saint Nicholas Chapel, in the lower church of San Francesco. He then worked in the Franciscan church in Rimini, where a painted crucifix by his hand still remains. Giotto was then called to Padua, probably between 1303 and 1306, where he painted the famous cycle of frescoes in the Scrovegni Chapel, and also paintings, now much ruined, in the Basilica del Santo and in its adjoining chapter house. To this stylistic phase, in which the strong, realistic charge of the frescoes in Assisi is ennobled and enriched with elements of classical solemnity as well as a strong poetical vein, also belong the great *Maestà* now in the Uffizi, Florence, and the frescoes in the Magdalene Chapel in the basilica of San Francesco at Assisi, probably to be connected with a document that speaks of the artist's presence in the Umbrian city just before January 1309.[3] Presumably slightly later in date are the very famous but now barely legible frescoes in the Peruzzi Chapel in Santa Croce in Florence.

Toward the middle of the second decade, a change in the artist's vision can be discerned. Though not abandoning the ideals of classical solemnity and grandeur, he now developed an interest in realistic details and began to enrich his scenes with secondary episodes, emphasizing the elegance of posture and the eloquence of gesture of his figures. So sweeping were the changes brought by this development that many works of the period between c. 1315 and 1325, including the important mural cycle in the right transept and in the ceiling vaults of the lower church of San Francesco at Assisi and the Stefaneschi altarpiece for Saint Peter's (now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana), although identified as the artist's work by fourteenth-century sources, are instead denied to him and attributed to an anonymous assistant by several scholars.[4] Much the same fate has befallen the Baroncelli polyptych in Santa Croce, a work signed by Giotto and probably executed in 1328, the year in which the artist began a long period of residence in Naples. Of his Neapolitan works, only a few fragments of frescoes survive in the church of Santa Chiara, but there are reasons for thinking that the polyptych signed by the artist and now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna was painted during this period. On his return to Florence in 1334, the artist was commissioned to design the campanile of the Duomo and its reliefs. He also painted the Bardi Chapel in Santa Croce and began to fresco the chapel of the Palazzo del Bargello. By 1335–1336 he was frescoing the chapel of the Castello di Galliera at Bologna and the palazzo of the Visconti in Milan. Giotto was already gravely ill when he returned to Florence. He died there in January 1337.

[1] According to tradition—which Giorgio Vasari also followed—Giotto was born at Colle di Vespignano, in the territory of the Mugello; but see Michael Viktor Schwarz and Pia Theis, "Giotto's Father: Old Stories and New Documents," *The Burlington Magazine* 141 (1999): 676–677.

[2] Some fourteenth-century sources, and then Lorenzo Ghiberti and Giorgio Vasari, asserted that Cimabue was the discoverer of the natural talent of the boy Giotto, and some scholars even have conjectured the existence of a work executed in collaboration between the aging master and his brilliant pupil. See Luciano Bellosi, *La pecora di Giotto* (Turin, 1985), 177–178; Luciano Bellosi, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 98–100. For Giotto's probable formative period in Rome, a circumstance that explains the attribution of the frescoes of the nave of the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi to Roman painters, cf. Miklós Boskovits, "Giotto: Un artista poco conosciuto?" in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e*

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[4] The mysterious assistant sometimes called the Master of the Stefaneschi Altarpiece is often designated by Italian art historians with the conventional name of “Parente di Giotto.” For a discussion of the problem from different points of view, cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 114; Giorgio Bonsanti and Miklós Boskovits, “Giotto o solo un parente? Una discussione,” *Arte cristiana* 81 (1994): 299–310.

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Giotto  
Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337

## *Madonna and Child*

c. 1310/1315

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface: 85.4 × 61.8 cm (33 5/8 × 24 5/16 in.)

overall (including added strips): 87.7 × 63.2 × 1.3 cm (34 1/2 × 24 7/8 × 1/2 in.)

framed: 128.3 × 72.1 × 5.1 cm (50 1/2 × 28 3/8 × 2 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.256

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### ENTRY

The painting in the National Gallery of Art presents the Virgin and Child according to a variant of the compositional scheme known as the *Hodegetria* Virgin, in which Mary's right hand, instead of indicating her Son, holds a rose that identifies her as the "rose of Sharon"[1] and hence the Church, mystic bride of Christ.[2] The gesture of the Christ child, his left hand extended to grasp his mother's forefinger, also presumably has a symbolic as well as a playful or affectionate significance; in other versions of the composition the child even pulls on his mother's hand with the forefinger pointed towards him, as if actively soliciting her designation of him as a lamb, sacrificial victim.[3]

Both the profile and shape of our painting, known to scholars as the Goldman Madonna, suggest that it was the centerpiece of a dispersed polyptych [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*). The appearance of the multipart altarpiece to which our *Madonna and Child* originally belonged remains uncertain due primarily to the various restorations that have altered its appearance, especially by modifying its external profile and eliminating the original surface of the back of its wooden support. Despite these uncertainties, it seems probable that the polyptych in question consisted of a series of rectangular panels topped by equilateral triangular gables—an archaic type of altarpiece, but one represented in Florence not only in works by Giotto but also in paintings by the circle of Pacino di Bonaguida and Jacopo del Casentino,[4] and in those realized in the circle of Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319) in Siena.[5] The resemblance of our painting to the image of Saint Stephen in the Museo Horne in

Florence has long been noted:[6] affinities between them are evident in style, in dimension, and in details of the ornamental repertoire.[7] However, the gold ground in the Saint Stephen was laid over a preparation of green underpaint instead of the usual red bole,[8] making their common origin unlikely. Many art historians have also proposed that two panels depicting Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Lawrence combined with busts of angels in the upper register [fig. 2][fig. 3], in the Jacquemart-André collection, Paris, and now displayed in the former abbey of Chaalis, outside Paris, belong to the same polyptych as our Madonna. This, in spite of some structural discrepancies between the Chaalis saints and the Washington Madonna, is possible.[9]

The reception of the painting, of unknown Florentine provenance, was rather cold when it suddenly appeared on the horizon of art historical studies in 1917, at a time when research on Giotto's style had led to an extreme limitation of works held to be autograph. Bernard Berenson, evidently the first art historian to have had the opportunity to examine it, attributed it at first to Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348), immediately followed by Edward Robinson (1920) and Wilhelm R. Valentiner (1922, 1927).[10] A more exhaustive analysis of the painting soon led Berenson to change his mind and to admit its close kinship to Giotto; he later assigned it to "one of the painters of the frescoes designed by Giotto in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi." [11] Like Berenson, Raimond van Marle (1924) and Richard Offner (1924) also referred the panel to an "assistant of Giotto," identifying the hand of the same anonymous artist in other paintings now generally recognized as the work of Giotto himself.[12] Similar opinions were then expressed by Curt H. Weigelt (1925), Wolfgang Fritz Volbach (1926), Valentiner (1926), Pietro Toesca (1929, 1933), Berenson (1930–1931, 1932, 1936), and Robert Oertel (1953, 1968).[13] Frank Jewett Mather Jr. (1925), however, began to speak of the panel now in Washington as a fully autograph Giotto, and this recognition, reaffirmed by such reputable scholars as Carlo Gamba (1930), Roberto Longhi (1930–1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), and Mario Salmi (1937), was generally accepted—with a few exceptions [14]—following the painting's entry into the Gallery.[15]

Opinions have differed in evaluating the date of the painting. A substantial body of the art historical literature considers the panel the work of Giotto's later maturity and dates it to the years 1325–1330 (Mather 1925; Brandi 1938–1939; Carli 1951, 1955; Battisti 1960; Walker et al. 1961; Berenson 1963; Bologna 1969; Bellosi 1974, 1994; Laclotte 1978; Shapley 1979; Brandi 1983; Cavazzini 1996),[16] or, more cautiously, within the third decade of the century (Toesca 1933; NGA 1985; Lunghi

1986; Bonsanti 1992, 2000; Tomei 1995).[17] The conviction that it should be dated to c. 1320 or even earlier is equally widespread (Longhi 1930–1931; Salmi 1937; Cecchi 1937; Duveen Pictures 1941; Frankfurter 1944; Florisoone 1950; Gamba 1961; Walker 1963; Rossi 1966; De Benedictis 1967; Dal Poggetto 1967; Previtali 1967, 1990; Venturoli 1969; Tartuferi 1987, 2000, 2007; Bandera Bistoletti 1989; Flores d’Arcais 1995; Boskovits 2000; Ragionieri 2002, 2007).[18] Supporters of such a dating are in essence those who have placed it between the frescoes in the Peruzzi and Bardi Chapels in Santa Croce in Florence, such as Federico Zeri (1957), Cesare Gnudi (1958), Roberto Longhi (1968), Lamberto Busignani (1993), and Julian Gardner (2002), but also those who have not accepted Giotto’s direct authorship and have limited themselves to pointing out the painting’s kinship with the Christological cycle in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi, such as Berenson (1930–1931) and Tantillo Mignosi (1975).[19]

Various hypotheses have also been advanced about the presumed destination of the polyptych of which the Washington Madonna formed part. The proposal, first formulated by Mather (1925), that it was one of the four polyptychs that Ghiberti mentioned in Santa Croce, met with wide support.[20] Later, observing that one of the panels in Chaalis represented Saint Lawrence and that in the Museo Horne Saint Stephen, Gnudi (1959), convinced like many others of the common origin of these panels with the Goldman Madonna, cautiously suggested as its original site the chapel dedicated to these saints in Santa Croce—that is, the chapel of the Pulci and Berardi families.[21] Although many found the proposal convincing, Gardner (1999, 2002)[22] placed it in doubt: according to this scholar, the original altar blocks that survive in the family chapels in the east transept of Santa Croce were too small ever to have supported an altarpiece some three meters in length, as the polyptych in question must have been.[23]

An alternative hypothesis, formulated by Venturi (1931, 1933), identified the panel now in Washington and its presumed companions as components of the lost polyptych in the church of the Badia in Florence.[24] Ugo Procacci (1962), however, refuted the proposal and succeeded in identifying the former Badia altarpiece with the still intact polyptych that entered the Museo di Santa Croce in the nineteenth century.[25] Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti (1949) advanced yet another proposal, according to which the panels now divided among the museums of Chaalis, Florence, and Washington were components of the polyptych painted by Giotto for the church of San Francesco in Borgo Sansepolcro,[26] but this hypothesis has been found unconvincing.

If the problem of the destination of the polyptych remains unresolved, by observing the characteristics of polyptychs by Giotto himself and by other Florentine painters (for example, that by Jacopo del Casentino, now in New Orleans)[27] datable within the first quarter of the fourteenth century, we can conclude that the altarpiece of which the Goldman Madonna formed the center is unlikely to have been very different in appearance from that conjectured by Longhi (1930–1931)[fig. 4]. By flanking the panel in the Gallery with panels of saints of slightly smaller size, we would obtain an ensemble similar in dimensions to those of the former Badia polyptych (which we know was intended for the high altar of that church). It would have considerably exceeded in width those polyptychs executed by Giotto for side chapels or for long-established altars in older churches.[28] It would be futile, based on current knowledge, to go any further in the field of conjecture; it will suffice to point out that among the churches in which panels by Giotto are mentioned by the earlier sources, the most probable provenances are likely to be the Florentine churches of Santa Croce and Ognissanti.[29]

With regard to the chronological position of the panel being discussed here, some features, such as the exclusive use of decorations incised freehand (hence the absence of punched motifs), seem to offer firm clues.[30] In the Stefaneschi altarpiece, which ought to date to the early 1320s,[31] the artist used at least one punched motif, and this type of decoration is increasingly found in his later paintings. The characteristics of the motifs incised freehand in the halos and the pseudo-Kufic lettering in the broad ornamental border that runs around the margins of the panel [fig. 5] seem recurrent in the works by Giotto since the end of the thirteenth century [fig. 6], but perhaps it is not by chance that the practice of surrounding the halos with a double row of dots appears no earlier than the *Maestà* in the Uffizi, Florence.[32] To these elements, which seem to indicate a relatively early date in Giotto's career—within the second decade of the fourteenth century—we can perhaps add an observation regarding the red coif that covers Mary's head and can be glimpsed, on either side of her face, below the pseudo-Kufic hem of the mantle that covers her head. This is an archaic, byzantinizing motif that would disappear from Giotto's authenticated works in the course of the 1320s.[33] A relatively early date might also be suggested by the neckline of the Virgin's dress. Though this is admittedly an unreliable clue, it concurs with other features in suggesting a date for the Washington painting no later than the early 1320s.[34]

A stylistic reading of the painting seems to confirm the chronological position suggested by the abovementioned data. Its morphological features connect the Goldman Madonna with the central phase of Giotto's career, what might be defined as his "Peruzzi phase." Unfortunately, the frescoes of the Peruzzi Chapel (in Santa Croce), much admired by the sources and by artists in the past, are now reduced to almost total illegibility by the radical abrasion to which they have been subjected. Other paintings have survived from the same phase, in which the artist appears no longer satisfied with the serene classicism of his Paduan paintings. Solemnity and monumentality were no longer enough: a more circumstantial, naturalistic description of the events, and a deeper participation of the protagonists in them, were needed. While further accentuating the physical stature and presence of his figures, Giotto now strove to underline their active involvement in the emotional climate of the scenes. These were also the years of the cycle of frescoes in the Magdalene chapel in the lower church of San Francesco at Assisi (for which there are good reasons for dating it to 1308).[35] The polyptych in the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh can be assumed to be only one or two years later: it is stylistically close to the mural cycle in Assisi.[36] Apart from the semidestroyed frescoes of the Peruzzi Chapel,[37] the surviving stained-glass windows of the last bay of Santa Croce before the transept (now replaced by copies: the original windows are housed in the Museo dell'Opera)[38] must also date to the early 1310s. The painted crucifix in the Florentine church of the Ognissanti, together with the *Dormitio Virginis* painted for the same church (now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin), also should date to this phase.[39]

Between 1311 and 1315, Giotto seems to have been engaged in paintings especially for his hometown.[40] In the years that followed, Giotto's painting is dominated by a gothicizing tendency, for example in the murals in the transept of the lower church of Assisi, where we may note a greater pursuit of realistic effects and a greater attention to the elegance of pose and expressiveness of gesture of his figures. So novel are these developments that the paintings he executed during these years have often been denied the status of autograph works; instead, art historians have postulated the leading presence at the master's side of an assistant, the so-called "Parente di Giotto." [41] The features of the works belonging to this phase are in any case different from those expressed in the Washington Madonna. The painting being discussed here finds its most convincing parallels in passages of the frescoes in the Magdalene chapel, for example with the bust of the titular saint in the vault, and also in the image of the Virgin in the Raleigh polyptych.[42] In the Goldman Madonna, however, the more slender proportions of

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the protagonists, the more fluent calligraphy of the contours, and the greater complexity of the draperies, in comparison with the abovementioned painting, reveal a more advanced stage in Giotto's development. The conduct of the protagonists of our painting seems to confirm this: the child is presented by the artist no longer as the infant pantocrator of the *Maestà* in the Uffizi but with a more human touch, with charm and infantile immediacy. The sternness is mitigated: the child's little face is softened, its tenderness heightened by the smile that seems to play on his lips. His gestures—right hand stretched out to touch the rose in his mother's hand, left hand to grasp her forefinger—are intimate and playful. As already in the great *Maestà*, the lips of the child and those of his mother are parted, not for any solemn declaration but to engage in an affectionate and intimate conversation.

Whatever our painting's destination, it ought to date to the years around 1310 to 1315, when the two panels of Chaalis (components, perhaps, of the same polyptych) also saw the light of day.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



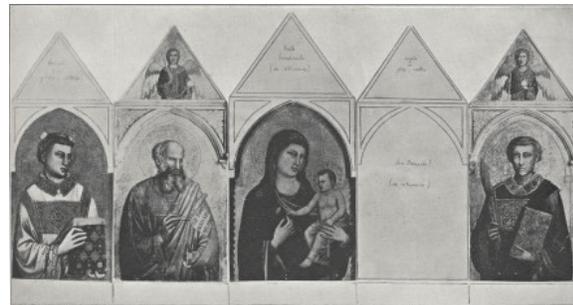
**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Giotto: a. *Saint John the Evangelist* (fig. 2); b. *Madonna and Child*; c. *Saint Lawrence* (fig. 3)



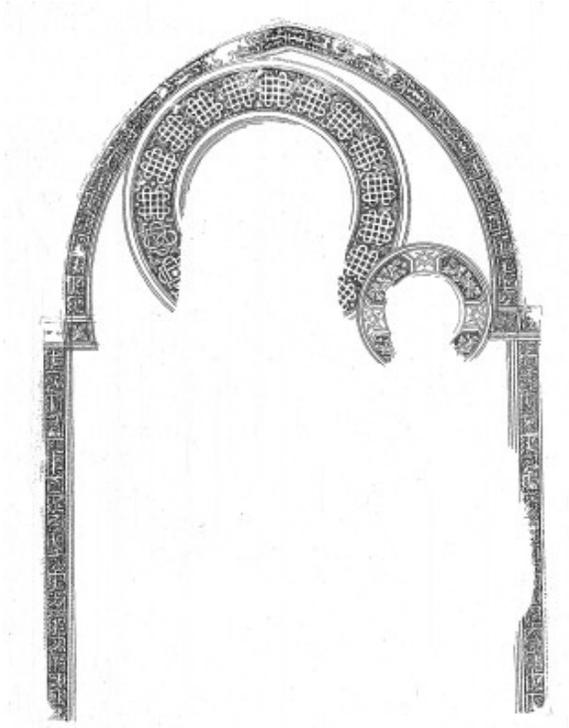
**fig. 2** Giotto, *Saint John the Evangelist*, c. 1310/1315, tempera on panel, Musée Jacquemart-André, Abbaye royale de Chaalis-Institute de France, Fontaine-Chaalis



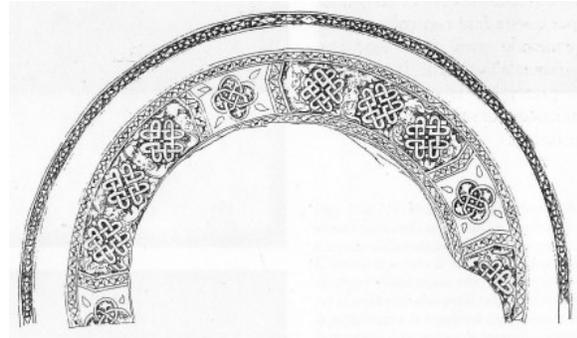
**fig. 3** Giotto, *Saint Lawrence*, c. 1310/1315, tempera on panel, Musée Jacquemart-André, Abbaye royale de Chaalis-Institute de France, Fontaine-Chaalis



**fig. 4** Reconstruction of the Badia polyptych by Giotto as proposed by Roberto Longhi, from left to right: *Saint Stephen*, Museo Horne, Florence; *Saint John the Evangelist* (fig. 2); *Madonna and Child*, NGA; *Saint Lawrence* (fig. 3)



**fig. 5** Graphic tracing of the halos and pseudo-Kufic lettering, Giotto, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1310/1315, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 6** Graphic tracing of the decoration of the halo of Christ, Giotto, *Painted Crucifix*, San Felice in Piazza, Florence

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Giotto:

- a. *Saint John the Evangelist* (Entry fig. 2)
- b. *Madonna and Child*
- c. *Saint Lawrence* (Entry fig. 3)

**NOTES**

[1] *Song of Solomon* 2:1: "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." In medieval religious thought, the rose is often linked to the figure of Mary, who is praised as *rosa speciosa* or *rosa gratiae divinae*; cf. M. Schmidt and S. Egbers, "Rose," in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1993), 5:548–552. Eugenio Battisti's conjecture of a connection between flower and rosary, on the other hand, is

unfounded. See Eugenio Battisti, *Piero della Francesca*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1971), 1:389, 528 n. 548. It cannot be excluded that the iconography of the Virgin with a rose was influenced by transalpine models, for which see Julian Gardner, "Panel Paintings Attributed to Giotto in American Collections," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 19 (1999): 71–72; Julian Gardner, "Giotto in America (and Elsewhere)," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 171–176. However, the motif of the Madonna presenting the Christ child with a rose predates Giotto and is attested in Tuscan painting since the thirteenth century; cf. Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 114. It is also known that an oratory was built around an image of the "Madonna delle Rose" at Lucca in 1309; see Angela Protesti Faggi, "Un episodio di protogiottismo a Lucca: La 'Madonna della Rosa,'" *Antichità viva* 27 (1988): 3–9.

- [2] Ever since the third century, the *Canticles* (the *Song of Solomon*) had been considered an allegorical description of God's relation with the Church and hence in medieval exegesis an expression of Christ's love for the Church. See Frank L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London and New York, 1958), 1270.
- [3] "The isolated forefinger of the Virgin's right hand would seem to possess a variety of meanings," observed Dorothy C. Shorr in *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168. In the case of the painting being discussed here, since the right hand of Mary is occupied in holding the symbolic rose, the artist used the other hand in a Christological sense: the Christ child grasps his mother's forefinger as if to point it towards himself, thus designating him as victim. Shorr also observed, "This pointing finger has already been seen in French sculpture of the late thirteenth century, when the so-called *Vierge dorée* of Amiens Cathedral points to the Child seated on her arm."
- [4] Even if it has perhaps been cropped below by c. 2.5 cm, as Monika Cämmerer-George suggested, the panel in the National Gallery of Art has the squat proportions of paintings dating to the first two decades of the fourteenth century, in which the panels of the main tier, if of rectangular format, often are or were surmounted by triangular gables. See Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 71. Examples of this type, apart from the laterals in Chaalis (cf. note 9 below), probably included Giotto's panel of Saint Anthony of Padua in the Berenson Library at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence; cf. Franco Russoli and Nicky Mariano, *La raccolta Berenson* (Milan, 1962), no. 1. Though now shorn of gables, the panels attributed to Pacino di Bonaguida from the polyptych now divided between the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 6146) and

the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, or nos. 1961.1.2 and 1961.1.3 in the El Paso Museum of Art attributed to Jacopo del Casentino, also exemplify the same type of altarpiece. See, respectively, Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 2, *Elder Contemporaries of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1987), 155–161; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 7, *The Biadaiolo Illuminator, Master of the Dominican Effigies* (New York, 1957), 100–101.

- [5] For example, cf. the polyptych no. 28 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena attributed to Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319) himself, and polyptych no. 33 in the same gallery, attributed to the Master of Città di Castello (Italian, active c. 1290 - 1320); the polyptych by the Goodhart Duccesque Master in the church of Monterongriffoli; and that by Ugolino da Siena in the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts. See James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: figs. 131, 188, 262, 450. According to Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 71, the type of altarpiece in question is of Sienese origin; but clearly altarpieces of this type, even if they have not survived intact, must have been widespread both in Florence and in Arezzo, as suggested *inter alia* by the example of the early fourteenth-century polyptych now divided between the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (Loeser bequest) and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven (nos. 1943.203, 1946.13).
- [6] Richard Offner, "A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings," *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244, was the first to note that "a St. Stephen in the Horne collection in Florence...happens to have originally stood to our Virgin's right in the same original polyptych." The hypothesis was immediately accepted by Mather and by Curt H. Weigelt in 1925 and by practically all the subsequent literature, at least until Dillian Gordon pointed out that "the Washington panel...has been gilded with orange bole" while "the St. Stephen...was definitely gilded with green [earth]." From this observation she deduced not that the panels belong to different altarpieces but instead that they probably were executed by different artists. This hypothesis is rather improbable, because while the realization of an altarpiece could have been entrusted to more than one painter, it is unlikely they would each have been left the freedom to choose their own techniques, including the kind of preparation to be used before applying the gilding. Cf. Frank Jewett Mather, "Two Attributions to Giotto," *Art Studies* 3 (1925): 25–27; Curt H. Weigelt, *Giotto: Des Meisters Gemälde* (Stuttgart, 1925), 242; Dillian Gordon, "A Dossal by Giotto and His Workshop: Some Problems of Attribution, Provenance and Patronage," *The Burlington Magazine* 131 (1989): 526. [Editor's note: see also Cecelia Frosinini, "St Stephen" in Dominique Thiebaut, ed., *Giotto e*

*compagni* (Paris, 2013), 139–140, for a discussion of the recent technical examination of the painting. This examination revealed that *St Stephen* was also gilded with a red bole on top of a green earth layer. Miklós Boskovits did not survive to learn of these new findings.]

- [7] Both paintings are surrounded by ornamental borders with decorative motifs incised freehand into the gold ground. The ornamental borders are framed in both panels by a double row of dots impressed into the gold ground. The halos also have incised decoration freehand, hence without the use of punched motifs, and are surrounded both inside and outside by concentric circles formed of dots. The border of the child's halo is further punctuated by three rosettes.
- [8] See note 6 above. Gilding laid on a green underpaint foundation has also been observed elsewhere in Giotto's oeuvre, in particular in his stories of Christ, now divided among the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (Presentation of Jesus in the Temple), the Berenson Library at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Renaissance Studies in Florence (Entombment), the National Gallery in London (Descent of the Holy Spirit), the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (Last Supper, Crucifixion, Descent to Limbo), and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Adoration of the Magi). See also Dillian Gordon, "A Dossal by Giotto and His Workshop: Some Problems of Attribution, Provenance and Patronage," *The Burlington Magazine* 131 (1989): 524–531. [Editor's note: see also Dominique Thiébaud, ed., *Giotto e compagni* (Paris, 2013), 130–151, for a discussion of the results of the cleaning of this painting, which Miklós Boskovits did not survive to examine. The National Gallery of Art has preserved his manuscript as he submitted it. In the case of these Giotto panels, it is important to point out that Boskovits wrote about them before technical examination in advance of exhibitions at the J. Paul Getty Museum and at the Louvre revealed new information about their construction.]
- [9] Roberto Longhi, "Progressi nella reintegrazione d'un polittico di Giotto," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 285–291, was the first to propose the reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych with the Washington Madonna at its center, flanked to the left by the Saint John the Evangelist in Chaalis and the Saint Stephen in the Museo Horne, and to the right by the Saint Lawrence in Chaalis and a still unidentified panel. The hypothesis met with a generally favorable reception among art historians, though Monika Cämmerer-George (1966) contested it, noting incongruities between the presumed laterals of the altarpiece in terms of both the decorative borders around the outer edge of the gold ground and the respective size of the panels and the proportions of the saints represented in them. See Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 71–74, 208 n. 233. Curiously, Francesca Flores d'Arcais, though considering Longhi's reconstruction valid, also adduced some

stylistic divergences between the panels in Chaalis and Florence, in Francesca Flores d'Arcais, *Giotto* (Milan, 1995), 320, 324. Only in recent years, however, were Cämmerer-George's doubts accepted by Giovanna Ragionieri, in *Giovanni Previtali and Giovanna Ragionieri, Giotto e la sua bottega*, ed. Alessandro Conti, 3rd ed. (Milan, 1993), 147 n. 217, 329, 348, 391; and Alessandro Tomei, "Giotto," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1995), 6:671. Miklós Boskovits (2000) and Angelo Tartuferi (2000) firmly ruled out the common origin of the four panels in Miklós Boskovits, "Giotto: Un artista poco conosciuto?" in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 182–186; Angelo Tartuferi, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 118. On the panels in Chaalis, cf. Nicolas Sainte Fare Garnot, "Brève histoire d'une redécouverte," in *Primitifs italiens du Musée Jacquemart-André* (Paris, 2000), 104–105, who still seemed to accept Longhi's reconstruction.

- [10] Bernard Berenson, "Italian Paintings," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 15 (1920): 160–161; Edward Robinson, "The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 15 (1920): 75; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *The Henry Goldman Collection* (New York, 1922), n.p., no. 1; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, "The Henry Goldman Collection," *Art News* (1927): 9–10.
- [11] See Provenance, note 2. Commenting on the work many years later, Bernard Berenson observed: "si cita ancora la mia attribuzione...al Daddi, sebbene io rammenti d'aver scritto al Dr. Valentiner molto tempo prima che pubblicasse il catalogo di quella collezione [i.e., that of Henry Goldman] per informarlo che io ritenevo opera di uno dei pittori che eseguirono gli affreschi disegnati da Giotto nella chiesa inferiore di San Francesco ad Assisi" (My attribution to Daddi is still cited, even though I recall having written to Dr. Valentiner long before he published the catalog of the Goldman collection to inform him that I considered [it] the work of one of the painters who executed the frescoes designed by Giotto in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi). See Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 988 n. 1. In fact, Wilhelm R. Valentiner, though maintaining the attribution to Daddi, also noted that the panel "is so closely related to the work of Giotto that one who is not professional would immediately think of the master himself." Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *The Henry Goldman Collection* (New York, 1922), n.p., Introduction.
- [12] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 185–190, tried to reconstruct the catalog of an "Assistant of Giotto's" whom he dubbed the "Master of the Six Scenes from the Life of Christ." This name referred to the series of panels cited in note 8 above (without the scene of

the Descent of the Holy Spirit, now in the National Gallery in London). The Dutch scholar attributed both this group of paintings and the small versions of the Crucifixion in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and in the Museum of Fine Arts in Strasbourg to the same hand, but they are now generally recognized as autograph works by Giotto. Van Marle also added to the catalog of the “Master of the Six Scenes” the painted crucifix in the Florentine church of San Felice in Piazza, a panel still disputed between those who regard it as an autograph work by Giotto and those who assign it to a studio assistant. Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244, considered both the Goldman Madonna and the Saint Stephen in the Museo Horne in Florence the work of a “nameless master” of “considerable gifts who must have worked very close to Giotto.”

- [13] Curt H. Weigelt, *Giotto: Des Meisters Gemälde* (Stuttgart, 1925), 242; Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, in Henry Thode, *Giotto*, ed. Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, 3rd ed., *Künstler-Monographien* (Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1926), 159 n. 62; Wilhelm R. Valentiner, *A Catalogue of Early Italian Paintings Exhibited at the Duveen Galleries, New York, April to May 1924* (New York, 1926), n.p., Introduction; Pietro Toesca, *La pittura fiorentina del Trecento* (Verona, 1929), 60 n. 9; Pietro Toesca, “Giotto di Bondone,” in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. 1929–1939 (Milan, 1933), 17:218; Bernard Berenson, “Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 1,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 974, 988 n. 1; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 236; Bernard Berenson, *Pittura italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 203; Robert Oertel, *Die Frühzeit der italienischen Malerei* (Stuttgart, 1953), 91; Robert Oertel, *Early Italian Painting to 1400* (London, 1968), 98.
- [14] Once they came into possession of the painting after Goldman’s death, Duveen Brothers, Inc., commissioned expert opinions from the most reputable connoisseurs of the day. Since some of these expertises are dated 1938 (copies in NGA curatorial files), it must be assumed they were collected in anticipation of the painting’s sale to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. Among the scholars approached by Duveen, Giuseppe Fiocco, Roberto Longhi, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi all unhesitatingly confirmed the attribution to Giotto, whereas Berenson and F. Mason Perkins attributed it respectively to a “close follower of Giotto” and “one of the closest and most gifted of Giotto’s anonymous pupils.” Not invited to express his opinion on this occasion, Richard Offner entrusted his view of the Goldman Madonna to a highly critical article devoted to the Italian paintings in the new National Gallery of Art in Washington, intended for the *Art News* but never in fact published; all that remains of it are the page

proofs, copies of which are in the NGA curatorial files. “Thus the peculiarities of the National Gallery panel”—observes *inter alia* the great American connoisseur—“would commit it, like the altarpiece to which it belongs, to Giotto’s studio, where the living presence of the master communicated to this work a considerable proportion of its admirable qualities, but in which the actual execution was due to an assistant.” Offner’s judgment of our Madonna was, after all, highly positive; he combined it with a proposed dating “toward the end of the first quarter of the century,” close to that supported by Longhi and various other proponents of Giotto’s authorship.

It is worth adding that the newspaper article by Carlyle Burrows cited in Provenance note 5 triumphantly reported the “final judgment” of Bernard Berenson, as pronounced *viva voce* by the “nonagenarian authority on Italian Renaissance art” in 1958: Berenson had then decided, reported Burrows, to accept the panel as a genuine “late Giotto.” He would memorialize this oral opinion in his posthumously published volume, Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 2:81. The fact that the recent Giotto monograph by Michael Schwarz (2009) did not cite the Washington Madonna presumably means that he did not accept the painting as an autograph work by Giotto. Cf. Michael Viktor Schwarz, *Giotto* (Munich, 2009).

- [15] Frank Jewett Mather, “Two Attributions to Giotto,” *Art Studies* 3 (1925): 25–27; Carlo Gamba, “Problemi artistici all’esposizione di Londra,” *Il Marzocco* 35, no. 17 (1930): 2; Roberto Longhi, “Progressi nella reintegrazione d’un polittico di Giotto,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 289–291; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 26; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 32; Mario Salmi, “La mostra giottesca,” *Emporium* 86 (1937): 358.
- [16] Frank Jewett Mather, “Two Attributions to Giotto,” *Art Studies* 3 (1925): 25–27; Cesare Brandi, “Giotto,” *Le Arti* 1 (1938–1939): 126; Enzo Carli, *Giotto* (Florence, 1951), n.p.; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese* (Milan, 1955), 96; Eugenio Battisti, *Giotto* (Geneva, 1960), 115–117; John Walker, Guy Emerson, and Charles Seymour, *Art Treasures for America: An Anthology of Paintings and Sculpture in the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London, 1961), 4–6; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 2:81; Ferdinando Bologna, *Novità su Giotto: Giotto al tempo della cappella Peruzzi* (Turin, 1969), 98; Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 52; Luciano Bellosi, “Ancora sulla cronologia degli affreschi del Cappellone di San Nicola a Tolentino,” in *Arte e spiritualità nell’ordine agostiniano e il Convento San Nicola a Tolentino: Atti della seconda sessione del convegno “Arte e Spiritualità negli Ordini Mendicanti”*; *Tolentino, 1–4 settembre 1992*, ed. Graziano Campisano

(Rome, 1994), 189; Michel Laclotte, "Reconstruction and Revaluation," *Apollo* 108 (1978): 387; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:219–221; Cesare Brandi, *Giotto* (Milan, 1983), 147; Laura Cavazzini, *Giotto* (Florence, 1996), 33.

- [17] Pietro Toesca, "Giotto di Bondone," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1933), 17:218; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 177; Elvio Lunghi, "Giotto," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:576; Giorgio Bonsanti, "La bottega di Giotto e la Croce di San Felice," in *La croce giottesca di San Felice in Piazza: Storia e restauro*, ed. Magnolia Scudieri (Venice, 1992), 79, 89 n. 50; Giorgio Bonsanti, "La bottega di Giotto," in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 66, 71; Alessandro Tomei, "Giotto," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1995), 6:671.
- [18] Roberto Longhi, "Progressi nella reintegrazione d'un polittico di Giotto," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 289–291; Mario Salmi, "La mostra giottesca," *Emporium* 86 (1937): 358; Emilio Cecchi, *Giotto* (Milan, 1937), 115–116; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 11; Alfred M. Frankfurter, *The Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New York, 1944), 14; Michel Florisoone, *Giotto* (Paris, 1950), 117; Carlo Gamba, *Il Museo Horne a Firenze: Catalogo con 40 illustrazione* (Florence, 1961), 35; John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC*, (New York, 1963), 68–69; Filippo Rossi, ed., *Il Museo Horne a Firenze, Gallerie e musei minori di Firenze* (Florence, 1966), 134; Cristina De Benedictis, "Firenze: Omaggio a Giotto," *Antichità viva* 6, no. 3 (1967): 34; Paolo Dal Poggetto, ed., *Omaggio a Giotto: Celebrazioni nazionali nel VII centenario della nascita di Giotto* (Florence, 1967), 11; Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 112–113, 376–377; Giovanni Previtali, "Giotto," in *Dizionario della pittura e dei pittori*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo and Bruno Toscano, 6 vols. (Turin, 1990), 2:604; Paolo Venturoli, "Giotto," *Storia dell'arte* 1, no. 2 (1969): 154, 156, 158; Angelo Tartuferi, "Dipinti del Due e Trecento alla mostra 'Capolavori e Restauri,'" *Paragone* 38, no. 445 (1987): 53, 59 n. 30; Angelo Tartuferi, "Giotto: Una nuova immagine," in *Giotto: Guida alla mostra*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 21; Angelo Tartuferi, *Giotto* (Florence, 2007), 125, 127; Sandrina Bandera Bistoletti, *Giotto: Catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Florence, 1989), 126; Francesca Flores d'Arcais, *Giotto* (Milan, 1995), 320, 324; Miklós Boskovits, "Giotto di Bondone," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2000), 55:412, 413, 418; Giovanna Ragionieri, "Giotto di Bondone," in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 2:360; and Giovanna Ragionieri, in Luciano Bellosi and Giovanna Ragionieri, *Giotto e la sua eredità: Filippo Rusuti, Pietro Cavallini, Duccio, Giovanni da*

*Rimini, Neri da Rimini, Pietro da Rimini, Simone Martini, Pietro Lorenzetti, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Matteo Giovannetti, Maso di Banco, Puccio Capanna, Taddeo Gaddi, Giovanni da Milano, Giotto, Giusto de' Menabuoi, Altichiero, Jacopo Avanzi, Jean Pucelle, i fratelli Limbourg* (Florence, 2007), 303, 305.

- [19] Federico Zeri, "Due appunti su Giotto," *Paragone* 8, no. 85 (1957): 78; Cesare Gnudi, "Giotto," in *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte*, ed. Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 15 vols. (Florence, 1962), 6:236; Roberto Longhi, *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi*, 14 vols. (Florence, 1961–1984), 4:6; Alberto Busignani, *Giotto* (Florence, 1993), 206, 307; Julian Gardner, "Giotto in America (and Elsewhere)," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 176; Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa: Il Trecento fiorentino, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 974, 988 n. 1; Almamaria Tantillo Mignosi, "Osservazioni sul transetto della Basilica Inferiore di Assisi," *Bollettino d'arte* 60 (1975): 136, 141 n. 38.
- [20] Frank Jewett Mather, "Two Attributions to Giotto," *Art Studies* 3 (1925): 25–27. See Julius von Schlosser, ed., *Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten: I Commentarii*, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1912), 1:36: "Nell'ordine de' frati minori [in Florence] quattro cappelle et quattro tauole" (In the order of friars minor of Florence [i.e., Santa Croce] four chapels and four altarpieces). Vasari, ever since the first edition (1550) of his *Vite*, specified that the chapels in question were that with the stories of Saint Francis (the Bardi Chapel), that of the Peruzzi, that of the Giugni, and a fourth to the left of the sanctuary (the family chapel of the Tosinighi and Spinelli). Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a' tempi nostri nell'edizione per i tipi di Lorenzo Torrentino, Firenze 1550*, ed. Luciano Bellosi and Aldo Rossi (Turin, 1986), 119.
- [21] On this chapel, the penultimate to the left of the cappella maggiore, see Walter Paatz and Elisabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1940), 1:574; Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 122–145. The frescoes by Bernardo Daddi, with stories of Saints Lawrence and Stephen, probably date to the mid-third decade or slightly before. However, since they are superimposed over earlier frescoes (or possibly merely geometrical decoration), the chapel could have been officiated several years before Daddi's intervention and perhaps even furnished with an altarpiece.
- [22] Julian Gardner, "Panel Paintings Attributed to Giotto in American Collections," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 19 (1999): 71; Julian Gardner, "Giotto in America (and

Elsewhere),” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 176.

- [23] Comparison with Giotto’s surviving polyptychs that include half figures of saints (the ones in the Badia, today in the Uffizi, Florence, and Santa Maria del Fiore [the Duomo]) shows a ratio between height and width of c. 2.5:1. If we assume that the panel in the National Gallery of Art originally had a size and shape similar to the panels of the two saints now in Chaalis, it must have been topped by an equilateral triangular gable and had an overall height of approximately 125 cm. We can then calculate the total width of the five-part polyptych as c. 312 cm. On the structure and proportions of Giotto’s polyptychs in general, see Monika Cämmerer-George, *Die Rahmung der toskanischen Altarbilder im Trecento* (Strasbourg, 1966), 50–85.
- [24] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 26; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1; no. 32.
- [25] Ugo Procacci, “La tavola di Giotto dell’altar maggiore della Chiesa della Badia fiorentina,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Mario Salmi*, ed. Filippa Aliberti, 3 vols. (Rome, 1962), 2:9–45. The polyptych has been on display in the Uffizi, Florence, since 1957.
- [26] Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, in *Giorgio Vasari, Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architetti*, ed. Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti (Milan, 1949), 4:282 n. 69. The “tavola di man di Giotto, di figure piccole, che poi se n’è ita in pezzi” (painting by the hand of Giotto, with small figures, which was then broken into pieces), putatively rediscovered in Borgo Sansepolcro, was reported by Vasari in the second edition (1568) of Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence, 1967), 2:113. The tendency now is to accept the hypothesis of Martin Davies, who identified the fragments of this polyptych with the stories of Christ divided among the museums of Boston, London, Munich, New York, and the Berenson Library at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence. See Martin Davies, *The Earlier Italian Schools*, National Gallery Catalogues (London, 1951), 181; and note 8 above.
- [27] Isaac Delgado Museum of Art, New Orleans, no. 61.60. The polyptych given to Jacopo del Casentino is one of the few Florentine polyptychs of the period to have survived intact; see Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 179–189.
- [28] The Badia polyptych, painted by Giotto for the early medieval church that had been undergoing enlargement and reconstruction from 1284 onward,

measures 91 × 340 cm. The polyptych painted by Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) in 1319 for the high altar of the Dominican church of Santa Caterina in Pisa measures 195 × 340 cm; that by Pietro Lorenzetti (Sienese, active 1306 - 1345), commissioned in 1320 for the main altar of the pieve of Santa Maria in Arezzo, 298 × 309 cm; and the panel by Meo da Siena, dated 1333 and destined for the high altar of San Pietro in Perugia, now in the Städtisches Kunstinstitut at Frankfurt, 59.5 × 304 cm. Smaller polyptychs were made for altars in side chapels or for the high altars in early churches, where the altar tables were generally of reduced size. We may cite as an example Giotto's Stefaneschi altarpiece in Old Saint Peter's in Rome, whose original dimensions, despite its prestigious destination, were just over two and a half meters in width. On the problem, cf. Julian Gardner, "Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure," in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo, il contributo dell'analisi tecnica alla storia dell'arte*, ed. Hendrik W. van Os and J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322; Julian Gardner, "Giotto in America (and Elsewhere)," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, *Studies in the History of Art* (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 160–181.

[29] Peter Murray's useful compilation (1959), complemented now by the work of Michael Viktor Schwarz and Pia Theis (2004), listed, apart from the Badia polyptych, four panels by Giotto in the church of Santa Croce, one in San Giorgio alla Costa (the fragmentary *Maestà* now in the Museo Diocesano of Florence), a crucifix and a now lost image of Saint Louis of Toulouse formerly in Santa Maria Novella, and a crucifix and four panels in Ognissanti. See Peter Murray, *An Index of Attributions Made in Tuscan Sources before Vasari* (Florence, 1959), 79–89; and Michael Viktor Schwarz and Pia Theis, *Giottus pictor*, vol. 1, *Giottos Leben* (Vienna, 2004), 285–303. The *tabula altaris* in the chapel of the Palazzo del Bargello is perhaps cited by error in a manuscript of Filippo Villani's *De origine*. Other manuscripts of Villani's book only report the presence of Giotto's frescoes in this chapel; cf. Schwarz and Theis 2004, 290.

Of the four panels cited in Santa Croce, that of the Baroncelli Chapel is still *in situ*. There are no firm reasons for assuming that the polyptych now in the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh has a provenance from the family chapels of the east side of the transept of this church, though its relatively small size (105.7 × 250 cm) and the presence of Francis of Assisi among the saints represented (Santa Croce being a Franciscan church) make this a possibility. The hypothesis of Wilhelm Suida (1931), who considered this polyptych as intended for the Peruzzi Chapel, is now generally accepted. See Wilhelm Suida, "A Giotto Altarpiece," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 59 (1931): 188–193. The proposed identification of one of Giotto's Santa Croce panels with that formerly in the Bromley Davenport collection at Capesthorpe Hall (Macclesfield) is more uncertain. This altarpiece, perhaps a product of Giotto's atelier and indeed intended for the

church of Santa Croce, was certainly not painted by the hand of the master; the proposed attribution to the young Taddeo Gaddi seems very convincing. Its original destination might have been the Lupicini Chapel or, less probable, the Bardi Saint Francis Chapel, in either of which, given its relatively small size, it could have been easily accommodated on the altar. Cf. Mina Gregori, "Sul politico Bromley Davenport di Taddeo Gaddi e sulla sua originaria collocazione," *Paragone* 25, no. 297 (1974): 73–83; and Federico Zeri, "Italian Primitives at Mssrs. Wildenstein," *The Burlington Magazine* 107 (1965): 252–256. We may wonder whether so acute an observer as Ghiberti could ever have classified it as an autograph work by the master himself. The panels of saints dispersed between the Horne and Jacquemart-André museums remain to be considered. That they come from the chapels in the east transept of Santa Croce seems improbable due to their measurements; see Julian Gardner, "Giotto in America (and Elsewhere)," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt, Studies in the History of Art (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 181 n. 80. But the existence of a Giotto polyptych would also be conceivable in the chapel of Saint Louis, on the north side of the transept: this chapel, dating to the years 1332–1335, could have accommodated an altarpiece of a width exceeding 3 meters; cf. Irene Hueck, "Stifter und Patronatsrecht: Dokumente zu zwei Kapellen der Bardi," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976): 263–270. It cannot be excluded, lastly, that one of Giotto's four polyptychs might have been executed for the high altar of the old church of Santa Croce, in use at least until 1314 and perhaps until 1320/1330 and doubtless not left without appropriate decoration. See Walter Paatz and Elisabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz: Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols. (Frankfurt am Main, 1940), 1:500.

As for the church of Ognissanti, one of the panels with an undoubted provenance from the church is the *Maestà* now in the Uffizi, Florence, often—though without foundation—considered an altarpiece for the high altar or displayed on its rood-screen; cf. Irene Hueck, "Le opere di Giotto per la chiesa di Ognissanti," in *La 'Madonna d'Ognissanti' di Giotto restaurata* (Florence, 1992), 37–49. Whatever the case, the fact remains that the *Maestà* comes from Ognissanti, as does the *Dormitio Virginis* now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. 1884) and the great painted crucifix still in situ in the church that Ghiberti cited in addition to the four panels. On the crucifix, see Marco Ciatti, ed., *L'officina di Giotto: Il restauro della Croce di Ognissanti, Problemi di conservazione e restauro* (Florence, 2010). Two other panels therefore remain to be identified. One might have been the "mezza Nostra Donna col fanciullo in braccio" that Ghiberti saw above the side door of the church leading into the cloister. It is possible, however, that this Madonna and Child was not a panel painting but a frescoed lunette. Julius von Schlosser, ed., *Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten*, 2 vols.

(Berlin, 1912), 1:36.

- [30] Erling Skaug's conclusion that "in Florence extensive punch work was introduced only about 1333–1334" was perhaps excessively cautious, since it was based only on securely dated paintings. Even so, Skaug admitted the occasional use of punches by Giotto before his *terminus post quem*, for example in the Stefaneschi altarpiece now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana (on which see the following note) and in that of the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce. See Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:34–36. This latter chapel was founded, according to the inscription on its external wall, in 1328; see Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 88. In any case, the fact that the gold ground of the Goldman Madonna is totally devoid of punched decoration might be an indication that it predates both the Roman and Florentine polyptychs.
- [31] The Stefaneschi altarpiece has lost its original frame, which probably bore the signature of Giotto and the date of execution. The fourteenth-century *Liber benefactorum* in the Basilica Vaticana did not hesitate to identify Giotto as the artist of the polyptych, while the manuscript of the canon Giacomo Grimaldi, dating to the early seventeenth century, said it was "circa annum MCCCXX depicta." Cf. Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal X secolo fino a Giotto* (Vatican City, 1979), 45–51. There are no good reasons to doubt the reliability of this affirmation, probably based on an inscription partially legible on the original frame. In addition, a punch mark is used in the Ognissanti crucifix, which is probably earlier than the Stefaneschi altarpiece. See Miklós Boskovits, "Il Crocifisso di Giotto della chiesa di Ognissanti: Riflessioni dopo il restauro," in *L'Officina di Giotto: Il restauro della Croce di Ognissanti*, ed. Marco Ciatti (Florence, 2010), 47–62.
- [32] Giotto had already used Kufic-type lettering in the halos of the mourners in the Santa Maria Novella crucifix, a painting generally recognized as one of the master's earliest works, datable to c. 1290. Motifs similar to those of Mary's halo in the Washington panel—interlaced motifs that are repeated in equal form from right to left, with the exception of two different decorative elements incised in the gold ground above the Madonna's right shoulder—are matched in Christ's halo in the Giottesque crucifix in San Felice in Piazza, Florence (figs. 5 and 6). Tracing based on Magnolia Scudieri, ed., *Lacroe giottesca di San Felice in Piazza: Storia e restauro* (Venice, 1992), 146. Invariably discussed as a product of Giotto's shop and thought to be painted mainly by the master's assistants, this work was dated to the early years of the fourteenth century by Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 137–138; Carlo Volpe, "Sulla Croce di San Felice in

Piazza e la cronologia dei crocefissi giotteschi,” in *Giotto e il suo tempo: Atti del congresso internazionale per la celebrazione del VII centenario della nascita di Giotto, Assisi, Padova, Firenze* (Rome, 1971), 253–263; and Giorgio Bonsanti, “La bottega di Giotto e la Croce di San Felice,” in *La croce giottesca di San Felice in Piazza: Storia e restauro*, ed. Magnolia Scudieri (Venice, 1992), 53–90; and toward 1310 or shortly after, i.e., the time of the Peruzzi Chapel, by Luciano Bellosi, Giotto (Florence, 1981), 69; and Miklós Boskovits, “Una vetrata e un frammento d’affresco di Giotto nel museo di Santa Croce,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Federico Zeri*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1984), 1:44, the latter of whom considered the crucifix an autograph painting by Giotto. Similar ornamental motifs also appear in the frescoes of the Saint Nicholas chapel in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi, painted, according to the more recent studies, no later than c. 1300; cf. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 192, no. 53 of the repertoire. For the dating of the Uffizi *Maestà* to the end of the first decade of the fourteenth century, cf. Giorgio Bonsanti, “La bottega di Giotto,” in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 66; and Miklós Boskovits, “Giotto: Un artista poco conosciuto?” in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 85. Adriano Peroni, “La *Maestà* di Ognissanti rivisitata dopo il restauro,” in *La Madonna d’Ognissanti di Giotto restaurata* (Florence, 1992), 30, argued, however, that the painting should date to the early years of the century.

[33] In medieval Byzantine devotional images of the Madonna and Child—and hence also in Italian ones—Mary’s hair is in general hidden within a kind of coif. The color of this article of clothing may vary, but at least in central Italy within the last decades of the thirteenth and first decades of the fourteenth century, it is usually red, as in the Washington Madonna. The Virgin is represented in this way in Giotto’s pre-1300 *Maestà* now in the Museo Diocesano in Florence, in the fresco on the inner façade of the upper church of the basilica in Assisi, and also in the Uffizi *Maestà* and in the Stefaneschi altarpiece. In Giotto’s later works, such as the polyptych in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna; the *Madonna of Santa Maria a Ricorboli*, also in Florence; and the polyptych in the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce (c. 1328), the mother of Christ instead wears a wimple and a transparent veil that covers her head but leaves her blond hair visible below it.

[34] Bellosi, who was the first to use the width of the scooped neckline as an indication of dating, compared the neckline of the Washington Madonna with those painted by Pietro Lorenzetti in 1320 in the polyptych of the Pieve of Santa Maria in Arezzo, in Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 12–14. Of course, that does not imply a dating ad annum; the fact remains that we find increasingly

wider necklines than that of the Goldman Madonna in Giotto's last decade of activity.

- [35] This is the date of the Cappella della Maddalena frescoes proposed by Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 90–94; Luciano Bellosi, *Giotto* (Florence, 1981), 59; Cesare Brandi, *Giotto* (Milan, 1983), 115–118; Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:395; Giorgio Bonsanti, “La bottega di Giotto,” in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 69; Miklós Boskovits, “Giotto di Bondone,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2000), 55:411. The Assisi document also seems to confirm this date, asserting that the painter Palmerino di Guido repaid a credit on Giotto's behalf in January 1309; cf. Valentino Martinelli, “Un documento per Giotto ad Assisi,” *Storia dell'arte* 19 (1973): 193–208. Evidently, the painter had been present and was working in the Umbrian city until shortly before this date. Francesca Flores d'Arcais, *Giotto* (Milan, 1995), 272, proposed a later date (1315–1318) for the Magdalene chapel cycle.
- [36] Cf. note 29 above. It cannot be excluded that the Raleigh polyptych belonged to the Peruzzi Chapel. However, the altarpiece is probably earlier than supposed in the past: Miklós Boskovits argued for a dating of 1310 in Miklós Boskovits, “Il Crocifisso di Giotto della chiesa di Ognissanti: Riflessioni dopo il restauro,” in *L'Officina di Giotto: Il restauro della Croce di Ognissanti*, ed. Marco Ciatti (Florence, 2010), 52, 61 n. 27.
- [37] Most art historians of the period accepted the dating of the Peruzzi Chapel cycle to 1310–1315. Cf. Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 105–107; Luciano Bellosi, *Giotto* (Florence, 1981), 62; Cesare Brandi, *Giotto* (Milan, 1983), 185; Francesca Flores d'Arcais, *Giotto* (Milan, 1995), 252–261; Giorgio Bonsanti, “La bottega di Giotto,” in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 66; Miklós Boskovits, “Giotto: Un artista poco conosciuto?” in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 86–87. Hayden B.J. Maginnis, *Painting in the Age of Giotto: A Historical Reevaluation* (University Park, PA, 1997), 131, seemed to prefer a slightly later dating.
- [38] See Miklós Boskovits, “Una vetrata e un frammento d'affresco di Giotto nel museo di Santa Croce,” in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Federico Zeri*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1984), 1:39–45; Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant'anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 138–140.
- [39] The *Dormitio Virginis* in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, no. 884, is generally dated to c. 1310. See Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967),

109–112; Luciano Bellosi, *Giotto* (Florence, 1981), 59; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 56–61; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, *Giotto* (Milan, 1995), 237–242. The crucifix in Ognissanti, although commissioned for the same church, is generally thought to be slightly later: according to Previtali 1967, 137–138, in the third decade of the century; according to Bellosi 1981, 69, “di un’epoca assai posteriore” (of considerably later period) than the Peruzzi Chapel frescoes. Miklós Boskovits, “Il Crocifisso di Giotto della chiesa di Ognissanti: Riflessioni dopo il restauro,” in *L’Officina di Giotto: Il restauro della Croce di Ognissanti*, ed. Marco Ciatti (Florence, 2010), 58, considered the painting executed by the mid-1310s, like Flores d’Arcais (1995), 243–244, who proposed the period 1310–1315, and Giorgio Bonsanti, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 147–150, who preferred the date c. 1315.

[40] Cf. Michael Viktor Schwarz and Pia Theis, *Giottus pictor*, vol. 1, *Giottos Leben* (Vienna, 2004), 103–112.

[41] On the much-debated problem of the so-called “Parente di [i.e., relative of] Giotto,” a painter to whom—according to some art historians—the great master delegated much of the actual execution of very important commissions during the second and third decade of the fourteenth century, cf. a summary of the contributions of Giorgio Bonsanti and Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 55–73, 75–94.

[42] In their recent contribution, Maria Clelia Galassi and Elizabeth Walmsley (2009) observed analogies between the painting technique of the Washington Madonna and the panel in the Museo Horne in Florence and differences between the execution of these latter and the Ognissanti Madonna and the Raleigh polyptych. This may be explained, in my opinion, by their different dates of execution. See Maria Clelia Galassi and Elizabeth Walmsley, “Painting Technique in the Late Works of Giotto,” in *The Quest for the Original: Underdrawing and Technology in Painting; Symposium 16, Bruges, 21–23 September 2006 [Colloque pour l’Étude du Dessin Sous-Jacent et de la Technologie dans la Peinture]*, ed. Hélène Verougstraete (Leuven, 2009), 116–122.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden support is a single-member poplar panel [1] with vertical grain, which was cradled sometime in the late 1910s and again in 1937, this time by Stephen Pichetto.[2] Probably during the earlier of these treatments, the panel was thinned

and trimmed along the edges of the terminal arch.

The painting was executed on a white gesso ground, and the x-radiographs show evidence of a fabric interlayer between the gesso and the wooden panel. The gilded areas were prepared with a thin green earth layer followed by a red bole.[3] The halos and the decorative border along the edges are adorned by patterns incised freehand in the gold ground. The outlines of the figures were incised into the ground. In the areas of flesh, the artist applied a green underpaint wash that loosely defined the shadows, followed by a verdaccio that used a combination of fine hatchmarks and broader strokes to create the shadows [fig. 1] [fig. 2].[4] The paint was built up in thin, fluid layers. At the underdrawing stage, visible with infrared reflectography at 0.9 to 5 microns,[5] the child's face was tilted up slightly by shifting his eyes and ear .

The painted surface is generally in a good state, but the gold ground is slightly abraded. Numerous scattered small paint losses and a few woodworm exit holes are visible in the painting. The losses are concentrated mainly in the lower portion of the Virgin's mantle. There is also some staining in the Virgin's mantle, which was inpainted when the painting underwent treatment to remove a discolored varnish in 2012.[6]

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Artificial-colored hyperspectral infrared reflectogram, Giotto, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1310/1315, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. The green earth wash appears red in this image because it has decreased absorption at the wavelength chosen for the red display channel. The verdaccio and drawing appears black.



**fig. 2** Infrared reflectogram, Giotto, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1310/1315, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the wood (see report dated January 11, 1989, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] The Duveen Brothers Records contain an entry for restoration by their Paris restorer, Mme Helfer, in 1918 and another entry for restoration in 1919, presumably by a different restorer because the amount is recorded in US dollars (see Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422). Historic x-

radiographs show the panel with the earlier cradle. On Pichetto's treatment, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols.

(Washington, DC, 1979), 1:221, and see also the exchange of cables between the company's New York and London offices (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 89, box 234, folder 23).

- [3] Cross-sections taken by the NGA scientific research department in 2012 showed a thin green underpaint layer under the red bole. Joanna R. Dunn, Barbara H. Berrie, John K. Delaney, and Lisha Denning Glinsman, "The Creation of Giotto's Madonna and Child: New Insights," *Facture 2* (2015): 6. [Editor's note: This information was not available during Miklós Boskovits's lifetime and has been added to the technical summary of this Online Edition in an endeavor to make available the most current information about the National Gallery of Art collections.]
- [4] Maria Clelia Galassi and Elizabeth Walmsley, "Painting Technique in the Late Works of Giotto," in *The Quest for the Original: Underdrawing and Technology in Painting; Symposium 16, Bruges, 21–23 September 2006* [*Colloque pour l'Étude du Dessin Sous-Jacent et de la Technologie dans la Peinture*], ed. Hélène Verougstraete (Leuven, 2009), 116–122; Joanna R. Dunn, Barbara H. Berrie, John K. Delaney, and Lisha Deming Glinsman, "The Creation of Giotto's Madonna and Child: New Insights," *Facture 2* (2015): 2–17. This was confirmed by the NGA Scientific Research Department using cross-sections in combination with scanning electron microscopy (see forthcoming report in NGA Conservation department files) and false-color hyperspectral infrared reflectography. The false-color hyperspectral infrared reflectography was captured using a modified 720 Surface Optics Corporation NIR hyperspectral camera. The focal plane has been replaced by a Sensor Unlimited high sensitivity InGaAs camera. The images were collected from 970 to 1680 nm with a spectral resolution of 3.4 nm. The artificial-color images were made using three bands (centered at 1000nm for the blue, 1200nm for the green and 1600 nm for the red) to better show features of interest.
- [5] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Vidicon camera, as well as a FLIR/Indigo Alph VisGaAs focal plane array camera, a Mitsubishi M600 PtSi focal plane array camera, and a Santa Barbara InSb focal plane array camera fitted with J and K filters.
- [6] At the time of this treatment the painting was analyzed by the NGA scientific research department using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections in combination with scanning electron microscopy, fiber optic reflectance spectrometry (XRF), and false color infrared reflectography (see forthcoming reports in NGA conservation files).

## PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the church of Santa Croce or the church of Ognissanti, both Florence.[1] Edouard-Alexandre de Max [1869-1924], Paris;[2] sold 1917 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); sold to Henry Goldman [1857-1937], New York, by 1920;[3] sold 1 February 1937 back to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[4] sold 1939 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[5] gift 1939 to NGA. [1] Peter Murray's compilation of polyptychs by Giotto (*An Index of attributions made in Tuscan Sources before Vasari*, Florence, 1959: 79-89), complemented by the work of Michael Viktor Schwarz and Pia Theis (*Giottus pictor*, 2 vols., Vienna, Cologne, and Weimar, 2004: 1:285-303), lists, apart from the polyptych in the church of the Badia in Florence, four panels in the church of Santa Croce, one in San Giorgio alla Costa, a *Crucifix* and a now lost image of *Saint Louis of Toulouse* formerly in Santa Maria novella, and a *Crucifix* and four panels in Ognissanti. [2] Edward Fowles, who managed the Paris office of Duveen Brothers, recalls in his memoirs, "In the autumn of 1917, our old friend Charles Wakefield Mori took me to see an early Florentine *Madonna and Child* (attributed to Giotto) which belonged to Max, the famous actor of the Comédie Française [in Paris]. As I examined the painting in Max's bedroom . . . he told me it had been given to his great aunt by the Pope. Berenson considered it an excellent work . . . [by Bernardo Daddi] . . . we agreed to purchase the painting. Berenson later supervised its cleaning and confessed that he was beginning to perceive certain Giottesque qualities . . . I had an Italian frame made for the painting. . . ." (Edward Fowles, *Memoirs of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 104). In a letter of 31 October 1958, to Carlyle Burrows (see note 5 below), Fowles relates that he "bought the picture just 44 years ago," which would have put the purchase in 1914 (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 101, box 246, folder 3; copy in NGA curatorial files). The former owner's story about the painting's provenance does not seem plausible; at any rate no evidence can be adduced to corroborate it. On the Romanian-born Edouard de Max, friend of Cocteau and leading tragedian on the Parisian stage in the first decade of the century, see Louis Delluc, *Chez de Max*, Paris, 1918. [3] The painting was displayed in the *Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition* (1920) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, as part of the Goldman Collection. [4] See the letter of 5 January 1937, from Henry Goldman to Duveen Brothers, in which he

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confirms the sale to the company of nine paintings and one sculpture (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 312, box 457, folder 4; see also reel 89, box 234, folder 23, and reel 101, box 246, folders 2 and 3; copies in NGA curatorial files). [5] Carlyle Burrows states this in an article in the *New York Herald Tribune* (30 October 1958): 5.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1920 Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1920, unnumbered catalogue, as by Bernardo Daddi.

1924 Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors, Duveen Brothers, New York, 1924, no. 15, as by Bernardo Daddi (no. 2 in illustrated 1926 version of catalogue, as by Giotto, or an Assistant).

1930 Exhibition of Italian Art 1200-1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1930, no. 16, as Attributed to Giotto (no. 8, pl. V in commemorative catalogue published 1931; not in souvenir catalogue).

1979 Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1979, no. 43, repro.

2012 Florence at the Dawn of the Renaissance: Painting and Illumination, 1300-1350, J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 2012-2013, no. 2, repro. (shown only in Los Angeles).

2013 Giotto e compagni, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2013, no. 12, repros.

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# *Baronzio, Giovanni*

Also known as

Baronzio, Giovanni di

Italian, active c. 1320 - 1350

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

The name Johannes Barontius appears in the signature of an altarpiece dated 1345. Representing the Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints (Galleria Nazionale, Urbino), it comes from the church of San Francesco at Macerata Feltria. Usually, Barontius (the latinized form of Baronzio) is considered a surname, but a document of 1362 recording the painter's tomb in the church of San Giuliano at Rimini (where he was buried, together with his brother and a son) makes it clear that it was a patronymic. The only other piece of documentary evidence found thus far is a deed dated 1343 that cites "Iohanne Baroncio pictore" as a witness.[1]

Various other paintings were added to the signed Madonna in Urbino over the last century, including the signed crucifix in San Francesco at Mercatello, which we now know to be by another painter named Giovanni.[2] The result was a very extended and heterogeneous catalog that comprised, according to Bernard Berenson (1932), some forty works. Various scholars have since tried to clarify the resulting confusion and better define the artist's character.[3] In particular, Carlo Volpe, in his fundamental study on the history of painting in Rimini (1965), drastically reduced the number of paintings assigned to the painter, grouping stylistically related works and dividing them among anonymous artists named, respectively, Master of the Parry Adoration, Master of Santa Colomba, Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist, and Pseudo-Baronzio. Art historical analysis of more recent decades has tended to restore most of the paintings assigned to these conventional masters to Giovanni Baronzio himself.[4]

To judge from the characteristics of this enlarged oeuvre, the painter, who may be said to have been a disciple of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) but at second hand, must have begun his career around 1320 or a little later under the more immediate influence of Giovanni and Pietro da Rimini. His probable first works include the stories of Christ now divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini formerly assigned to the Pseudo-Baronzio. Fragments of an altarpiece

depicting the Madonna and Child and stories of the life of the Baptist, including the panels now in the National Gallery of Art, and panels formerly gathered under the name Master of the Parry Adoration belong to a subsequent phase in Baronzio's development. The final phase of his career is represented by the Madonna and Child in Urbino and the other version of the Madonna, generally given to Baronzio, that is still preserved in the church of San Francesco at Mercatello.

Long misunderstood and undervalued by art historians, Giovanni Baronzio was the leading light of the second generation of painters influenced in a decisive way by the activity of Giotto at Rimini. Though he adopted many of the compositional devices and motifs introduced by Giotto, Baronzio assimilated them into his own distinctive narrative style, enlivened and enriched with a wealth of decorative elements and genre details taken from everyday life. His narrative scenes, crowded with incident, err on the side of excessive loquacity, even naiveté. But this was a painter able not only to produce brilliant color combinations and striking decorative effects but also to achieve moments of great emotional intensity.

[1] Oreste Delucca, *I pittori riminesi del Trecento nelle carte d'archivio* (Rimini, 1992), 112–114.

[2] Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 62–63, 71; Mauro Minardi, "Giovanni da Rimini," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 83 vols. (Rome, 1960–2015), 56(2001):188–193.

[3] Cesare Brandi, ed., *Mostra della pittura riminese del Trecento* (Rimini, 1935), xii, xiii, xviii, xxii, xxvii, xxxii, 88–99, 160; Mario Salmi, "La scuola di Rimini, 3," *Rivista del R. Istituto d'archeologia e storia dell'arte* 5 (1935): 98–127; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 3, *I padani* (Novara, 1947), xii–xiv, xvii–xix; Alberto Martini, "Ricostruzione parziale di un dossale riminese," *Paragone* 9 (1958): 40–44; Federico Zeri, "Una *Deposizione* di scuola riminese," *Paragone* 9 (1958): 46–54.

[4] Cf. Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18; Miklós Boskovits, "Per la storia della pittura tra la Romagna e le Marche ai primi del '300," *Arte cristiana* 81 (1993): 163–182; Daniele Benati, "Disegno del Trecento riminese," in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 45–54; and Daniele Benati, in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 246–273.

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Giovanni Baronzio  
Italian, active c. 1320 - 1350

## *The Baptism of Christ*

c. 1335

tempera on panel

painted surface: 46.3 × 49 cm (18 1/4 × 19 5/16 in.)

overall (original panel): 48.8 × 41.2 cm (19 3/16 × 16 1/4 in.)

overall (including added strips): 49.6 × 42 cm (19 1/2 × 16 9/16 in.)

framed: 56 × 48.6 × 4.6 cm (22 1/16 × 19 1/8 × 1 13/16 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.131

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### ENTRY

This panel, along with its two companions *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist* and *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*, are fragments of a dismantled altarpiece whose original provenance is unknown but which was presumably commissioned for the high altar of a church dedicated to the Baptist in Emilia Romagna or, perhaps, in the Marche.<sup>[1]</sup> Keith Christiansen (1982)<sup>[2]</sup> proposed a reconstruction of the altar [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*) as follows: four stories of the Baptist would have accompanied, on either side, the central *Madonna and Child with Five Angels* now in the National Gallery of Art; to the upper left, *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* [fig. 2] formerly in the Street collection in Bath,<sup>[3]</sup> flanked by *Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of the Baptist* now in the Gallery. The lower register on the same side would have consisted of *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* [fig. 3], now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana,<sup>[4]</sup> and *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* [fig. 4], of which only a fragment survives, in the Seattle Art Museum.<sup>[5]</sup> The upper register on the right side would have consisted of *Baptism of Christ* in the Gallery (this panel) and *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* [fig. 5], formerly in the Street collection in Bath.<sup>[6]</sup> Two more panels formed the lower register on the same side: *Feast of Herod* [fig. 6], now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Robert Lehman Collection) in New York,<sup>[7]</sup> flanked by *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* [fig. 7], formerly in the collection of Charles Loeser in Florence, its whereabouts now unknown.<sup>[8]</sup> A possible argument against Christiansen's reconstruction, as Laurence Kanter has informed me (in correspondence), is the fact that the vertically grained wood of the

central Madonna seems to exclude its common origin with the panels representing the stories of the Baptist, which are painted on panels with horizontal grain. Kanter considers the possibility of two different altarpieces or one double-sided altarpiece. These proposals are interesting, but all the fragments share a common author, their dimensions are comparable, and similarity of pictorial conduct makes the hypothesis of a single-sided panel more likely after all. Complete disappearance (except for the Madonna) of the paintings on the back of a double-sided altarpiece would also seem rather unlikely. And for an altarpiece as large as two meters or more, instead of a single wooden support, the use of three panels was preferred. On the whole, Christiansen's hypothesis is likely to be correct.

The altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist had evidently been dismantled by the first half of the nineteenth century, for by the 1840s fragments of it had begun to emerge on the art market.[9] Adolfo Venturi (1906) was the first to attempt to classify more precisely the *Baptism of Christ* and the other two fragments then in the Sterbini collection in Rome.[10] Venturi recognized Bolognese influences deriving from the activity of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in that city. He suggested that the artist might have been someone like Jacopo di Paolo, active in Bologna from the close of the thirteenth century. A few years later Osvald Sirén (1916), unfamiliar, it seems, with Venturi's publication, asserted the common origin of the *Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of the Baptist; Annunciation of the Baptist's Birth; The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ; and Feast of Herod*.<sup>[11]</sup> He correctly attributed them to Giovanni Baronzio, the master who had signed and dated (1345) the altarpiece now in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino. The great Swedish art historian erred, however, in thinking that the panel of Saint John the Baptist Enthroned in Christ Church Gallery in Oxford stood in the center of the altarpiece. This painting is clearly Florentine, even if its proposed attribution to Lippo di Benivieni remains under discussion.<sup>[12]</sup> Sirén's proposal, indeed, convinced few scholars.<sup>[13]</sup> Later contributions to the problem accepted instead the proposal of Richard Offner (1924), who recognized in *Madonna and Child with Five Angels* the work of an anonymous painter from the Romagna, to whom he attributed the stories of the Baptist.<sup>[14]</sup> Raimond van Marle (1924) also placed the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio in doubt. He preferred to classify *The Baptism of Christ* and its companion panel now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana as works of the "Cavallinesque Riminese school."<sup>[15]</sup> Lehman (1928), on the other hand, retained the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio and, in his analysis of *Feast of Herod*, linked it with the fragment depicting the Baptism.<sup>[16]</sup> Both Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) and Bernard Berenson

(1932, 1936) also assigned to Giovanni Baronzio the panels they recognized as forming part of the same series.[17] Other art historians and catalogers followed suit.[18] Doubts then grew about Giovanni's authorship: the fragments were assigned instead to an ad hoc Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist. This opinion prevailed in the literature of the following decades; it was also expressed in the catalogs of the Gallery and repeated in more recent publications.[19] Since 1987, however, the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio has been reinstated, and reinforced with fresh arguments, both for the group of panels that concerns us here and for other paintings that had in the past been attributed to the artist; scholars have increasingly supported this suggestion.[20]

Altarpieces in the elongated horizontal form of thirteenth-century dossals, approximately one meter (or a little more) in height and two and a half meters in width, such as the dismantled altarpiece of the Baptist being discussed here, are rare in Tuscany in the fourteenth century, but must have been fairly common in a region like Emilia Romagna.[21] They usually showed the Madonna and Child Enthroned (or, more rarely, a story of Christ) at the center flanked by saints or biblical or legendary narrative scenes. An extended cycle of stories of the Baptist comparable to that of our altarpiece has only survived in Emilia Romagna in the field of mural paintings, more particularly in those of the dome of the baptistery of Parma.[22] Our altarpiece dedicated to Saint John the Baptist is unusual in its iconographic program: it lacks scenes usually included in cycles of the Baptist, such as the Visitation, the *Ecce Agnus Dei*, the Dance of Salome, or the Burial of the Baptist, while it includes such rare episodes as Saint John the Baptist Praying in the Wilderness or the Baptist's Descent into Limbo.[23] Nor did the artist hesitate to introduce into the individual episodes motifs that diverge from the usual iconography.[24] As regards the panels in the Gallery (as seen in *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*), it is unusual for the episode of the Washing of the Infant Saint John, often placed in the foreground with an intentional allusion to the theme of baptism, to be dispensed with, as it is here; it is replaced instead by the scene in the background, more homely than symbolic in tone, of two handmaids wrapping the newborn child in swaddling cloths. The Naming of the Baptist, which often represents a self-sufficient scene, is here inserted in the scene of the Birth, and indeed placed in the foreground and combined to the far right with the episode of the Circumcision of the recalcitrant child.[25] On the other hand, in *The Baptism of Christ*, the painter remains faithful to the tradition of representing Christ submerged up to his hips in the water of the Jordan, the Baptist placed to the left, standing on the rocky banks of the river, and

two angels holding Christ's clothes to the right. In the upper part of the panel the heavens open, and we catch a glimpse of the half-length figure of God the Father blessing.[26] A motif of archaizing character that gradually disappeared in the fourteenth century is that of John imposing his hand on Christ instead of pouring water over his head.[27]

With regard to the Madonna and Child, a motif for which the painters of Rimini had a special predilection was the cloth of honor supported by angels behind the Virgin's throne [fig. 8]. On the other hand, the motif of the child grasping his mother's veil—an allusion to the Passion[28]—is more widespread in fourteenth-century painting in Tuscany than in Emilia Romagna. The miniature lions on the throne armrests allude to the throne of Solomon, while the enormous locust in the hand of the child reminds us of the diet—locusts and wild honey—on which the Baptist lived during his years in the wilderness.[29]

The precision in representing the insect[30] attests to the artist's acute interest in various aspects and curiosities of daily life. Here as elsewhere in his paintings, he consciously participated in the more naturalistic and descriptive tendencies of Gothic art. The pursuit of naturalistic detail—in costume, in attributes, in setting—distinguished an innovative current in Italian painting in the second quarter of the fourteenth century that sought to disassociate itself from the solemn and classicizing manner of previous decades. Additional proof of this interest are the elaborate architectural settings of many of the episodes of the Baptist's legend (as in the temple porch in *Birth of the Baptist*, with its cantilevered upper floor and Gothic double-lancet windows), the attention devoted to characterizing the protagonists' states of mind, and, not least, the costumes worn, in particular in *Feast of Herod*. Peculiarities of fashion in turn provide useful clues for pinpointing the date of the altarpiece.[31] Other features of *Madonna and Child*, such as the use of chrysography and the sharp proportional difference between the figures of Mary and the angels, might at first sight appear retrograde. More careful observation shows that the artist used gilded highlights not in the Byzantine manner but to accentuate the volumetric relief of the forms below the precious garments and to enliven the sweeping folds of the drapery. The motif of angels peering out from behind the cloth of honor as if playing hide-and-seek is itself an indication of the merry, make-believe spirit that animates the gothicizing artistic current of the time.

Several clues confirm the attribution of our panels to Giovanni Baronzio. First, there are clear analogies between the fragments of the altarpiece of Saint John and

other works generally attributed to the artist, such as the solemn mantle-clad men to the right of our *Birth of the Baptist* and those of *Christ before Pilate* now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, or the peculiar, splayed-leg pose of the Baptist in the baptism scene that recurs in the figure of Adam in *Descent of Christ into Limbo*, also in the Gemäldegalerie.[32] The facial features also coincide: characterized by drooping heads, squared forms, high foreheads, eyes reduced to narrow slits, flattened noses, powerful chins, rounded jaws, they are found in all the works of the artist. The incised decoration of the gold ground is also an important clue for associating our panels with Giovanni Baronzio.[33]

As for the date of our dismantled altarpiece, it may be placed in or shortly before the mid-fourth decade of the fourteenth century, on the basis of comparisons with the artist's only signed and dated work.[34] A motif like the swirling and zigzagging folds of the mantle as it falls to the ground is rendered in a very similar way both in the Madonna in Washington and in the altarpiece in Urbino. The latter, however, is likely to be the later of the two, as a number of features make clear. Evidence of its modernity includes the wider décolleté of Mary's dress than that of the Virgin in Washington, and the fact that her head is covered with a transparent veil, enabling us to glimpse her elaborate and modish hairstyle with two braids raised and knotted together over the crown of her head. Abandoning the usual position of Christ in the Virgin's lap, Giovanni Baronzio represents him instead standing on the ground and gesturing insistently to be restored to his mother's arms. No such liberties are found in the Gallery Madonna, which is characterized by softer modeling and by an absence of the delicate and incisive contours that delineate the forms of the faces and hands in the Urbino Madonna and Child. In observing the stories of the Baptist, moreover, we cannot fail to notice the absence of the stiff and formal reserve of the conduct that distinguishes the narrative scenes of the altarpiece dated 1345: the protagonists of the Nativity and of the Baptism in the Gallery are squatter in proportions but more natural and spontaneous in the way they express themselves with gestures. The attitude of the man who observes Zacharias writing the name of John on a sheet of paper reveals all too clearly the disapproval of those present in the choice of this name, underlined by the narrative in Luke's Gospel.[35] The energetic pose of the Baptist, bending forward as far as he can to place his hand on the head of Jesus, immersed in the waters of Jordan, is a powerful expression of his zeal and the profound consciousness he has of his role.

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

The period that elapsed between the execution of the dismantled altarpiece of the Baptist and the panel now in Urbino cannot have been brief, but its duration is difficult to gauge given the lack of other securely datable works by Baronzio. A probable *terminus post quem* could be offered by the dossal now divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the collection of the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini; according to a plausible recent proposal, the dossal must have been commissioned for the high altar of the Franciscan church of Villa Verucchio and must date to c. 1330.[36] The essential immobility of the individual compositions contained in this altarpiece, the rudimentary architectural backdrops, and the strongly simplified drawing that still recalls models of Pietro da Rimini suggest that this is an early work of Giovanni Baronzio. The putative Villa Verucchio dossal, which Cesare Brandi compared with the stories of the Baptist,[37] resembles the fragments being discussed here, especially in its delicate modeling, sharp chiaroscuro, and facial characteristics, but it can be assumed to belong to an earlier creative phase in the career of Giovanni Baronzio. The most probable date for the panels in the Gallery therefore would seem to be c. 1335.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Giovanni Baronzio as proposed by Keith Christiansen (color images are NGA objects): a. *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* (fig. 2); b. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*; c. *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* (fig. 3); d. *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* (fig. 4); e. *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*; f. *The Baptism of Christ*; g. *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* (fig. 5); h. *Feast of Herod* (fig. 6); i. *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* (fig. 7)



**fig. 2** Giovanni Baronzio, *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Street collection, Bath



**fig. 3** Giovanni Baronzio, *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Vaticana. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees*, c. 1335, wood transferred to Masonite, Seattle Art Museum, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Eduardo Calderon



**fig. 5** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Street collection, Bath



**fig. 6** Giovanni Baronzio, *Feast of Herod*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection



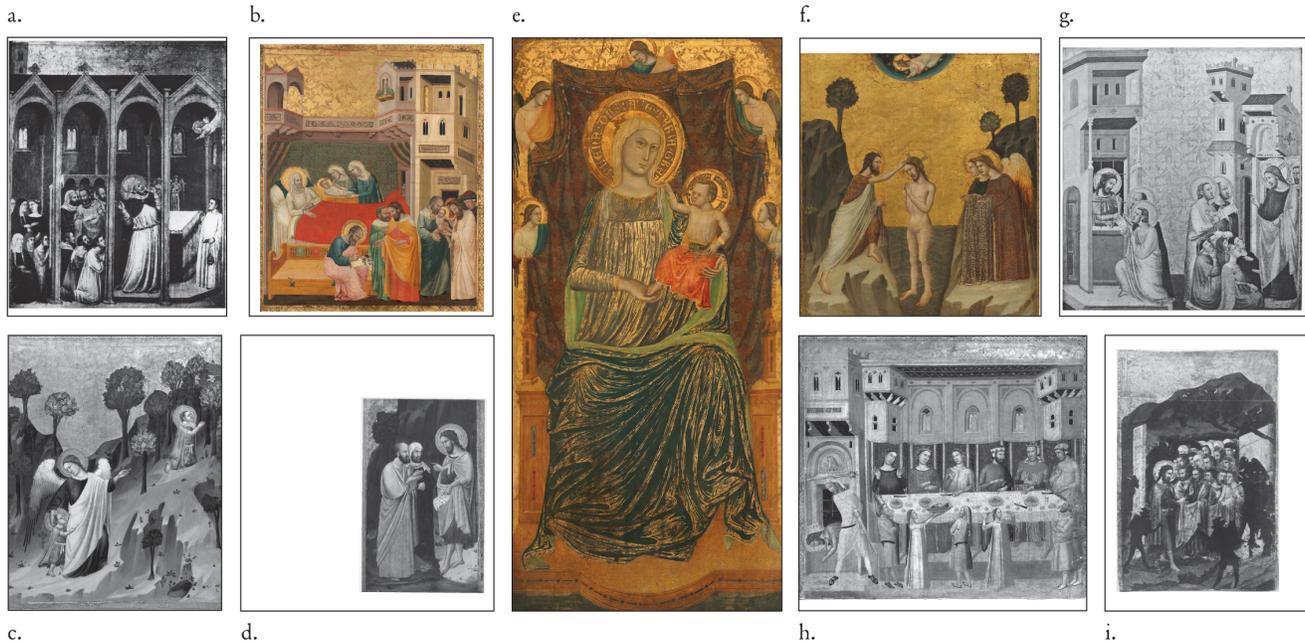
**fig. 7** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Charles Loeser collection, Florence



**fig. 8** Detail of upper section, Giovanni Baronzio, *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Giovanni Baronzio as proposed by Keith Christiansen (1982)

- a. *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* (Entry fig. 2)
- b. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*
- c. *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* (Entry fig. 3)
- d. *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* (Entry fig. 4)
- e. *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*
- f. *The Baptism of Christ*
- g. *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* (Entry fig. 5)
- h. *Feast of Herod* (Entry fig. 6)
- i. *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* (Entry fig. 7)

**NOTES**

[1] In the infrequent cases in which their original destination is known, horizontal dossals come from churches and altars dedicated to the saint whose legend they illustrate; cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 140–144; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 300, 538, 632. Fourteenth-century Riminese painters also frequently painted

works for Marchigian churches.

- [2] Keith Christiansen, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 42–45.
- [3] Cf. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*, Provenance note 1. The panel's measurements given in *Art Treasures of the West Country* (Bristol, 1937) are 19 x 15 in. (48.2 x 38.1 cm).
- [4] Cf. Provenance note 1, and Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 3 *Il Trecento: Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord* (Vatican City, 1994), 113–118. The panel measures 47.8 x 40.5 cm.
- [5] Venturi linked the panel, with a provenance from the Sterbini collection (cf. Provenance note 1) and then on the art market (Galleria Sangiorgi) in Rome, with the series of episodes from the life of the Baptist. See Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 92; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 113. Acquired for the Samuel H. Kress Collection in 1936, it has been in the Seattle Art Museum (It 37/M 394 L1.1) since 1952. It measures 23.8 x 18.4 cm.
- [6] Cf. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*, Provenance note 1. *Art Treasures of the West Country* (Bristol, 1937) gives its measurements as 17 x 15 in (43.2 x 40.6 cm).
- [7] Purchased by Philip Lehman from the Galerie Trotti in Paris in 1921, the panel was donated by Robert Lehman to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1975 (no. 1975.1.103). See John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 86–88. The painting had already been introduced to the art historical literature by Osvald Sirén, who had seen it on the art market in Paris; Osvald Sirén, "Giuliano, Pietro and Giovanni da Rimini," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 29 (1916): 320. Pope-Hennessy and Kanter identified the coat of arms on the reverse of the panel as that of the Agnelli dei Malerbi family and suggested that "the panel may have been preserved in the Agnelli collection in Rome or in the Casa Malerbi at Lugo (Ravenna)." A possible connection between the presumed provenance from Lugo (Ravenna) and the life and interests of Luigi Malerbi (1776–1843), *canonico*, musician, and collector from that little town, has also been surmised. See Anna Tambini, in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 264, but without convincing evidence.
- [8] This panel formed part of the Sterbini collection in 1906 (cf. Provenance note 1) but was probably acquired shortly after by Charles Loeser (1865–1928) for his Florentine collection. In 1926, however, the painting was auctioned in Florence; it was attributed in the sale catalog to the "scuola dell'Orcagna." See *Impresa Vendita Cesare Galardelli: Catalogo della*

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*Vendita di Arte Antica di proprietà del Sig. L. M. Banti*, Florence, April, 14–16, 1926, lot 220. Wilhelm Suida stated that the panel had been the property of Mrs. R. Calnan. Wilhelm Suida, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951), 36. The painting's measurements are unknown.

- [9] Cf. Provenance note 1.
- [10] Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906), 48–53.
- [11] Osvald Sirén, “Giuliano, Pietro and Giovanni da Rimini,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 29 (1916): 320.
- [12] The panel (no. 6), which Richard Offner assigned to the Florentine “following of the St. Cecilia Master,” has also been attributed to Buffalmacco and, by the present writer, to Lippo di Benivieni. In any case the more recent literature generally has recognized it as the work of a Florentine artist. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 178–180. It has further been shown that it used to belong to the church of Santa Maria degli Ughi in Florence.
- [13] Osvald Sirén and Maurice Brockwell repeated the view that *Saint John the Baptist Enthroned* now in Oxford belonged with the dispersed series of stories of the same saint, and Robert Lehman and L. Venturi accepted this premise. See Osvald Sirén and Maurice W. Brockwell, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives* (New York, 1917), 181; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 74; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 94; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 116, repro. Raimond van Marle, “Contributo allo studio della scuola pittorica del Trecento a Rimini,” *Rassegna Municipale Rimini* 4 (1935): 8–15, expressed uncertainty about the proposal, which has since been abandoned by everyone.
- [14] It is worth recalling that Robert Lehman (1928), commenting on *Decollation of the Baptist and Presentation of His Head*, cited Richard Offner's verbal opinion, evidently pronounced some years previously, in favor of Giovanni Baronzio's authorship. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 74. But by 1924 Offner had changed his mind. He then argued that the Lehman panel and the other two stories of the Baptist formerly in the Pratt collection had been painted around 1340 by the anonymous master of the Kahn Madonna. Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 245.
- [15] Raimond Van Marle gathered under this loose definition various artists'

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works, some of which have more recently been recognized as the work of Giovanni Baronzio. Apart from the two stories of the Baptist mentioned in the text, they include the stories of Christ now in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome, the six small panels with stories of Christ in the Accademia in Venice, and *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery in London. See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 4, *The Local Schools of North Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 288.

- [16] Robert Lehman and following him some other authors cited an otherwise unspecified story of the Baptist in the Ryerson collection in Chicago that allegedly formed part of the same series. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 74. But the fact that this painting was not among those that entered the Art Institute of Chicago from the Ryerson collection suggests the claim is based on a misunderstanding.
- [17] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 92, 94; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 113, 116. Among the works attributed to Giovanni Baronzio, Bernard Berenson listed the Kahn Madonna, the Lehman Feast of Herod, the Pratt Birth of the Baptist, and the Angel Leading the Baptist into the Wilderness in the Pinacoteca Vaticana. To these panels he later added the Baptism of Christ in the Kress collection. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 43–45; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 37–39.
- [18] *Guida della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, Musei e Gallerie Pontificie (Vatican City, 1933), 54; *An Exhibition of Italian Paintings Lent by Mr. Samuel H. Kress of New York to the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences* (1935), 32; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "Fine Italian Paintings from Kress Exhibition," *Art News* 32 (1934): 8–9; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "Medieval Style in Painting," *Art News* 38 (1940): 14; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "On the Italian Renaissance Painters in the National Gallery," *Art News* 40 (1941): 17; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "How Modern the Renaissance," *Art News* 45 (1947): 17; *Arts of the Middle Ages: A Loan Exhibition* (Boston, 1940), 20; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 60, 238; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 13; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1945), 9, 10; "The New Kress Gift to the National Gallery, Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 86, no. 504 (1945): 55; Robert Langton Douglas, "Recent Additions to the Kress Collection," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 88 (1946): 84; *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1947), no. 37; Herbert Friedmann, "The Iconography of

the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronzio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 345–352; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 730–731 (as "maniera di Baronzio"); Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 1:209; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers* (London, 1976), 124–125.

- [19] See Cesare Brandi, "Conclusioni su alcuni discussi problemi della pittura riminese del Trecento," *Critica d'arte* 1 (1936): 236–237; Wilhelm Suida, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection Acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951), 36; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 31–32; John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC* (New York, 1963), 297; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 86; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 75; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 254–255; Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 38–39; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 68–69; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:316–318; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 64; Charles Seymour, *Early Italian Paintings in the Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven and London, 1970), 108; Hanna Kiel, "Review of Antologia di dipinti di cinque secoli, Circolo delle Stampe, Palazzo Serbelloni," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 345; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 130; George Szabó, *The Robert Lehman Collection: A Guide* (New York, 1975), 25; George Kaftal and Fabio Bisogni, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 3, *Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North East Italy* (Florence, 1978), 512, 514, 520; Fulvio Zuliani, "Tommaso da Modena," in *Tomaso da Modena: Catalogo*, ed. Luigi Menegazzi (Treviso, 1979), 105 n. 9; Keith Christiansen, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 42–45; Antonio Corbara, "Il ciclo francescano di Francesco da Rimini," *Romagna arte e storia* 4, no. 12 (1984): 59 ("Maestro del Battista"); Andrea Bacchi, "Maestro della Vita del Battista," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:611; Daniele Benati, "Pittura del Trecento in Emilia Romagna," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:208; John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 86; Pier Giorgio Pasini, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1990), 124, 125, 127; Fabrizio Mancinelli, "I dipinti della Pinacoteca dall'XI al XV secolo," in *Pinacoteca Vaticana:*

*Nella pittura l'espressione del messaggio divino nella luce la radice della creazione pittorica*, ed. Umberto Baldini (Milan, 1992), 162–163; Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 3, *Il Trecento: Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord* (Vatican City, 1994), 113–118; Katharine Baetjer, *European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Artists Born before 1865: A Summary Catalogue* (New York, 1995), 110; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 152, 164; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 63.

- [20] See Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18; Miklós Boskovits, “Per la storia della pittura tra la Romagna e le Marche ai primi del '300,” *Arte cristiana* 81 (1993): 168–169; Daniele Benati, “Baronzio, Giovanni,” in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1992), 3:121; Daniele Benati, “Disegno del Trecento riminese,” in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 47, 55, 56 n. 3; Daniele Benati, “Il Dossale Corvisieri nel percorso di Giovanni Baronzio,” *L'Arco* 4(2006): 27; Daniele Benati, “Giovanni Baronzio nella pittura riminese del Trecento,” in *Giovanni Baronzio e la pittura a Rimini nel Trecento*, ed. Daniele Ferrara (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2008), 31; Christian Hornig, “Baronzio Giovanni,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 1993), 7:135; Alessandro Marchi, “La pittura della prima metà del Trecento nelle Marche: Presenze riminesi, pittori ‘stanieri’ e pittori locali,” in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 112–123; Anna Tambini, “In margine alla pittura riminese del Trecento,” *Studi romagnoli* 47 (1996): 466 (“attribuiti a Giovanni Baronzio”); Giovanna Ragionieri, “Baronzio, Giovanni,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 1:53.

- [21] Altarpieces of this type and of similar size originally must have included Giovanni da Rimini's *Madonna and Child with Saints* in the Museo Correr in Venice (apparently a triptych but, as the horizontal grain of the wood shows, originally a type of dossal enriched with gables); Pietro da Rimini's fragmentary panel *Christ, the Madonna, and Saints* now in the Denver Art Museum; Francesco da Rimini's similar altarpiece now dismantled and dispersed among the Cini Collection in Venice and museums in Lausanne and Barcelona; Giovanni Baronzio's stories of Christ divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini; and Giovanni Baronzio's still intact altarpieces of this type in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino and in the church of San Francesco at Mercatello. We may also recall the early fourteenth-

century dossal of an anonymous master in the Museo Civico at Reggio Emilia, cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), figs. 64, 78, 159–163, 208, 210, 198, 206, 315, and some Bolognese examples, such as the dossals by the Pseudo Jacopino in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, for which see Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian, eds., *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia* (Venice, 2004), 78–83. In rare cases, horizontal dossals even larger in size than the abovementioned were produced, such as that by Giuliano da Rimini in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (164 × 300 cm).

- [22] See Véronique Rouchon Mouilleron, “Le pitture duecentesche del Battistero di Parma: Iconografia e organizzazione spaziale,” in *Battistero di Parma*, vol. 2, *La decorazione pittorica* (Milan, 1993), 34–116.
- [23] On the episode of the Child Saint John the Baptist Praying, see Isle Falk, *Studien zu Andrea Pisano* (PhD diss., University of Zurich, 1940), 128; Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, “Giovannino Battista: A Study in Renaissance Religious Symbolism,” *The Art Bulletin* 37 (1955): 88–89 and n. 27. The rare motif of the Baptist’s Descent into Limbo recurs in dossal no. 14 of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, which was cataloged by Piero Torriti as the work of a “Maestro senese–bizantino” but should probably be attributed to Gilio di Pietro. Cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 44–45; Miklós Boskovits, “Sulle tracce di un grande pittore toscano di metà Duecento,” *Arte cristiana* 98 (2010): 241–246. Based on the account in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, this is evidently a version of the more familiar iconography of Christ’s Descent into Limbo (*Anastasis*), in which the Baptist, easily recognizable, often appears among the Fathers awaiting the Savior’s arrival; cf. Elisabeth Lucchesi Palli, “Höllenfahrt Christi,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:325.
- [24] For example, *Annunciation to Zacharias*, formerly in the Street collection in Bath, is very unusual in iconography. It takes place in a Romanesque church packed with worshippers, and the priest is kneeling before the altar as if celebrating Mass. The iconography adopted in the other former Street panel is equally rare. Here, in the scene in which the disciples are sent by John to interrogate Christ, instead of the miracles performed by Christ we see a group of believers sitting on the ground and listening to the Savior’s words. Also rare is the twofold presence of Salome in *Feast of Herod*, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: in one she is dancing, and in the other she is presenting the decapitated head of the Baptist on a charger to the banqueters.
- [25] The episode of the Circumcision, if shown at all, substitutes either the scene of the Birth of the Baptist, as in the relief on the façade of San Giovanni in

Venere at Fossacesia (Chieti), or that of the Naming of the Baptist, as in the reliefs of the cathedral of Auxerre. See Otto Lehmann-Brockhaus, *Abruzzen und Molise: Kunst und Geschichte, Römische Forschungen der Bibliotheca Hertziana* (Munich, 1983), 175–176; Camille Enlart, “La sculpture des portails de la cathédrale d’Auxerre du XIIIe à la fin du XIVe siècle,” *Congres archeologique de France* 74 (1907): pl. between 602 and 603.

- [26] On the iconography of the Baptism of Christ, see Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l’iconographie de l’évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles, d’après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1916), 170–215; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 1:137–152.
- [27] On placing the hand on the person being baptized, cf. U. Miekke, “Taufe, Taufszenen,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1972), 2:244–247; and, more generally, Lucien De Bruyne, “L’imposition des mains dans l’art chrétien ancien,” *Rivista d’archeologia cristiana* 20 (1943): 113–278. Baptism by infusion—that is, by the pouring of water over the neophyte’s head—is usually represented from the fourteenth century onward.
- [28] See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 116–117.
- [29] With reference to Proverbs 30:27 (“the locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank”), Herbert Friedmann explained that in medieval thought, locusts were sometimes considered symbols of converted pagans. See Herbert Friedmann, “The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 345–352. But in the case of the altarpiece being discussed here, in which the Madonna and Child is flanked by stories of the Baptist, the locust in the Christ child’s hand presumably was intended to allude, more prosaically, to the food on which the Baptist lived in the wilderness of Judea (cf. Mt 3:4; Mk 1:6). As for the figures of lions on the throne, in medieval theology Mary was considered the personification of wisdom, seated on the throne of Solomon, in which (1 Kings 10:19) “two lions stood beside the stays” (i.e., beside the armrests). Cf. also Gregor Martin Lechner, “Sedes Sapientiae,” in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:113–118.
- [30] Herbert Friedmann, “The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 350, underlined this aspect.
- [31] A very important aspect of women’s dress of the period, the depth and width of the décolleté, is exemplified by the dresses in *Feast of Herod* (but

also by the dress of Mary herself in the Washington Madonna). This wider and deeper neckline reflects a fashion that spread in the 1330s; cf. Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: A) gli affreschi della Basilica Inferiore di Assisi,” *Prospettiva* 10 (1977): 21–31. Details such as the length of the dresses of the courtiers portrayed in the foreground in front of Herod’s table, or the length of their caps with side flaps, also reflect a phase of the development of fourteenth-century court fashion that precedes that illustrated by Giovanni Baronzio in the altarpiece dated 1345 in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino. Bellosi’s studies are useful in elucidating these aspects. Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974) 41–54. The details of dress I have cited, to which others can be added, therefore suggest a date for our panels in the 1330s.

- [32] For the five fragments with stories of Christ in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. 1110), cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 86 and fig. 280 (as Master of the Parry Adoration); Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18 and figs. 15–20 (as Giovanni Baronzio).
- [33] As Brigitte Klesse has shown, the ornamental motifs incised in the gold ground in the Gallery’s panels depicting stories of the Baptist recur in the abovementioned panels in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, in the fragments belonging to the same series now in the Accademia in Venice (no. 26), and in the altarpiece signed by Giovanni and dated 1345 in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 281.
- [34] For the altarpiece *Madonna and Child with Angels and Saints and Stories of Christ* in Urbino’s Galleria Nazionale (no. 125), cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 82; Pier Giorgio Pasini, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1990), 141–143.
- [35] The Gospel narrative (Lk 1:59–63) explains that Elizabeth’s kinsfolk and neighbors had suggested the boy be called Zacharias like his father and not John, as indicated by the angel at the time of the Annunciation (Lk 1:13: “and you shall call his name John”), objecting: “There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.”
- [36] It is Massimo Medica who observed that the two surviving fragments are similar in subject and iconography to those preserved in the church of San Francesco a Villa Verucchio until the mid-nineteenth century. The same scholar also assumed that, since this church was completed in 1324, the altarpiece for its high altar would have been commissioned and installed not many years later. Massimo Medica, “Una proposta per la provenienza del *Dossale* di Baronzio: La chiesa francescana di Villa Verucchio,” *L’Arco* 4 (2006): 13–16. The dating of c. 1330–1335 that Daniel Ferrara suggested for the *dossale* is too late, in my opinion. Cf. Daniele Ferrara, ed., *Giovanni*

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[37] Cesare Brandi, ed., *Mostra della pittura riminese del Trecento* (Rimini, 1935), xxiii, who considered the Madonna in the Gallery and the stories of the Baptist as works by an anonymous Riminese master, compared them with the stories of Christ now in the Galleria Nazionale of Palazzo Barberini, Rome, though the latter are said to be more closely linked to the traditions of painting in Rimini.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a panel made from a single piece of wood with horizontal grain. It has been thinned to approximately 1 cm, and cradled. The x-radiographs show pieces of fabric between the wood and the gesso. Areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole. Major contours were delineated with incised lines, which were reinforced with dark paint in the early stages of painting. The artist used gold and silver leaf in the brocade of the figure on the right and gold leaf in the background.[1] The gold is tooled freehand. The ornamental gold leaf border survives in its original width along the bottom and right sides of the panel but it is partially truncated along the other two sides.[2] The panel has suffered some worm damage in the past. Stephen Pichetto treated the painting and applied the cradle c. 1934, and Mario Modestini treated it again in 1955.[3] The panel was vandalized in 1974, causing a vertical crack above the heads of the figures on the right. The painted surface also suffered scattered losses in the figures, as did the gold ground on the right. Local treatments were performed in these areas at that time. Old, discolored inpainting can be noted in the rocks below the figure of the Baptist, in the saint's robes, and in the head of the angel to the far right. There is a fair amount of inpainting in the figure of God at the top of the panel and in the gold around this area. The varnish has darkened to some degree.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] Silver and gold leaf were identified by the NGA scientific research department using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (see report dated February 16, 2000, in NGA conservation files).

[2] A photograph published by Pietro Toesca shows that much of the original

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gold leaf along the bottom is missing, indicating that it has been heavily inpainted. Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 732.

- [3] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:316, reported that this painting was “cradled, cleaned, restored, and varnished” by Stephen Pichetto and “last varnished” by Mario Modestini. The photographs reproduced by Adolfo Venturi and Pietro Toesca show numerous losses in the painting and therefore must have been taken prior to Pichetto’s treatment. Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906), 51; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 732.
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### PROVENANCE

Possibly commissioned as part of the high altarpiece of a church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist in Emilia Romagna or in the Marche, Italy. Probably Monsignor Gabriele Laureani [d. 1849], Rome; Giulio Sterbini [d. 1911], Rome, by 1874;<sup>[1]</sup> Pasini collection, Rome, by 1924;<sup>[2]</sup> (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence); purchased June 1933 by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[3]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] David Farabulini (*La pittura antica e moderna e la Galleria del cav. Giulio Sterbini*, Rome, 1874: 29) cites “varie storie della vita del Battista” in the Sterbini collection, while Adolfo Venturi (*La Galleria Sterbini in Roma*, Rome, 1906), in publishing *The Baptism of Christ*, then forming part of that collection, comments that two additional Stories of the Saint, the “San Giovanni che parla a due seguaci” (i.e., the *Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees*) and “S. Giovanni tra i Padri del Limbo” (i.e., the *Baptist’s Descent into Limbo*) also formed part of this collection. Farabulini further explains (1874, 13) that Sterbini had acquired paintings for his collection in Rome from Monsignor Gabriele Laureani, prefect of the Vatican Apostolic Library, who was engaged in acquiring paintings by “maestri primitivi” for the Vatican’s collections. Since the works later gathered in the Pinacoteca Vaticana also include a panel from this series, namely the *Young Baptist Being Led into the Wilderness by an Angel* (no. 40185), there are good grounds for assuming that it had arrived in Rome together with the fragments acquired by Sterbini. On the Sterbini collection see also L. Morozzi, “Da Lasinio a Sterbini. Primitivi in una raccolta romana di secondo Ottocento,” *AEIMNETO. Miscellanea di studi per Mauro Cristofani*, ed. by B. Adembris, II, Florence, 2006: 908-916. The supposition, quite unfounded, that NGA 1939.1.131 actually comes from the Pinacoteca Vaticana,

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no doubt derives from these circumstances (see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools XIII - XV century*, London, 1966: 69, and Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:316, citing Bernard Berenson's notes on the reverse of a photograph of the painting, in the Kress Foundation files). [2] Lionello Venturi (*Pitture italiane in America*, Milan, 1931) was the last to report the painting's presence in the Pasini collection. Federico Zeri wrote to Robert O. Parks that Pasini was the dealer who sold the entire Sterbini collection; Parks in turn passed this information on to John Walker (letter, Parks to Walker, 27 December 1949, in NGA curatorial files). [3] The bill of sale for a large number of paintings, including this one, is dated 28 June 1933 (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1932 An Exhibition of Italian Paintings, Lent by Mr. Samuel H. Kress of New York to Museums, Colleges, and Associations, twenty-four venues in the United States, 1932-1935, no. 32.

1995 Il Trecento Riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche, Museo della Città, Rimini, Italy, 1995-1996, no. 52, repro.

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Giovanni Baronzio  
Italian, active c. 1320 - 1350

## *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*

c. 1335

tempera on panel

painted surface: 46.4 × 38.3 cm (18 1/4 × 15 1/16 in.)

overall: 48.8 × 40.7 cm (19 3/16 × 16 in.)

framed: 55.7 × 48.1 × 5.1 cm (21 15/16 × 18 15/16 × 2 in.)

Inscription: on the sheet on which Zacharias is writing: NOMEN / E[S]T IO /

HA[NN]ES (The name is John)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.68

### ENTRY

This panel, along with its two companions *The Baptism of Christ* and *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*, are fragments of a dismantled altarpiece whose original provenance is unknown but which was presumably commissioned for the high altar of a church dedicated to the Baptist in Emilia Romagna or, perhaps, in the Marche.[1] Keith Christiansen (1982)[2] proposed a reconstruction of the altar [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*) as follows: four stories of the Baptist would have accompanied, on either side, the central *Madonna and Child with Five Angels* also in the National Gallery of Art; to the upper left, *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* [fig. 2] formerly in the Street collection in Bath,[3] flanked by *Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of the Baptist* now in the Gallery. The lower register on the same side would have consisted of *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* [fig. 3], now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana,[4] and *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* [fig. 4], of which only a fragment survives, in the Seattle Art Museum.[5] The upper register on the right side would have consisted of *The Baptism of Christ* in the Gallery and *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* [fig. 5], formerly in the Street collection in Bath.[6] Two more panels formed the lower register on the same side: *Feast of Herod* [fig. 6], now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Robert Lehman Collection) in New York,[7] flanked by *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo*

[fig. 7], formerly in the collection of Charles Loeser in Florence, its whereabouts now unknown.[8] A possible argument against Christiansen's reconstruction, as Laurence Kanter has informed me (in correspondence), is the fact that the vertically grained wood of the central Madonna (see *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*) seems to exclude its common origin with the panels representing the stories of the Baptist, which are painted on panels with horizontal grain. Kanter considers the possibility of two different altarpieces or one double-sided altarpiece. These proposals are interesting, but all the fragments share a common author, their dimensions are comparable, and similarity of pictorial conduct makes the hypothesis of a single-sided panel more likely after all. Complete disappearance (except for the Madonna) of the paintings on the back of a double-sided altarpiece would also seem rather unlikely. And for an altarpiece as large as two meters or more, instead of a single wooden support, the use of three panels was preferred. On the whole, Christiansen's hypothesis is likely to be correct.

The altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist had evidently been dismantled by the first half of the nineteenth century, for by the 1840s fragments of it had begun to emerge on the art market.[9] Adolfo Venturi (1906) was the first to attempt to classify more precisely the *Baptism of Christ* and the other two fragments then in the Sterbini collection in Rome.[10] Venturi recognized Bolognese influences deriving from the activity of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in that city. He suggested that the artist might have been someone like Jacopo di Paolo, active in Bologna from the close of the thirteenth century. A few years later Osvald Sirén (1916), unfamiliar, it seems, with Venturi's publication, asserted the common origin of the *Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of the Baptist; Annunciation of the Baptist's Birth; The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ; and Feast of Herod*.<sup>[11]</sup> He correctly attributed them to Giovanni Baronzio, the master who had signed and dated (1345) the altarpiece now in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino. The great Swedish art historian erred, however, in thinking that the panel of Saint John the Baptist Enthroned in Christ Church Gallery in Oxford stood in the center of the altarpiece. This painting is clearly Florentine, even if its proposed attribution to Lippo di Benivieni remains under discussion.<sup>[12]</sup> Sirén's proposal, indeed, convinced few scholars.<sup>[13]</sup> Later contributions to the problem accepted instead the proposal of Richard Offner (1924), who recognized in *Madonna and Child with Five Angels* the work of an anonymous painter from the Romagna, to whom he attributed the stories of the Baptist.<sup>[14]</sup> Raimond van Marle (1924) also placed the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio in doubt. He preferred to classify *The Baptism of Christ* and its companion panel now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana as works of the "Cavallinesque

Riminese school.”[15] Lehman (1928), on the other hand, retained the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio and, in his analysis of *Feast of Herod*, linked it with the fragment depicting the Baptism.[16] Both Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) and Bernard Berenson (1932, 1936) also assigned to Giovanni Baronzio the panels they recognized as forming part of the same series.[17] Other art historians and catalogers followed suit.[18] Doubts then grew about Giovanni’s authorship: the fragments were assigned instead to an ad hoc Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist. This opinion prevailed in the literature of the following decades; it was also expressed in the catalogs of the Gallery and repeated in more recent publications.[19] Since 1987, however, the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio has been reinstated, and reinforced with fresh arguments, both for the group of panels that concerns us here and for other paintings that had in the past been attributed to the artist; scholars have increasingly supported this suggestion.[20]

Altarpieces in the elongated horizontal form of thirteenth-century dossals, approximately one meter (or a little more) in height and two and a half meters in width, such as the dismantled altarpiece of the Baptist being discussed here, are rare in Tuscany in the fourteenth century, but must have been fairly common in a region like Emilia Romagna.[21] They usually showed the Madonna and Child Enthroned (or, more rarely, a story of Christ) at the center flanked by saints or biblical or legendary narrative scenes. An extended cycle of stories of the Baptist comparable to that of our altarpiece has only survived in Emilia Romagna in the field of mural paintings, more particularly in those of the dome of the baptistery of Parma.[22] Our altarpiece dedicated to Saint John the Baptist is unusual in its iconographic program: it lacks scenes usually included in cycles of the Baptist, such as the Visitation, the *Ecce Agnus Dei*, the Dance of Salome, or the Burial of the Baptist, while it includes such rare episodes as Saint John the Baptist Praying in the Wilderness or the Baptist’s Descent into Limbo.[23] Nor did the artist hesitate to introduce into the individual episodes motifs that diverge from the usual iconography.[24] As regards the panels in the Gallery (as seen in this panel), it is unusual for the episode of the Washing of the Infant Saint John, often placed in the foreground with an intentional allusion to the theme of baptism, to be dispensed with, as it is here; it is replaced instead by the scene in the background, more homely than symbolic in tone, of two handmaids wrapping the newborn child in swaddling cloths. The Naming of the Baptist, which often represents a self-sufficient scene, is here inserted in the scene of the Birth, and indeed placed in the foreground and combined to the far right with the episode of the Circumcision of the recalcitrant child.[25] On the other hand, in *The Baptism of Christ*, the painter

remains faithful to the tradition of representing Christ submerged up to his hips in the water of the Jordan, the Baptist placed to the left, standing on the rocky banks of the river, and two angels holding Christ's clothes to the right. In the upper part of the panel the heavens open, and we catch a glimpse of the half-length figure of God the Father blessing.[26] A motif of archaizing character that gradually disappeared in the fourteenth century is that of John imposing his hand on Christ instead of pouring water over his head.[27]

With regard to the *Madonna and Child*, a motif for which the painters of Rimini had a special predilection was the cloth of honor supported by angels behind the Virgin's throne [fig. 8]. On the other hand, the motif of the child grasping his mother's veil—an allusion to the Passion [28]—is more widespread in fourteenth-century painting in Tuscany than in Emilia Romagna. The miniature lions on the throne armrests allude to the throne of Solomon, while the enormous locust in the hand of the child reminds us of the diet—locusts and wild honey—on which the Baptist lived during his years in the wilderness.[29]

The precision in representing the insect [30] attests to the artist's acute interest in various aspects and curiosities of daily life. Here as elsewhere in his paintings, he consciously participated in the more naturalistic and descriptive tendencies of Gothic art. The pursuit of naturalistic detail—in costume, in attributes, in setting—distinguished an innovative current in Italian painting in the second quarter of the fourteenth century that sought to disassociate itself from the solemn and classicizing manner of previous decades. Additional proof of this interest are the elaborate architectural settings of many of the episodes of the Baptist's legend (as in the temple porch in *Birth of the Baptist*, with its cantilevered upper floor and Gothic double-lancet windows), the attention devoted to characterizing the protagonists' states of mind, and, not least, the costumes worn, in particular in *Feast of Herod*. Peculiarities of fashion in turn provide useful clues for pinpointing the date of the altarpiece.[31] Other features of the *Madonna and Child*, such as the use of chrysography and the sharp proportional difference between the figures of Mary and the angels, might at first sight appear retrograde. More careful observation shows that the artist used gilded highlights not in the Byzantine manner but to accentuate the volumetric relief of the forms below the precious garments and to enliven the sweeping folds of the drapery. The motif of angels peering out from behind the cloth of honor as if playing hide-and-seek is itself an indication of the merry, make-believe spirit that animates the gothicizing artistic current of the time.

Several clues confirm the attribution of our panels to Giovanni Baronzio. First, there are clear analogies between the fragments of the altarpiece of Saint John and other works generally attributed to the artist, such as the solemn mantle-clad men to the right of our *Birth of the Baptist* and those of *Christ before Pilate* now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, or the peculiar, splayed-leg pose of the Baptist in the baptism scene that recurs in the figure of Adam in *Descent of Christ into Limbo*, also in the Gemäldegalerie.[32] The facial features also coincide: characterized by drooping heads, squared forms, high foreheads, eyes reduced to narrow slits, flattened noses, powerful chins, rounded jaws, they are found in all the works of the artist. The incised decoration of the gold ground is also an important clue for associating our panels with Giovanni Baronzio.[33]

As for the date of our dismantled altarpiece, it may be placed in or shortly before the mid-fourth decade of the fourteenth century, on the basis of comparisons with the artist's only signed and dated work.[34] A motif like the swirling and zigzagging folds of the mantle as it falls to the ground is rendered in a very similar way both in the Madonna in Washington and in the altarpiece in Urbino. The latter, however, is likely to be the later of the two, as a number of features make clear. Evidence of its modernity includes the wider décolleté of Mary's dress than that of the Virgin in Washington, and the fact that her head is covered with a transparent veil, enabling us to glimpse her elaborate and modish hairstyle with two braids raised and knotted together over the crown of her head. Abandoning the usual position of Christ in the Virgin's lap, Giovanni Baronzio represents him instead standing on the ground and gesturing insistently to be restored to his mother's arms. No such liberties are found in the Gallery Madonna, which is characterized by softer modeling and by an absence of the delicate and incisive contours that delineate the forms of the faces and hands in the Urbino Madonna and Child. In observing the stories of the Baptist, moreover, we cannot fail to notice the absence of the stiff and formal reserve of the conduct that distinguishes the narrative scenes of the altarpiece dated 1345: the protagonists of the Nativity and of the Baptism in the Gallery are squatter in proportions but more natural and spontaneous in the way they express themselves with gestures. The attitude of the man who observes Zacharias writing the name of John on a sheet of paper reveals all too clearly the disapproval of those present in the choice of this name, underlined by the narrative in Luke's Gospel.[35] The energetic pose of the Baptist, bending forward as far as he can to place his hand on the head of Jesus, immersed in the waters of Jordan, is a powerful expression of his zeal and the profound consciousness he has of his

role.

The period that elapsed between the execution of the dismantled altarpiece of the Baptist and the panel now in Urbino cannot have been brief, but its duration is difficult to gauge given the lack of other securely datable works by Baronzio. A probable *terminus post quem* could be offered by the dossal now divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the collection of the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini; according to a plausible recent proposal, the dossal must have been commissioned for the high altar of the Franciscan church of Villa Verucchio and must date to c. 1330.[36] The essential immobility of the individual compositions contained in this altarpiece, the rudimentary architectural backdrops, and the strongly simplified drawing that still recalls models of Pietro da Rimini suggest that this is an early work of Giovanni Baronzio. The putative Villa Verucchio dossal, which Cesare Brandi compared with the stories of the Baptist,[37] resembles the fragments being discussed here, especially in its delicate modeling, sharp chiaroscuro, and facial characteristics, but it can be assumed to belong to an earlier creative phase in the career of Giovanni Baronzio. The most probable date for the panels in the Gallery therefore would seem to be c. 1335.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Giovanni Baronzio as proposed by Keith Christiansen (color images are NGA objects): a. *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* (fig. 2); b. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*; c. *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* (fig. 3); d. *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* (fig. 4); e. *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*; f. *The Baptism of Christ*; g. *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* (fig. 5); h. *Feast of Herod* (fig. 6); i. *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* (fig. 7)



**fig. 2** Giovanni Baronzio, *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Street collection, Bath



**fig. 3** Giovanni Baronzio, *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Vaticana. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees*, c. 1335, wood transferred to Masonite, Seattle Art Museum, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Eduardo Calderon



**fig. 5** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Street collection, Bath



**fig. 6** Giovanni Baronzio, *Feast of Herod*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection



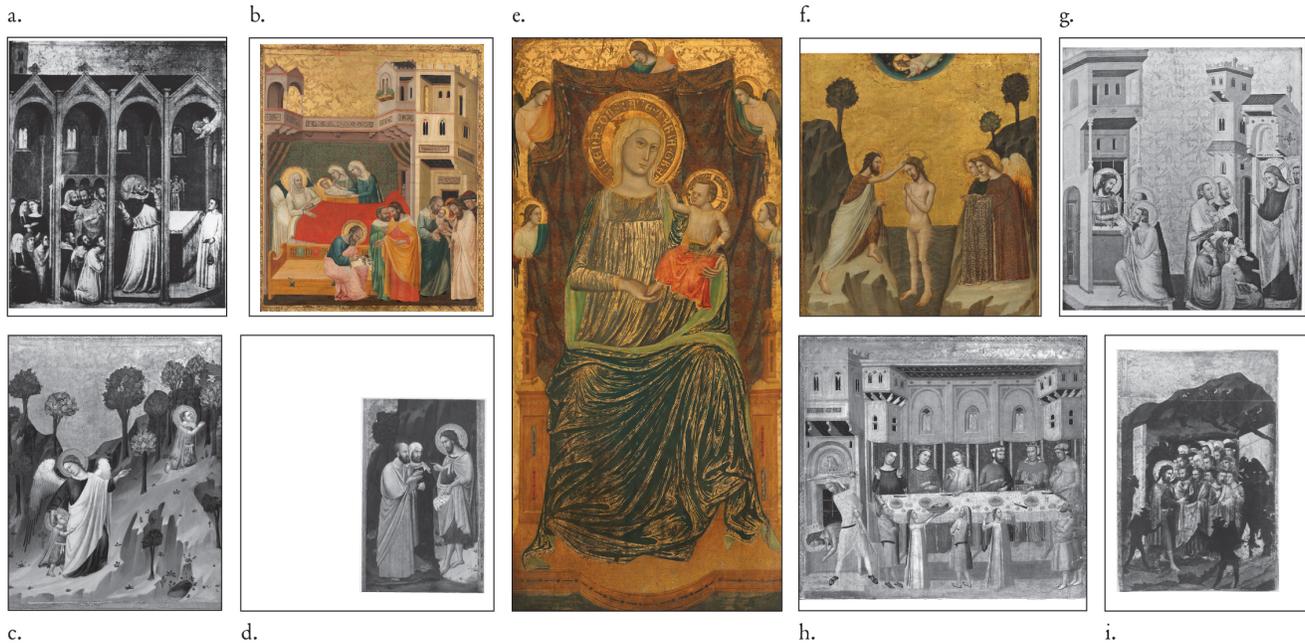
**fig. 7** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Charles Loeser collection, Florence



**fig. 8** Detail of upper section, Giovanni Baronzio, *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Giovanni Baronzio as proposed by Keith Christiansen (1982)

- a. *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* (Entry fig. 2)
- b. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*
- c. *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* (Entry fig. 3)
- d. *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* (Entry fig. 4)
- e. *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*
- f. *The Baptism of Christ*
- g. *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* (Entry fig. 5)
- h. *Feast of Herod* (Entry fig. 6)
- i. *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* (Entry fig. 7)

**NOTES**

[1] In the infrequent cases in which their original destination is known, horizontal dossals come from churches and altars dedicated to the saint whose legend they illustrate; cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 140–144; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting, sec. 1, vol. 1, The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 300, 538, 632. Fourteenth-century Riminese painters also frequently painted

works for Marchigian churches.

- [2] Keith Christiansen, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 42–45.
- [3] Cf. Provenance note 1. The panel's measurements given in *Art Treasures of the West Country* (Bristol, 1937) are 19 x 15 in. (48.2 x 38.1 cm).
- [4] Cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1, and Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 3 *Il Trecento: Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord* (Vatican City, 1994), 113–118. The panel measures 47.8 x 40.5 cm.
- [5] Venturi linked the panel, with a provenance from the Sterbini collection (cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1) and then on the art market (*Galleria Sangiorgi*) in Rome, with the series of episodes from the life of the Baptist. See Lionello Venturi, *Pittura italiana in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 92; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 113. Acquired for the Samuel H. Kress Collection in 1936, it has been in the Seattle Art Museum (It 37/M 394 L1.1) since 1952. It measures 23.8 x 18.4 cm.
- [6] Cf. Provenance note 1. *Art Treasures of the West Country* (Bristol, 1937) gives its measurements as 17 x 15 in (43.2 x 40.6 cm).
- [7] Purchased by Philip Lehman from the Galerie Trotti in Paris in 1921, the panel was donated by Robert Lehman to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1975 (no. 1975.1.103). See John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 86–88. The painting had already been introduced to the art historical literature by Osvald Sirén, who had seen it on the art market in Paris; Osvald Sirén, "Giuliano, Pietro and Giovanni da Rimini," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 29 (1916): 320. Pope-Hennessy and Kanter identified the coat of arms on the reverse of the panel as that of the Agnelli dei Malerbi family and suggested that "the panel may have been preserved in the Agnelli collection in Rome or in the Casa Malerbi at Lugo (Ravenna)." A possible connection between the presumed provenance from Lugo (Ravenna) and the life and interests of Luigi Malerbi (1776–1843), *canonico*, musician, and collector from that little town, has also been surmised. See Anna Tambini, in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 264, but without convincing evidence.
- [8] This panel formed part of the Sterbini collection in 1906 (cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1) but was probably acquired shortly after by Charles Loeser (1865–1928) for his Florentine collection. In 1926, however, the painting was auctioned in Florence; it was attributed in the sale catalog to the "scuola dell'Orcagna." See *Impresa Vendita Cesare Galardelli: Catalogo della Vendita di Arte Antica di proprietà del Sig. L. M. Banti*,

Florence, April, 14–16, 1926, lot 220. Wilhelm Suida stated that the panel had been the property of Mrs. R. Calnan. Wilhelm Suida, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951), 36. The painting's measurements are unknown.

- [9] Cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1.
- [10] Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906), 48–53.
- [11] Osvald Sirén, “Giuliano, Pietro and Giovanni da Rimini,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 29 (1916): 320.
- [12] The panel (no. 6), which Richard Offner assigned to the Florentine “following of the St. Cecilia Master,” has also been attributed to Buffalmacco and, by the present writer, to Lippo di Benivieni. In any case the more recent literature generally has recognized it as the work of a Florentine artist. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 178–180. It has further been shown that it used to belong to the church of Santa Maria degli Ughi in Florence.
- [13] Osvald Sirén and Maurice Brockwell repeated the view that *Saint John the Baptist Enthroned* now in Oxford belonged with the dispersed series of stories of the same saint, and Robert Lehman and L. Venturi accepted this premise. See Osvald Sirén and Maurice W. Brockwell, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives* (New York, 1917), 181; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 74; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 94; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 116, repro. Raimond van Marle, “Contributo allo studio della scuola pittorica del Trecento a Rimini,” *Rassegna Municipale Rimini* 4 (1935): 8–15, expressed uncertainty about the proposal, which has since been abandoned by everyone.
- [14] It is worth recalling that Robert Lehman (1928), commenting on *Decollation of the Baptist and Presentation of His Head*, cited Richard Offner's verbal opinion, evidently pronounced some years previously, in favor of Giovanni Baronzio's authorship. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 74. But by 1924 Offner had changed his mind. He then argued that the Lehman panel and the other two stories of the Baptist formerly in the Pratt collection had been painted around 1340 by the anonymous master of the Kahn Madonna. Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 245.
- [15] Raimond Van Marle gathered under this loose definition various artists'

works, some of which have more recently been recognized as the work of Giovanni Baronzio. Apart from the two stories of the Baptist mentioned in the text, they include the stories of Christ now in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome, the six small panels with stories of Christ in the Accademia in Venice, and *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery in London. See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 4, *The Local Schools of North Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 288.

- [16] Robert Lehman and following him some other authors cited an otherwise unspecified story of the Baptist in the Ryerson collection in Chicago that allegedly formed part of the same series. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 74. But the fact that this painting was not among those that entered the Art Institute of Chicago from the Ryerson collection suggests the claim is based on a misunderstanding.
- [17] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 92, 94; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 113, 116. Among the works attributed to Giovanni Baronzio, Bernard Berenson listed the Kahn Madonna, the Lehman Feast of Herod, the Pratt Birth of the Baptist, and the Angel Leading the Baptist into the Wilderness in the Pinacoteca Vaticana. To these panels he later added the Baptism of Christ in the Kress collection. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 43–45; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 37–39.
- [18] *Guida della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, Musei e Gallerie Pontificie (Vatican City, 1933), 54; *An Exhibition of Italian Paintings Lent by Mr. Samuel H. Kress of New York to the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences* (1935), 32; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "Fine Italian Paintings from Kress Exhibition," *Art News* 32 (1934): 8–9; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "Medieval Style in Painting," *Art News* 38 (1940): 14; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "On the Italian Renaissance Painters in the National Gallery," *Art News* 40 (1941): 17; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "How Modern the Renaissance," *Art News* 45 (1947): 17; *Arts of the Middle Ages: A Loan Exhibition* (Boston, 1940), 20; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 60, 238; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 13; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1945), 9, 10; "The New Kress Gift to the National Gallery, Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 86, no. 504 (1945): 55; Robert Langton Douglas, "Recent Additions to the Kress Collection," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 88 (1946): 84; *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1947), no. 37; Herbert Friedmann, "The Iconography of

the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronzio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 345–352; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 730–731 (as "maniera di Baronzio"); Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 1:209; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers* (London, 1976), 124–125.

- [19] See Cesare Brandi, "Conclusioni su alcuni discussi problemi della pittura riminese del Trecento," *Critica d'arte* 1 (1936): 236–237; Wilhelm Suida, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection Acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951), 36; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 31–32; John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC* (New York, 1963), 297; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 86; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 75; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 254–255; Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 38–39; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 68–69; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:316–318; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 64; Charles Seymour, *Early Italian Paintings in the Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven and London, 1970), 108; Hanna Kiel, "Review of Antologia di dipinti di cinque secoli, Circolo delle Stampe, Palazzo Serbelloni," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 345; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 130; George Szabó, *The Robert Lehman Collection: A Guide* (New York, 1975), 25; George Kaftal and Fabio Bisogni, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 3, *Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North East Italy* (Florence, 1978), 512, 514, 520; Fulvio Zuliani, "Tommaso da Modena," in *Tomaso da Modena: Catalogo*, ed. Luigi Menegazzi (Treviso, 1979), 105 n. 9; Keith Christiansen, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 42–45; Antonio Corbara, "Il ciclo francescano di Francesco da Rimini," *Romagna arte e storia* 4, no. 12 (1984): 59 ("Maestro del Battista"); Andrea Bacchi, "Maestro della Vita del Battista," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:611; Daniele Benati, "Pittura del Trecento in Emilia Romagna," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:208; John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 86; Pier Giorgio Pasini, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1990), 124, 125, 127; Fabrizio Mancinelli, "I dipinti della Pinacoteca dall'XI al XV secolo," in *Pinacoteca Vaticana:*

*Nella pittura l'espressione del messaggio divino nella luce la radice della creazione pittorica*, ed. Umberto Baldini (Milan, 1992), 162–163; Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 3, *Il Trecento: Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord* (Vatican City, 1994), 113–118; Katharine Baetjer, *European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Artists Born before 1865: A Summary Catalogue* (New York, 1995), 110; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 152, 164; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 63.

[20] See Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18; Miklós Boskovits, “Per la storia della pittura tra la Romagna e le Marche ai primi del '300,” *Arte cristiana* 81 (1993): 168–169; Daniele Benati, “Baronzio, Giovanni,” in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1992), 3:121; Daniele Benati, “Disegno del Trecento riminese,” in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 47, 55, 56 n. 3; Daniele Benati, “Il Dossale Corvisieri nel percorso di Giovanni Baronzio,” *L'Arco* 4(2006): 27; Daniele Benati, “Giovanni Baronzio nella pittura riminese del Trecento,” in *Giovanni Baronzio e la pittura a Rimini nel Trecento*, ed. Daniele Ferrara (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2008), 31; Christian Hornig, “Baronzio Giovanni,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 1993), 7:135; Alessandro Marchi, “La pittura della prima metà del Trecento nelle Marche: Presenze riminesi, pittori ‘stanieri’ e pittori locali,” in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 112–123; Anna Tambini, “In margine alla pittura riminese del Trecento,” *Studi romagnoli* 47 (1996): 466 (“attribuiti a Giovanni Baronzio”); Giovanna Ragionieri, “Baronzio, Giovanni,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 1:53.

[21] Altarpieces of this type and of similar size originally must have included Giovanni da Rimini's *Madonna and Child with Saints* in the Museo Correr in Venice (apparently a triptych but, as the horizontal grain of the wood shows, originally a type of dossal enriched with gables); Pietro da Rimini's fragmentary panel *Christ, the Madonna, and Saints* now in the Denver Art Museum; Francesco da Rimini's similar altarpiece now dismantled and dispersed among the Cini Collection in Venice and museums in Lausanne and Barcelona; Giovanni Baronzio's stories of Christ divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini; and Giovanni Baronzio's still intact altarpieces of this type in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino and in the church of San Francesco at Mercatello. We may also recall the early fourteenth-

century dossal of an anonymous master in the Museo Civico at Reggio Emilia, cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), figs. 64, 78, 159–163, 208, 210, 198, 206, 315, and some Bolognese examples, such as the dossals by the Pseudo Jacopino in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, for which see Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian, eds., *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia* (Venice, 2004), 78–83. In rare cases, horizontal dossals even larger in size than the abovementioned were produced, such as that by Giuliano da Rimini in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (164 × 300 cm).

- [22] See Véronique Rouchon Mouilleron, “Le pitture duecentesche del Battistero di Parma: Iconografia e organizzazione spaziale,” in *Battistero di Parma*, vol. 2, *La decorazione pittorica* (Milan, 1993), 34–116.
- [23] On the episode of the Child Saint John the Baptist Praying, see Isle Falk, *Studien zu Andrea Pisano* (PhD diss., University of Zurich, 1940), 128; Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, “Giovannino Battista: A Study in Renaissance Religious Symbolism,” *The Art Bulletin* 37 (1955): 88–89 and n. 27. The rare motif of the Baptist’s Descent into Limbo recurs in dossal no. 14 of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, which was cataloged by Piero Torriti as the work of a “Maestro senese–bizantino” but should probably be attributed to Gilio di Pietro. Cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 44–45; Miklós Boskovits, “Sulle tracce di un grande pittore toscano di metà Duecento,” *Arte cristiana* 98 (2010): 241–246. Based on the account in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, this is evidently a version of the more familiar iconography of Christ’s Descent into Limbo (*Anastasis*), in which the Baptist, easily recognizable, often appears among the Fathers awaiting the Savior’s arrival; cf. Elisabeth Lucchesi Palli, “Höllenfahrt Christi,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:325.
- [24] For example, *Annunciation to Zacharias*, formerly in the Street collection in Bath, is very unusual in iconography. It takes place in a Romanesque church packed with worshippers, and the priest is kneeling before the altar as if celebrating Mass. The iconography adopted in the other former Street panel is equally rare. Here, in the scene in which the disciples are sent by John to interrogate Christ, instead of the miracles performed by Christ we see a group of believers sitting on the ground and listening to the Savior’s words. Also rare is the twofold presence of Salome in *Feast of Herod*, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: in one she is dancing, and in the other she is presenting the decapitated head of the Baptist on a charger to the banqueters.
- [25] The episode of the Circumcision, if shown at all, substitutes either the scene of the Birth of the Baptist, as in the relief on the façade of San Giovanni in

Venere at Fossacesia (Chieti), or that of the Naming of the Baptist, as in the reliefs of the cathedral of Auxerre. See Otto Lehmann-Brockhaus, *Abruzzen und Molise: Kunst und Geschichte, Römische Forschungen der Bibliotheca Hertziana* (Munich, 1983), 175–176; Camille Enlart, “La sculpture des portails de la cathédrale d’Auxerre du XIIIe à la fin du XIVe siècle,” *Congres archeologique de France* 74 (1907): pl. between 602 and 603.

- [26] On the iconography of the Baptism of Christ, see Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l’iconographie de l’évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles, d’après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1916), 170–215; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 1:137–152.
- [27] On placing the hand on the person being baptized, cf. U. Miekke, “Taufe, Taufszenen,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1972), 2:244–247; and, more generally, Lucien De Bruyne, “L’imposition des mains dans l’art chrétien ancien,” *Rivista d’archeologia cristiana* 20 (1943): 113–278. Baptism by infusion—that is, by the pouring of water over the neophyte’s head—is usually represented from the fourteenth century onward.
- [28] See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 116–117.
- [29] With reference to Proverbs 30:27 (“the locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank”), Herbert Friedmann explained that in medieval thought, locusts were sometimes considered symbols of converted pagans. See Herbert Friedmann, “The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 345–352. But in the case of the altarpiece being discussed here, in which the Madonna and Child is flanked by stories of the Baptist, the locust in the Christ child’s hand presumably was intended to allude, more prosaically, to the food on which the Baptist lived in the wilderness of Judea (cf. Mt 3:4; Mk 1:6). As for the figures of lions on the throne, in medieval theology Mary was considered the personification of wisdom, seated on the throne of Solomon, in which (1 Kings 10:19) “two lions stood beside the stays” (i.e., beside the armrests). Cf. also Gregor Martin Lechner, “Sedes Sapientiae,” in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:113–118.
- [30] Herbert Friedmann, “The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 350, underlined this aspect.
- [31] A very important aspect of women’s dress of the period, the depth and width of the décolleté, is exemplified by the dresses in *Feast of Herod* (but

also by the dress of Mary herself in the Washington Madonna). This wider and deeper neckline reflects a fashion that spread in the 1330s; cf. Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: A) gli affreschi della Basilica Inferiore di Assisi,” *Prospettiva* 10 (1977): 21–31. Details such as the length of the dresses of the courtiers portrayed in the foreground in front of Herod’s table, or the length of their caps with side flaps, also reflect a phase of the development of fourteenth-century court fashion that precedes that illustrated by Giovanni Baronzio in the altarpiece dated 1345 in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino. Bellosi’s studies are useful in elucidating these aspects. Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974) 41–54. The details of dress I have cited, to which others can be added, therefore suggest a date for our panels in the 1330s.

- [32] For the five fragments with stories of Christ in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. 1110), cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 86 and fig. 280 (as Master of the Parry Adoration); Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18 and figs. 15–20 (as Giovanni Baronzio).
- [33] As Brigitte Klesse has shown, the ornamental motifs incised in the gold ground in the Gallery’s panels depicting stories of the Baptist recur in the abovementioned panels in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, in the fragments belonging to the same series now in the Accademia in Venice (no. 26), and in the altarpiece signed by Giovanni and dated 1345 in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 281.
- [34] For the altarpiece *Madonna and Child with Angels and Saints and Stories of Christ* in Urbino’s Galleria Nazionale (no. 125), cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 82; Pier Giorgio Pasini, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1990), 141–143.
- [35] The Gospel narrative (Lk 1:59–63) explains that Elizabeth’s kinsfolk and neighbors had suggested the boy be called Zacharias like his father and not John, as indicated by the angel at the time of the Annunciation (Lk 1:13: “and you shall call his name John”), objecting: “There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.”
- [36] It is Massimo Medica who observed that the two surviving fragments are similar in subject and iconography to those preserved in the church of San Francesco a Villa Verucchio until the mid-nineteenth century. The same scholar also assumed that, since this church was completed in 1324, the altarpiece for its high altar would have been commissioned and installed not many years later. Massimo Medica, “Una proposta per la provenienza del *Dossale* di Baronzio: La chiesa francescana di Villa Verucchio,” *L’Arco* 4 (2006): 13–16. The dating of c. 1330–1335 that Daniel Ferrara suggested for the dossal is too late, in my opinion. Cf. Daniele Ferrara, ed., *Giovanni*

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

*Baronzio e la pittura a Rimini nel Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2008), 108–115.

[37] Cesare Brandi, ed., *Mostra della pittura riminese del Trecento* (Rimini, 1935), xxiii, who considered the Madonna in the Gallery and the stories of the Baptist as works by an anonymous Riminese master, compared them with the stories of Christ now in the Galleria Nazionale of Palazzo Barberini, Rome, though the latter are said to be more closely linked to the traditions of painting in Rimini.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single piece of horizontally grained wood that has been thinned to approximately 2 cm and cradled. The x-radiographs show that pieces of fabric were applied to the panel before it was covered with gesso. The areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole. Lines marking major contours in the figures and architecture were inscribed and then reinforced with dark paint in the early stages of painting. Gold and silver leaf were identified in several decorative details on the architecture and in the brocade cloth behind the bed, but only gold leaf was found in the background.[1]

The panel was cut from an altarpiece along the ornamental gold leaf border separating it from the other scenes; at the left edge, the ornamental border is truncated. The panel has suffered some worm damage in the past. The painted surface is fairly well preserved, but inpainting along several old scratches has discolored, and there is a fair amount of inpainting in the body and in the blanket covering Saint Elizabeth's bed, in the group of women behind it, and in the lower part of the robes of the figures in the foreground. Much of the gold of the ornamental border along the lower edge is modern, and a 1 cm-wide strip above it is heavily inpainted. The painting was "cradled, restored, and varnished" by Stephen Pichetto in 1947 and "cleaned, restored, and varnished" by Mario Modestini in 1950.[2] Archival x-radiographs show an earlier cradle, indicating that the painting had been cradled before Stephen Pichetto worked on it. The surface film is now dull and discolored.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified gold and silver leaf using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) (see report dated February 16, 2000, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:318.
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### PROVENANCE

Possibly commissioned as part of the high altarpiece of a church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist in Emilia Romagna or in the Marche, Italy. George Edmund Street [1824-1881], London, by 1880; [1] probably by inheritance to his son, Arthur Edmund Street [1855-1938], Bath. Harold Irving Pratt [1877-1939], New York, by 1917. [2] (Wildenstein & Co., Inc., London, New York and Paris); sold 1947 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation; [3] gift 1952 to NGA. [1] The painting must have been acquired by Street, the English Gothic Revival architect, together with two other fragments from the same dismantled altarpiece: the *Annunciation of the Baptist's Birth* and the *Baptist Sending His Disciples to Christ*. In addition to the Gallery's painting, these two panels were also exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1880 (nos. 231 and 234). Both were presented anew at an exhibition in Bristol in 1937 as the property of Street's son in Bath. But since then all trace of them has been lost: it is possible these two were destroyed in a bombardment that struck the Street family's house during World War II; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle* (Brattleboro, 1947), 2nd edition: Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 472, citing information provided by Federico Zeri. The date of Street's acquisition of the panels is uncertain; perhaps it occurred between the dates of the first and second edition of his book *Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages. Notes of a Tour in the North of Italy*, London, 1855 (*Brick and Marble in the Middle Ages. Notes of Tours in the North of Italy*, London, 1874). In the first edition the author shows little interest in painting, but in the preface to the second he recalls his many visits to Italy and draws the reader's attention to the publication of James Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, London, 1864-1871. [2] Exactly when the panel passed into the collection of Pratt, the American oil industrialist and philanthropist, is also uncertain. Reports of this collection are found from 1909 onward (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of*

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*Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 33). Pratt lent the painting to a 1917 exhibition at Kleinberger Galleries in New York, from whom he possibly acquired it. By the time of the 1947 exhibition of Italian paintings at Wildenstein's in New York, it was no longer in the Pratt collection: the catalogue lists the owner as Wildenstein. [3] The bill of sale (copy in NGA curatorial files) from Wildenstein & Co. to the Kress Foundation for thirteen paintings and one tapestry room is dated 30 October 1947; payment was made in installments. The painting is described as by Giovanni Baronzio da Rimini.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1880 Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters, and by Deceased Masters of the British School. Winter Exhibition, Royal Academy, London, 1880, no. 228, as *Birth of St. John the Baptist* by an unknown artist.

1917 A Loan Exhibition of Italian Paintings, Kleinberger Galleries, New York, 1917, no. 70, repro., as by Giovanni Baronzio.

1947 Italian Paintings, Wildenstein & Co., Inc., New York, 1947, no. 37, repro., as by Giovanni Baronzio.

1995 Il Trecento Riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche, Museo della Città, Rimini, Italy, 1995-1996, no. 51, repro.

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Giovanni Baronzio  
Italian, active c. 1320 - 1350

## *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*

c. 1335

tempera on panel

painted surface: 100.6 × 48.2 cm (39 5/8 × 19 in.)

overall: 102.3 × 49.3 × 3.7 cm (40 1/4 × 19 7/16 × 1 7/16 in.)

framed: 138.4 × 70.1 cm (54 1/2 × 27 5/8 in.)

Inscription: on the Madonna's halo: AVE.MARIA.GRAT[IA].PLENA.D[OMI]N[U]S:  
(Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; from Luke 1:28)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1943.4.45

### ENTRY

This panel, along with its two companions *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist* and *The Baptism of Christ*, are fragments of a dismantled altarpiece whose original provenance is unknown but which was presumably commissioned for the high altar of a church dedicated to the Baptist in Emilia Romagna or, perhaps, in the Marche.[1] Keith Christiansen (1982)[2] proposed a reconstruction of the altar [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*) as follows: four stories of the Baptist would have accompanied, on either side, the central *Madonna and Child with Five Angels* now in the National Gallery of Art; to the upper left, *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* [fig. 2] formerly in the Street collection in Bath,[3] flanked by *Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of the Baptist* now in the Gallery. The lower register on the same side would have consisted of *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* [fig. 3], now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana,[4] and *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* [fig. 4], of which only a fragment survives, in the Seattle Art Museum.[5] The upper register on the right side would have consisted of *The Baptism of Christ* in the Gallery and *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* [fig. 5], formerly in the Street collection in Bath.[6] Two more panels formed the lower register on the same side: *Feast of Herod* [fig. 6], now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Robert Lehman Collection) in New

York,[7] flanked by *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* [fig. 7], formerly in the collection of Charles Loeser in Florence, its whereabouts now unknown.[8] A possible argument against Christiansen's reconstruction, as Laurence Kanter has informed me (in correspondence), is the fact that the vertically grained wood of the central Madonna seems to exclude its common origin with the panels representing the stories of the Baptist, which are painted on panels with horizontal grain. Kanter considers the possibility of two different altarpieces or one double-sided altarpiece. These proposals are interesting, but all the fragments share a common author, their dimensions are comparable, and similarity of pictorial conduct makes the hypothesis of a single-sided panel more likely after all. Complete disappearance (except for the Madonna) of the paintings on the back of a double-sided altarpiece would also seem rather unlikely. And for an altarpiece as large as two meters or more, instead of a single wooden support, the use of three panels was preferred. On the whole, Christiansen's hypothesis is likely to be correct.

The altarpiece of Saint John the Baptist had evidently been dismantled by the first half of the nineteenth century, for by the 1840s fragments of it had begun to emerge on the art market.[9] Adolfo Venturi (1906) was the first to attempt to classify more precisely the Baptism of Christ and the other two fragments then in the Sterbini collection in Rome.[10] Venturi recognized Bolognese influences deriving from the activity of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in that city. He suggested that the artist might have been someone like Jacopo di Paolo, active in Bologna from the close of the thirteenth century. A few years later Osvald Sirén (1916), unfamiliar, it seems, with Venturi's publication, asserted the common origin of the *Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of the Baptist; Annunciation of the Baptist's Birth; The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ; and Feast of Herod*.<sup>[11]</sup> He correctly attributed them to Giovanni Baronzio, the master who had signed and dated (1345) the altarpiece now in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino. The great Swedish art historian erred, however, in thinking that the panel of Saint John the Baptist Enthroned in Christ Church Gallery in Oxford stood in the center of the altarpiece. This painting is clearly Florentine, even if its proposed attribution to Lippo di Benivieni remains under discussion.<sup>[12]</sup> Sirén's proposal, indeed, convinced few scholars.<sup>[13]</sup> Later contributions to the problem accepted instead the proposal of Richard Offner (1924), who recognized in the Madonna and Child the work of an anonymous painter from the Romagna, to whom he attributed the stories of the Baptist.<sup>[14]</sup> Raimond van Marle (1924) also placed the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio in doubt. He preferred to classify *The Baptism of Christ* and its

companion panel now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana as works of the “Cavallinesque Riminese school.”[15] Lehman (1928), on the other hand, retained the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio and, in his analysis of *Feast of Herod*, linked it with the fragment depicting the Baptism.[16] Both Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) and Bernard Berenson (1932, 1936) also assigned to Giovanni Baronzio the panels they recognized as forming part of the same series.[17] Other art historians and catalogers followed suit.[18] Doubts then grew about Giovanni’s authorship: the fragments were assigned instead to an ad hoc Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist. This opinion prevailed in the literature of the following decades; it was also expressed in the catalogs of the Gallery and repeated in more recent publications.[19] Since 1987, however, the attribution to Giovanni Baronzio has been reinstated, and reinforced with fresh arguments, both for the group of panels that concerns us here and for other paintings that had in the past been attributed to the artist; scholars have increasingly supported this suggestion.[20]

Altarpieces in the elongated horizontal form of thirteenth-century dossals, approximately one meter (or a little more) in height and two and a half meters in width, such as the dismantled altarpiece of the Baptist being discussed here, are rare in Tuscany in the fourteenth century, but must have been fairly common in a region like Emilia Romagna.[21] They usually showed the Madonna and Child Enthroned (or, more rarely, a story of Christ) at the center flanked by saints or biblical or legendary narrative scenes. An extended cycle of stories of the Baptist comparable to that of our altarpiece has only survived in Emilia Romagna in the field of mural paintings, more particularly in those of the dome of the baptistery of Parma.[22] Our altarpiece dedicated to Saint John the Baptist is unusual in its iconographic program: it lacks scenes usually included in cycles of the Baptist, such as the Visitation, the *Ecce Agnus Dei*, the Dance of Salome, or the Burial of the Baptist, while it includes such rare episodes as Saint John the Baptist Praying in the Wilderness or the Baptist’s Descent into Limbo.[23] Nor did the artist hesitate to introduce into the individual episodes motifs that diverge from the usual iconography.[24] As regards the panels in the Gallery (as seen in *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*), it is unusual for the episode of the Washing of the Infant Saint John, often placed in the foreground with an intentional allusion to the theme of baptism, to be dispensed with, as it is here; it is replaced instead by the scene in the background, more homely than symbolic in tone, of two handmaids wrapping the newborn child in swaddling cloths. The Naming of the Baptist, which often represents a self-sufficient scene, is here inserted in the scene of the Birth, and indeed placed in the foreground and

combined to the far right with the episode of the Circumcision of the recalcitrant child.[25] On the other hand, in *The Baptism of Christ*, the painter remains faithful to the tradition of representing Christ submerged up to his hips in the water of the Jordan, the Baptist placed to the left, standing on the rocky banks of the river, and two angels holding Christ's clothes to the right. In the upper part of the panel the heavens open, and we catch a glimpse of the half-length figure of God the Father blessing.[26] A motif of archaizing character that gradually disappeared in the fourteenth century is that of John imposing his hand on Christ instead of pouring water over his head.[27]

With regard to the Madonna and Child, a motif for which the painters of Rimini had a special predilection was the cloth of honor supported by angels behind the Virgin's throne [fig. 8]. On the other hand, the motif of the child grasping his mother's veil—an allusion to the Passion [28]—is more widespread in fourteenth-century painting in Tuscany than in Emilia Romagna. The miniature lions on the throne armrests allude to the throne of Solomon, while the enormous locust in the hand of the child reminds us of the diet—locusts and wild honey—on which the Baptist lived during his years in the wilderness.[29]

The precision in representing the insect [30] attests to the artist's acute interest in various aspects and curiosities of daily life. Here as elsewhere in his paintings, he consciously participated in the more naturalistic and descriptive tendencies of Gothic art. The pursuit of naturalistic detail—in costume, in attributes, in setting—distinguished an innovative current in Italian painting in the second quarter of the fourteenth century that sought to disassociate itself from the solemn and classicizing manner of previous decades. Additional proof of this interest are the elaborate architectural settings of many of the episodes of the Baptist's legend (as in the temple porch in *Birth of the Baptist*, with its cantilevered upper floor and Gothic double-lancet windows), the attention devoted to characterizing the protagonists' states of mind, and, not least, the costumes worn, in particular in *Feast of Herod*. Peculiarities of fashion in turn provide useful clues for pinpointing the date of the altarpiece.[31] Other features of *Madonna and Child*, such as the use of chrysography and the sharp proportional difference between the figures of Mary and the angels, might at first sight appear retrograde. More careful observation shows that the artist used gilded highlights not in the Byzantine manner but to accentuate the volumetric relief of the forms below the precious garments and to enliven the sweeping folds of the drapery. The motif of angels peering out from behind the cloth of honor as if playing hide-and-seek is itself an

indication of the merry, make-believe spirit that animates the gothicizing artistic current of the time.

Several clues confirm the attribution of our panels to Giovanni Baronzio. First, there are clear analogies between the fragments of the altarpiece of Saint John and other works generally attributed to the artist, such as the solemn mantle-clad men to the right of our *Birth of the Baptist* and those of *Christ before Pilate* now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, or the peculiar, splayed-leg pose of the Baptist in the baptism scene that recurs in the figure of Adam in *Descent of Christ into Limbo*, also in the Gemäldegalerie.[32] The facial features also coincide: characterized by drooping heads, squared forms, high foreheads, eyes reduced to narrow slits, flattened noses, powerful chins, rounded jaws, they are found in all the works of the artist. The incised decoration of the gold ground is also an important clue for associating our panels with Giovanni Baronzio.[33]

As for the date of our dismantled altarpiece, it may be placed in or shortly before the mid-fourth decade of the fourteenth century, on the basis of comparisons with the artist's only signed and dated work.[34] A motif like the swirling and zigzagging folds of the mantle as it falls to the ground is rendered in a very similar way both in the Madonna in Washington and in the altarpiece in Urbino. The latter, however, is likely to be the later of the two, as a number of features make clear. Evidence of its modernity includes the wider décolleté of Mary's dress than that of the Virgin in Washington, and the fact that her head is covered with a transparent veil, enabling us to glimpse her elaborate and modish hairstyle with two braids raised and knotted together over the crown of her head. Abandoning the usual position of Christ in the Virgin's lap, Giovanni Baronzio represents him instead standing on the ground and gesturing insistently to be restored to his mother's arms. No such liberties are found in the Gallery Madonna, which is characterized by softer modeling and by an absence of the delicate and incisive contours that delineate the forms of the faces and hands in the Urbino Madonna and Child. In observing the stories of the Baptist, moreover, we cannot fail to notice the absence of the stiff and formal reserve of the conduct that distinguishes the narrative scenes of the altarpiece dated 1345: the protagonists of the Nativity and of the Baptism in the Gallery are squatter in proportions but more natural and spontaneous in the way they express themselves with gestures. The attitude of the man who observes Zacharias writing the name of John on a sheet of paper reveals all too clearly the disapproval of those present in the choice of this name, underlined by the narrative in Luke's Gospel.[35] The energetic pose of the Baptist, bending forward as far as

he can to place his hand on the head of Jesus, immersed in the waters of Jordan, is a powerful expression of his zeal and the profound consciousness he has of his role.

The period that elapsed between the execution of the dismantled altarpiece of the Baptist and the panel now in Urbino cannot have been brief, but its duration is difficult to gauge given the lack of other securely datable works by Baronzio. A probable *terminus post quem* could be offered by the dossal now divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the collection of the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini; according to a plausible recent proposal, the dossal must have been commissioned for the high altar of the Franciscan church of Villa Verucchio and must date to c. 1330.[36] The essential immobility of the individual compositions contained in this altarpiece, the rudimentary architectural backdrops, and the strongly simplified drawing that still recalls models of Pietro da Rimini suggest that this is an early work of Giovanni Baronzio. The putative Villa Verucchio dossal, which Cesare Brandi compared with the stories of the Baptist,[37] resembles the fragments being discussed here, especially in its delicate modeling, sharp chiaroscuro, and facial characteristics, but it can be assumed to belong to an earlier creative phase in the career of Giovanni Baronzio. The most probable date for the panels in the Gallery therefore would seem to be c. 1335.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Giovanni Baronzio as proposed by Keith Christiansen (color images are NGA objects): a. *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* (fig. 2); b. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*; c. *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* (fig. 3); d. *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* (fig. 4); e. *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*; f. *The Baptism of Christ*; g. *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* (fig. 5); h. *Feast of Herod* (fig. 6); i. *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* (fig. 7)



**fig. 2** Giovanni Baronzio, *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Street collection, Bath



**fig. 3** Giovanni Baronzio, *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Vaticana. Image: Scala/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees*, c. 1335, wood transferred to Masonite, Seattle Art Museum, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Eduardo Calderon



**fig. 5** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Street collection, Bath



**fig. 6** Giovanni Baronzio, *Feast of Herod*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection



**fig. 7** Giovanni Baronzio, *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, now lost, formerly in the Charles Loeser collection, Florence

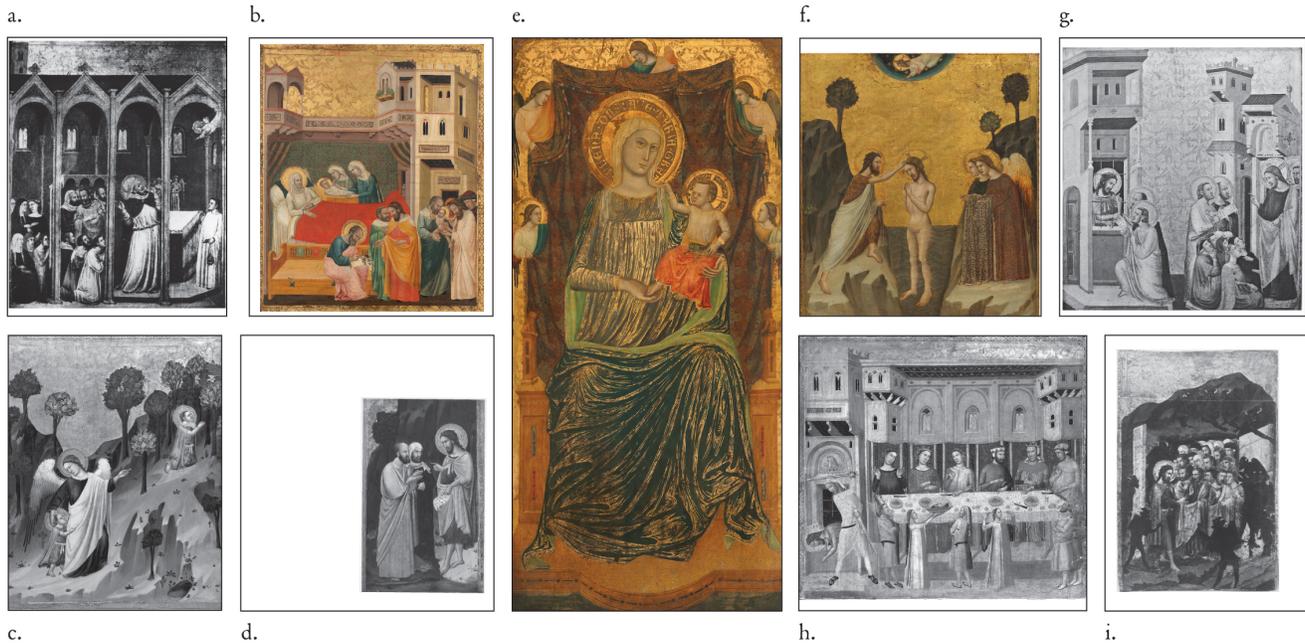
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**fig. 8** Detail of upper section, Giovanni Baronzio, *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed altarpiece by Giovanni Baronzio as proposed by Keith Christiansen (1982)

- a. *Annunciation of the Birth of the Baptist* (Entry fig. 2)
- b. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*
- c. *Young Baptist Led by an Angel into the Wilderness* (Entry fig. 3)
- d. *The Baptist Interrogated by the Pharisees* (Entry fig. 4)
- e. *Madonna and Child with Five Angels*
- f. *The Baptism of Christ*
- g. *The Baptist Sends His Disciples to Christ* (Entry fig. 5)
- h. *Feast of Herod* (Entry fig. 6)
- i. *The Baptist's Descent into Limbo* (Entry fig. 7)

**NOTES**

[1] In the infrequent cases in which their original destination is known, horizontal dossals come from churches and altars dedicated to the saint whose legend they illustrate; cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 140–144; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 300, 538, 632. Fourteenth-century Riminese painters also frequently painted

works for Marchigian churches.

- [2] Keith Christiansen, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 42–45.
- [3] Cf. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*, Provenance note 1. The panel's measurements given in *Art Treasures of the West Country* (Bristol, 1937) are 19 x 15 in. (48.2 x 38.1 cm).
- [4] Cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1, and Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 3 *Il Trecento: Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord* (Vatican City, 1994), 113–118. The panel measures 47.8 x 40.5 cm.
- [5] Venturi linked the panel, with a provenance from the Sterbini collection (cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1) and then on the art market (Galleria Sangiorgi) in Rome, with the series of episodes from the life of the Baptist. See Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 92; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 113. Acquired for the Samuel H. Kress Collection in 1936, it has been in the Seattle Art Museum (It 37/M 394 L1.1) since 1952. It measures 23.8 x 18.4 cm.
- [6] Cf. *The Birth, Naming, and Circumcision of Saint John the Baptist*, Provenance note 1. *Art Treasures of the West Country* (Bristol, 1937) gives its measurements as 17 x 15 in (43.2 x 40.6 cm).
- [7] Purchased by Philip Lehman from the Galerie Trotti in Paris in 1921, the panel was donated by Robert Lehman to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1975 (no. 1975.1.103). See John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 86–88. The painting had already been introduced to the art historical literature by Osvald Sirén, who had seen it on the art market in Paris; Osvald Sirén, "Giuliano, Pietro and Giovanni da Rimini," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 29 (1916): 320. Pope-Hennessy and Kanter identified the coat of arms on the reverse of the panel as that of the Agnelli dei Malerbi family and suggested that "the panel may have been preserved in the Agnelli collection in Rome or in the Casa Malerbi at Lugo (Ravenna)." A possible connection between the presumed provenance from Lugo (Ravenna) and the life and interests of Luigi Malerbi (1776–1843), *canonico*, musician, and collector from that little town, has also been surmised. See Anna Tambini, in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 264, but without convincing evidence.
- [8] This panel formed part of the Sterbini collection in 1906 (cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1) but was probably acquired shortly after by Charles Loeser (1865–1928) for his Florentine collection. In 1926, however, the painting was auctioned in Florence; it was attributed in the sale catalog

to the “scuola dell’Orcagna.” See *Impresa Vendita Cesare Galardelli: Catalogo della Vendita di Arte Antica di proprietà del Sig. L. M. Banti*, Florence, April, 14–16, 1926, lot 220. Wilhelm Suida stated that the panel had been the property of Mrs. R. Calnan. Wilhelm Suida, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951), 36. The painting’s measurements are unknown.

- [9] Cf. *The Baptism of Christ*, Provenance note 1.
- [10] Adolfo Venturi, *La Galleria Sterbini in Roma: Saggio illustrativo* (Rome, 1906), 48–53.
- [11] Osvald Sirén, “Giuliano, Pietro and Giovanni da Rimini,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 29 (1916): 320.
- [12] The panel (no. 6), which Richard Offner assigned to the Florentine “following of the St. Cecilia Master,” has also been attributed to Buffalmacco and, by the present writer, to Lippo di Benivieni. In any case the more recent literature generally has recognized it as the work of a Florentine artist. See Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 178–180. It has further been shown that it used to belong to the church of Santa Maria degli Ughi in Florence.
- [13] Osvald Sirén and Maurice Brockwell repeated the view that *Saint John the Baptist Enthroned* now in Oxford belonged with the dispersed series of stories of the same saint, and Robert Lehman and L. Venturi accepted this premise. See Osvald Sirén and Maurice W. Brockwell, *Catalogue of a Loan Exhibition of Italian Primitives* (New York, 1917), 181; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 74; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 94; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 116, repro. Raimond van Marle, “Contributo allo studio della scuola pittorica del Trecento a Rimini,” *Rassegna Municipale Rimini* 4 (1935): 8–15, expressed uncertainty about the proposal, which has since been abandoned by everyone.
- [14] It is worth recalling that Robert Lehman (1928), commenting on *Decollation of the Baptist and Presentation of His Head*, cited Richard Offner’s verbal opinion, evidently pronounced some years previously, in favor of Giovanni Baronzio’s authorship. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 74. But by 1924 Offner had changed his mind. He then argued that the Lehman panel and the other two stories of the Baptist formerly in the Pratt collection had been painted around 1340 by the anonymous master of the Kahn Madonna. Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 245.

- [15] Raimond Van Marle gathered under this loose definition various artists' works, some of which have more recently been recognized as the work of Giovanni Baronzio. Apart from the two stories of the Baptist mentioned in the text, they include the stories of Christ now in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome, the six small panels with stories of Christ in the Accademia in Venice, and *Adoration of the Magi* now in the Courtauld Institute Art Gallery in London. See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 4, *The Local Schools of North Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 288.
- [16] Robert Lehman and following him some other authors cited an otherwise unspecified story of the Baptist in the Ryerson collection in Chicago that allegedly formed part of the same series. Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 74. But the fact that this painting was not among those that entered the Art Institute of Chicago from the Ryerson collection suggests the claim is based on a misunderstanding.
- [17] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 92, 94; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 113, 116. Among the works attributed to Giovanni Baronzio, Bernard Berenson listed the Kahn Madonna, the Lehman Feast of Herod, the Pratt Birth of the Baptist, and the Angel Leading the Baptist into the Wilderness in the Pinacoteca Vaticana. To these panels he later added the Baptism of Christ in the Kress collection. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 43–45; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 37–39.
- [18] *Guida della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, Musei e Gallerie Pontificie (Vatican City, 1933), 54; *An Exhibition of Italian Paintings Lent by Mr. Samuel H. Kress of New York to the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences* (1935), 32; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "Fine Italian Paintings from Kress Exhibition," *Art News* 32 (1934): 8–9; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "Medieval Style in Painting," *Art News* 38 (1940): 14; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "On the Italian Renaissance Painters in the National Gallery," *Art News* 40 (1941): 17; Alfred M. Frankfurter, "How Modern the Renaissance," *Art News* 45 (1947): 17; *Arts of the Middle Ages: A Loan Exhibition* (Boston, 1940), 20; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 60, 238; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 13; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1945), 9, 10; "The New Kress Gift to the National Gallery, Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 86, no. 504 (1945): 55; Robert Langton Douglas, "Recent Additions to the Kress Collection," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 88 (1946): 84; *Italian Paintings*

(New York, 1947), no. 37; Herbert Friedmann, "The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronzio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 345–352; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 730–731 (as "maniera di Baronzio"); Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 1:209; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers* (London, 1976), 124–125.

- [19] See Cesare Brandi, "Conclusioni su alcuni discussi problemi della pittura riminese del Trecento," *Critica d'arte* 1 (1936): 236–237; Wilhelm Suida, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection Acquired by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1945–1951* (Washington, DC, 1951), 36; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 31–32; John Walker, *National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC* (New York, 1963), 297; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 86; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 75; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 254–255; Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 38–39; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 68–69; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:316–318; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 64; Charles Seymour, *Early Italian Paintings in the Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven and London, 1970), 108; Hanna Kiel, "Review of Antologia di dipinti di cinque secoli, Circolo delle Stampe, Palazzo Serbelloni," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 345; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 130; George Szabó, *The Robert Lehman Collection: A Guide* (New York, 1975), 25; George Kaftal and Fabio Bisogni, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 3, *Iconography of the Saints in the Painting of North East Italy* (Florence, 1978), 512, 514, 520; Fulvio Zuliani, "Tommaso da Modena," in *Tommaso da Modena: Catalogo*, ed. Luigi Menegazzi (Treviso, 1979), 105 n. 9; Keith Christiansen, "Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 42–45; Antonio Corbara, "Il ciclo francescano di Francesco da Rimini," *Romagna arte e storia* 4, no. 12 (1984): 59 ("Maestro del Battista"); Andrea Bacchi, "Maestro della Vita del Battista," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:611; Daniele Benati, "Pittura del Trecento in Emilia Romagna," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:208; John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter, *The Robert Lehman Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings* (New York, 1987), 86; Pier Giorgio Pasini, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1990), 124, 125, 127; Fabrizio Mancinelli, "I dipinti

della Pinacoteca dall'XI al XV secolo," in *Pinacoteca Vaticana: Nella pittura l'espressione del messaggio divino nella luce la radice della creazione pittorica*, ed. Umberto Baldini (Milan, 1992), 162–163; Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana*, vol. 3, *Il Trecento: Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord* (Vatican City, 1994), 113–118; Katharine Baetjer, *European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Artists Born before 1865: A Summary Catalogue* (New York, 1995), 110; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 152, 164; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 63.

[20] See Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18; Miklós Boskovits, "Per la storia della pittura tra la Romagna e le Marche ai primi del '300," *Arte cristiana* 81 (1993): 168–169; Daniele Benati, "Baronzio, Giovanni," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1992), 3:121; Daniele Benati, "Disegno del Trecento riminese," in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 47, 55, 56 n. 3; Daniele Benati, "Il Dossale Corvisieri nel percorso di Giovanni Baronzio," *L'Arco* 4(2006): 27; Daniele Benati, "Giovanni Baronzio nella pittura riminese del Trecento," in *Giovanni Baronzio e la pittura a Rimini nel Trecento*, ed. Daniele Ferrara (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2008), 31; Christian Hornig, "Baronzio Giovanni," in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 1993), 7:135; Alessandro Marchi, "La pittura della prima metà del Trecento nelle Marche: Presenze riminesi, pittori 'stanieri' e pittori locali," in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 112–123; Anna Tambini, "In margine alla pittura riminese del Trecento," *Studi romagnoli* 47 (1996): 466 ("attribuiti a Giovanni Baronzio"); Giovanna Ragionieri, "Baronzio, Giovanni," in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 1:53.

[21] Altarpieces of this type and of similar size originally must have included Giovanni da Rimini's *Madonna and Child with Saints* in the Museo Correr in Venice (apparently a triptych but, as the horizontal grain of the wood shows, originally a type of dossal enriched with gables); Pietro da Rimini's fragmentary panel *Christ, the Madonna, and Saints* now in the Denver Art Museum; Francesco da Rimini's similar altarpiece now dismantled and dispersed among the Cini Collection in Venice and museums in Lausanne and Barcelona; Giovanni Baronzio's stories of Christ divided between the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini in Rome and the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Rimini; and Giovanni Baronzio's still intact altarpieces of this type in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino and in the church of San Francesco at Mercatello. We may also recall the early fourteenth-

century dossal of an anonymous master in the Museo Civico at Reggio Emilia, cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), figs. 64, 78, 159–163, 208, 210, 198, 206, 315, and some Bolognese examples, such as the dossals by the Pseudo Jacopino in the Pinacoteca Nazionale, for which see Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelesian, eds., *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia* (Venice, 2004), 78–83. In rare cases, horizontal dossals even larger in size than the abovementioned were produced, such as that by Giuliano da Rimini in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (164 × 300 cm).

- [22] See Véronique Rouchon Mouilleron, “Le pitture duecentesche del Battistero di Parma: Iconografia e organizzazione spaziale,” in *Battistero di Parma*, vol. 2, *La decorazione pittorica* (Milan, 1993), 34–116.
- [23] On the episode of the Child Saint John the Baptist Praying, see Isle Falk, *Studien zu Andrea Pisano* (PhD diss., University of Zurich, 1940), 128; Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, “Giovannino Battista: A Study in Renaissance Religious Symbolism,” *The Art Bulletin* 37 (1955): 88–89 and n. 27. The rare motif of the Baptist’s Descent into Limbo recurs in dossal no. 14 of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, which was cataloged by Piero Torriti as the work of a “Maestro senese–bizantino” but should probably be attributed to Gilio di Pietro. Cf. Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 44–45; Miklós Boskovits, “Sulle tracce di un grande pittore toscano di metà Duecento,” *Arte cristiana* 98 (2010): 241–246. Based on the account in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, this is evidently a version of the more familiar iconography of Christ’s Descent into Limbo (*Anastasis*), in which the Baptist, easily recognizable, often appears among the Fathers awaiting the Savior’s arrival; cf. Elisabeth Lucchesi Palli, “Höllenfahrt Christi,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:325.
- [24] For example, *Annunciation to Zacharias*, formerly in the Street collection in Bath, is very unusual in iconography. It takes place in a Romanesque church packed with worshippers, and the priest is kneeling before the altar as if celebrating Mass. The iconography adopted in the other former Street panel is equally rare. Here, in the scene in which the disciples are sent by John to interrogate Christ, instead of the miracles performed by Christ we see a group of believers sitting on the ground and listening to the Savior’s words. Also rare is the twofold presence of Salome in *Feast of Herod*, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: in one she is dancing, and in the other she is presenting the decapitated head of the Baptist on a charger to the banqueters.
- [25] The episode of the Circumcision, if shown at all, substitutes either the scene of the Birth of the Baptist, as in the relief on the façade of San Giovanni in

Venere at Fossacesia (Chieti), or that of the Naming of the Baptist, as in the reliefs of the cathedral of Auxerre. See Otto Lehmann-Brockhaus, *Abruzzen und Molise: Kunst und Geschichte, Römische Forschungen der Bibliotheca Hertziana* (Munich, 1983), 175–176; Camille Enlart, “La sculpture des portails de la cathédrale d’Auxerre du XIIIe à la fin du XIVe siècle,” *Congres archeologique de France* 74 (1907): pl. between 602 and 603.

- [26] On the iconography of the Baptism of Christ, see Gabriel Millet, *Recherches sur l’iconographie de l’évangile aux XIVe, XVe et XVIe siècles, d’après les monuments de Mistra, de la Macédoine et du Mont-Athos*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1916), 170–215; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 1:137–152.
- [27] On placing the hand on the person being baptized, cf. U. Miekke, “Taufe, Taufszenen,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1972), 2:244–247; and, more generally, Lucien De Bruyne, “L’imposition des mains dans l’art chrétien ancien,” *Rivista d’archeologia cristiana* 20 (1943): 113–278. Baptism by infusion—that is, by the pouring of water over the neophyte’s head—is usually represented from the fourteenth century onward.
- [28] See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 116–117.
- [29] With reference to Proverbs 30:27 (“the locusts have no king, yet all of them march in rank”), Herbert Friedmann explained that in medieval thought, locusts were sometimes considered symbols of converted pagans. See Herbert Friedmann, “The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 345–352. But in the case of the altarpiece being discussed here, in which the Madonna and Child is flanked by stories of the Baptist, the locust in the Christ child’s hand presumably was intended to allude, more prosaically, to the food on which the Baptist lived in the wilderness of Judea (cf. Mt 3:4; Mk 1:6). As for the figures of lions on the throne, in medieval theology Mary was considered the personification of wisdom, seated on the throne of Solomon, in which (1 Kings 10:19) “two lions stood beside the stays” (i.e., beside the armrests). Cf. also Gregor Martin Lechner, “Sedes Sapientiae,” in *Marienlexikon*, ed. Remigius Bäumer and Leo Scheffczyk, 6 vols. (St. Ottilien, 1994), 6:113–118.
- [30] Herbert Friedmann, “The Iconography of the Madonna and Child by Giovanni Baronio in the Kress Collection, National Gallery, Washington,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 350, underlined this aspect.
- [31] A very important aspect of women’s dress of the period, the depth and width of the décolleté, is exemplified by the dresses in *Feast of Herod* (but also by the dress of Mary herself in the Washington Madonna). This wider

and deeper neckline reflects a fashion that spread in the 1330s; cf. Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: A) gli affreschi della Basilica Inferiore di Assisi,” *Prospettiva* 10 (1977): 21–31. Details such as the length of the dresses of the courtiers portrayed in the foreground in front of Herod’s table, or the length of their caps with side flaps, also reflect a phase of the development of fourteenth-century court fashion that precedes that illustrated by Giovanni Baronzio in the altarpiece dated 1345 in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino. Bellosi’s studies are useful in elucidating these aspects. Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974) 41–54. The details of dress I have cited, to which others can be added, therefore suggest a date for our panels in the 1330s.

- [32] For the five fragments with stories of Christ in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. 1110), cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 86 and fig. 280 (as Master of the Parry Adoration); Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 15–18 and figs. 15–20 (as Giovanni Baronzio).
- [33] As Brigitte Klesse has shown, the ornamental motifs incised in the gold ground in the Gallery’s panels depicting stories of the Baptist recur in the abovementioned panels in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, in the fragments belonging to the same series now in the Accademia in Venice (no. 26), and in the altarpiece signed by Giovanni and dated 1345 in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 281.
- [34] For the altarpiece *Madonna and Child with Angels and Saints and Stories of Christ* in Urbino’s Galleria Nazionale (no. 125), cf. Carlo Volpe, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Milan, 1965), 82; Pier Giorgio Pasini, *La pittura riminese del Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1990), 141–143.
- [35] The Gospel narrative (Lk 1:59–63) explains that Elizabeth’s kinsfolk and neighbors had suggested the boy be called Zacharias like his father and not John, as indicated by the angel at the time of the Annunciation (Lk 1:13: “and you shall call his name John”), objecting: “There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.”
- [36] It is Massimo Medica who observed that the two surviving fragments are similar in subject and iconography to those preserved in the church of San Francesco a Villa Verucchio until the mid-nineteenth century. The same scholar also assumed that, since this church was completed in 1324, the altarpiece for its high altar would have been commissioned and installed not many years later. Massimo Medica, “Una proposta per la provenienza del Dossale di Baronzio: La chiesa francescana di Villa Verucchio,” *L’Arco* 4 (2006): 13–16. The dating of c. 1330–1335 that Daniel Ferrara suggested for the dossal is too late, in my opinion. Cf. Daniele Ferrara, ed., *Giovanni Baronzio e la pittura a Rimini nel Trecento* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2008),

108–115.

- [37] Cesare Brandi, ed., *Mostra della pittura riminese del Trecento* (Rimini, 1935), xxiii, who considered the Madonna in the Gallery and the stories of the Baptist as works by an anonymous Riminese master, compared them with the stories of Christ now in the Galleria Nazionale of Palazzo Barberini, Rome, though the latter are said to be more closely linked to the traditions of painting in Rimini.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a panel made from a single, vertically grained plank of wood, which has been thinned to approximately 1.2 cm and cradled. It was covered with pieces of fabric, followed by gesso, and areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole. The artist used both gold and silver leaf in the cloth of honor, but just gold leaf in the background.[1] The gold background is worked freehand, while the Virgin's halo is punched as well as incised. Sgraffito technique was used to reveal the gold and silver areas in the cloth of honor, but the chrysography of the Virgin's robe was created by mordant gilding on top of the paint layer. The outlines of architecture and major contours of the figures were incised and then reinforced or redrawn with dark paint in the early stages of painting. Stephen Pichetto applied the present cradle and collar and treated the painting in 1942–1943,[2] but old, undated x-radiographs show an earlier, wider cradle in place. The panel shows some damage from worm tunneling. The background is terminated along its upper edge with an ornamental gold leaf border that is absent on the other three sides of the panel, indicating that they have probably been cropped. There are numerous small, scattered losses over the whole image. The largest areas of inpainting are located in the four corners, in the forehead and halo of the Madonna, and along the bottom edge. The chrysography of the Madonna's robes is slightly worn. The painted surface is coated with a dull and somewhat yellowed varnish.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified gold and silver leaf using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (see report dated February 16, 2000, in NGA conservation files). At that time, XRF analysis suggested that the pigment in the Virgin's blue robe was azurite.

## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

- [2] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:316, reported that Stephen Pichetto “cradled, cleaned, restored, and varnished” the painting.
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### PROVENANCE

Possibly commissioned as part of the high altarpiece of a church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist in Emilia Romagna or in the Marche, Italy. Léon Ouroussoff [1877-1933], Vienna and later, Monte Carlo and Cannes, early twentieth century; [1] purchased February 1920 by Edward Fowles for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); [2] sold to Otto H. Kahn [1867-1934], New York, by 1924; by inheritance to his wife, Addie Wolff Kahn [d. 1949], New York; sold 18 January 1937 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); [3] sold 1942 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; gift 1943 to NGA. [1] Léon Ouroussoff had been Russian ambassador in Vienna. In the years after World War I his collection was reported to be both in Cannes and in Monte Carlo. [2] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422. [3] Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 124, describes Otto Kahn’s acquisition of the panel from Duveen Brothers and its sale back to the company by Kahn’s widow. See also Duveen Brothers Records: reel 79, box 224, folder 7; reel 328, box 473, folder 2.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1924 Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors, Duveen Brothers, New York, 1924, no. 9, as by Giovanni Baronzio (no. 33 in illustrated 1926 version of catalogue).

1940 Arts of the Middle Ages: A Loan Exhibition, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1940, no. 57, as The Virgin and Child Enthroned.

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# *Grifo di Tancredi*

Italian, active 1271 - 1303 (or possibly 1328)

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Grifo must have been active in the profession of painter by 1271: in that year, he rented a workshop in Volterra together with Filippo di Jacopo. Therefore, his birth date probably should be placed before rather than after 1250. The same artist is likely the “Grifo di Tancredi” who was paid for work on painting the Fontana Maggiore in Perugia in 1281. By 1295, when he hired an apprentice for his shop, he had secured his residence in Florence. His enrollment in the Florentine painters’ guild can be placed in the period between 1297 and 1312. In 1303 he executed a now lost painting in the Palazzo Vecchio, commemorating a political event of the day. It seems unlikely that he can be identified with the Grifo, son of the late Tancredi da Montegonzi, cited in a document of 1328,[1] although it cannot be excluded, given the relative scarcity of the name. The fragmentary inscription on a portable triptych in the collection of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres and now on loan to the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh, conjecturally integrated as “...H[oc] OP[us] Q[uod] FEC[it] M[agister] GRI[fus] FL[orentinus],”[2] has enabled a small group of works hitherto assembled by Roberto Longhi (1974) under the conventional name of Master of San Gaggio to be attributed to the painter.[3] Grifo probably had been trained under the prolific artist strongly rooted in the traditions of pre-Cimabuesque Florentine painting known under the conventional name of the Magdalen Master. The two seem to have worked together in some enterprises.[4] Cimabue’s influence was to prove decisive in Grifo’s more advanced phase. In such late works as the *Maestà* from the monastery of San Gaggio near Florence (now in the Galleria dell’Accademia), Grifo seems to have been swayed by the influence of the Master of Santa Cecilia, recently identified with Gaddo Gaddi, head of an important workshop and one of the protagonists of fourteenth-century painting in Florence.[5]

Grifo di Tancredi is sometimes considered one of the first followers of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337), but his art exemplifies an alternative approach to that of his great contemporary. He started out from the lessons of Cimabue but developed further, aiming at an art of solemn and realistic composure, capable of expressing complex emotions. Sometimes he shows himself able to confer monumentality on

his scenes, as in the fragmentary frescoes in the chapel of San Giacomo at Castelpulci. His paintings in general do not lack the narrative clarity and the classical spirit that distinguish the works of Giotto, but he never achieved Giotto's volumetric richness or mastery of perspective; the settings of Grifo's narrative scenes reveal his difficulty in creating optically convincing settings around his figures.

[1] The person cited in the document renounced the rights of patronage he had in the church of San Cresci at Monteficalli (now Montefioralle at Greve in Chianti), near Florence; cf. Giovanni Lami, *Sanctae ecclesiae Florentinae monumenta: Quibus notitiae innumerae ad omnigenam Etruriae aliarumque regionum historiam spectantes continentur*, 4 vols. (Florence, 1758), 1:599 n. It would have been unusual for a painter to have enjoyed such rights. For further documentary information on Grifo di Tancredi, see Angelo Tartuferi, "Grifo di Tancredi," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 83 vols. (Rome, 1960–2015), 59(2002):397.

[2] Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 122, thus expanded the abbreviations of the surviving part of the inscription. More recent scholarship generally accepted this proposed reading of the inscription; cf. Nicolas Barker, Hugh Brigstocke, and Timothy Clifford, *A Poet in Paradise: Lord Lindsay and Christian Art*, ed. Aidan Weston-Lewis (Edinburgh, 2000), 34.

[3] Roberto Longhi, "Giudizio sul Duecento (1948)," in *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi*, 14 vols. (Florence, 1961–1984), 7(1974):14–15 and 44, gathered a number of paintings under the name of "Maestro di San Gaggio": the altarpiece with the Maestà and four saints in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence (no. 6115); the polyptych now divided between the National Gallery of Art and the Musée de Chambéry; and the triptych divided between Christ Church Gallery in Oxford and the heirs of the Sessa collection formerly in Milan. For the altarpiece in the Accademia, see Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 94–98; and for further additions to the catalog, see Angelo Tartuferi, "Grifo di Tancredi," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 83 vols. (Rome, 1960–2015), 59(2002):397–399. For the panel at Oxford, see J. Byam Shaw, *Paintings by Old Masters at Christ Church Oxford* (London, 1967), 29.

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[4] Grifo painted the stories of Christ to the sides of a half-length Madonna and Child, now in the Timken Art Gallery in San Diego; see Laurence B. Kanter, in *Timken Museum of Art: European Works of Art, American Paintings and Russian Icons in the Putnam Foundation Collection* (San Diego, 1996), 35–41. The present writer has conjectured that the two artists also worked side by side in the fragmentary *Maestà* in the church of San Remigio in Florence. See also Ada Labriola, “Lo stato degli studi su Cimabue e un libro recente,” *Arte cristiana* 88 (2000): 352 n. 51.

[5] On the Master of Santa Cecilia, cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 21–148. For the master’s identification with Gaddo Gaddi, see Monica Bietti, “Gaddo Gaddi: Un’ipotesi,” *Arte cristiana* 71 (1983): 49–52; Miklós Boskovits, “Un nome per il maestro del Trittico Horne,” *Saggi e memorie di storia dell’arte* 27 (2003): 57–70.

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Grifo di Tancredi  
Italian, active 1271 - 1303 (or possibly 1328)

## *Christ Blessing*

c. 1310

tempera on panel

painted surface (top of gilding): 73 × 52.6 cm (28 3/4 × 20 11/16 in.)

painted surface (including painted border): 75.6 × 52.6 cm (29 3/4 × 20 11/16 in.)

overall: 78.2 × 55.5 × 1.5 cm (30 13/16 × 21 7/8 × 9/16 in.)

Inscription: on the book held by Christ: EGO SUM / LUX / MUNDI. (I am the light of the world)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.2.b

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### ENTRY

Up until the mid-nineteenth century, this panel and its two companions (*Saint Peter* and *Saint James Major*) were preserved together with two others from the same polyptych [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*): one representing the Baptist [fig. 2] now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry,[1] and the other probably with an image of Saint Ursula, its whereabouts currently unknown.[2] They were parts of an altarpiece that, in view of its dimensions and execution, must have been a commission of some importance, although characterized by iconographic conventions and technical features (execution on a single panel) of an archaizing type. From an iconographic point of view, the bust of the adult Christ (rather than the Madonna and Child) in the central panel, rather uncommon in Tuscany at the time of the execution of the work,[3] and the appearance among the lateral saints of one whose veneration was not particularly widespread (if she really does represent, as would seem to be the case, Saint Ursula), might suggest that the altarpiece was intended for the nuns of the Florentine convent named after this saint and founded in 1309.[4] The elaborate ornamental decoration incised on the gold ground is probably a measure of the importance attached to the work. This type of decoration, preferred by Cimabue, was not common in Florence and was generally used in the thirteenth century only on images of the Maestà.[5] As for the peculiar profiles of the triptych components, and the fact that they seem to have been painted on a single panel, these were aspects of archaizing character but still fairly widespread in Florentine painting in the early fourteenth century.[6]

Artaud de Montor probably acquired the National Gallery of Art's panels in Italy in the later years of the eighteenth or early years of the nineteenth century. They came to him accompanied by the attribution (wholly unjustified) to "Margaritone d'Arezzo," with which they were later illustrated in the successive catalogs of his collection (1808, 1811, 1843).[7] A century later, Bernard Berenson (1920) suggested an attribution to Cimabue.[8] Publishing the three panels immediately after their acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., in 1919, Berenson considered them executed "as early as 1271...or a little later" and compared them with various late thirteenth-century works, including two apse mosaics—one in San Miniato al Monte in Florence[9] and the other in Pisa Cathedral, the latter a documented work of a "magister Franciscus," who executed it between 1301 and 1302[10]—and the fresco with the scene of the Capture of Christ in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi.[11] The panels were exhibited under the name of Cimabue in 1920, 1924, and 1935, and various subsequent publications accepted the attribution.[12] Among these we may mention the opinions of Osvald Sirén (1922), who compared the three paintings with the artist's late works (in particular with the *Maestà* now in the Uffizi, Florence);[13] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933); Enzo Carli (1949); Pietro Toesca (1927); and Luigi Coletti (1941), all of whom thought that the paintings in the Gallery probably were autograph by the master.[14] Berenson himself restated on various occasions his conviction of the Cimabuesque authorship of the panels. But Raimond Van Marle (1923 and later) placed this in doubt, as did Richard Offner (1924), though he admitted the possibility of a direct intervention of the master, at least in the central panel.[15] Mario Salmi (1935) also excluded the three panels from Cimabue's catalog; additionally, he recognized one of the missing figures of the former Artaud de Montor altarpiece in the panel of the Baptist in the museum in Chambéry.[16] In 1948, Roberto Longhi identified the master of the polyptych with the anonymous artist who executed the *Maestà* no. 6115 in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence.[17] That panel came from the monastery of San Gaggio near Florence,[18] hence the conventional name Longhi bestowed on this artist: Master of San Gaggio. From that moment, the attribution to Cimabue disappeared from the art historical literature, apart from the posthumous edition of Berenson's *Italian Pictures* (1963) and the catalogs of the Gallery.[19] The three paintings thereafter were classified as works by a follower of the master, or ascribed—ever more frequently—to the Master of San Gaggio himself.[20] In 1987, the present writer tentatively proposed the identification of this anonymous master with Grifo di Tancredi,[21] and this proposal has since met with growing consensus.[22] On the other hand, different opinions have been expressed about the dating of the former

Artaud de Montor polyptych: Luiz C. Marques (1987) proposed the date 1275–1280; Edward Garrison (1949), Angelo Tartuferi (1990, 2002), and Rolf Bagemihl (1999), the years between 1280 and 1290; Sonia Chiodo (2009), the last decade of the thirteenth century; and others have preferred a dating around or even after 1300.[23]

An aid for solving the problem of dating may come from the panel that gave its name to the painter, namely the *Maestà* now in the Accademia. This is not dated, but some clues suggest that it was executed in the early years of the fourteenth century.[24] The very circumstance that the earlier literature related the altarpiece in the Accademia to the Master of Santa Cecilia, and the three panels in Washington to the earlier production of Pacino di Bonaguida, implies that their closest stylistic affinities should be sought in works dating to the early decades of the fourteenth century.[25] The influence of the young Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) has even been aired.[26] That seems improbable, for some characteristic aspects of the art of Grifo da Tancredi, such as the incongruities and chaotic perspective of his architectural structures or of his marble thrones, suggest that his models in this phase were derived not from Giotto but from the works of Cimabue and artists of his own generation, as yet unable to accept the rationality of Giotto's way of creating pictorial space. The model for the panel in the Accademia, for example, could have been an image of the type of the *Maestà* of Santa Margherita at Montici, or *Saint Peter Enthroned* (dated 1307) in the church of San Simone in Florence.[27]

If the San Gaggio altarpiece in the Accademia belongs, as I believe, to the first decade of the fourteenth century, a similar dating may also apply to the former Artaud de Montor panels. The two share close affinities. Among the saints in the Florentine *Maestà*, the Baptist in particular is almost a replica of the image of the same saint in the painting now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry, but the Saint Peter [fig. 3] standing alongside the protagonist in the San Gaggio altarpiece also is very close to the representation of that saint in our panels. Their faces are energetically modeled, with marked contrasts of light and shade and characterized by very pronounced cheekbones, short nose, fleshy lips, small eyes, and penetrating gaze. Their facial features and their intense brooding expressions are further enlivened by the undulating curls that frame their faces, while their stiff, simplified drapery, furrowed by few folds and given an almost metallic consistency and sheen, assumes a subordinate role. The artist's unfamiliarity with the rules of perspectival foreshortening is also betrayed in the panels now in the Gallery,

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notably by the rendering of the book held in Christ's left hand [fig. 4]: its pages, instead of opening, improbably seem to bend backwards.[28] Offner (1924) rightly observed that, although the frowning expression of the energetically squared faces [fig. 5] may recall those of the Florentine caposcuola, "Cimabue's figures possess a higher intensity." [29] At least during his late phase, Grifo emphasized solemnity and elegance in his figures, delineated with a graphic style that Fern Rusk Shapley correctly deemed "more suave and flowing than in Cimabue's commonly accepted paintings." [30] It is just in this respect that Grifo went beyond the example of Cimabue. His human ideal is gentler, more graceful in movement, neater in dress. He conforms more faithfully to the conventions of the Gothic style in Florentine painting, as did the Master of Santa Cecilia (that is, probably Gaddo Gaddi) and Lippo di Benivieni during these same years. The style of the Washington panels suggests that their dating be placed between the first and the second decade of the fourteenth century. But if we are right in assuming that they were intended for the church of Sant'Orsola in Florence, they cannot have been any earlier than 1309.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi (color images are NGA objects): a. *Saint Peter*; b. *Saint John the Baptist* (fig. 2); c. *Christ Blessing*; d. *Saint James Major*; e. After Grifo di Tancredi, line drawing of a lost image of Saint Ursula



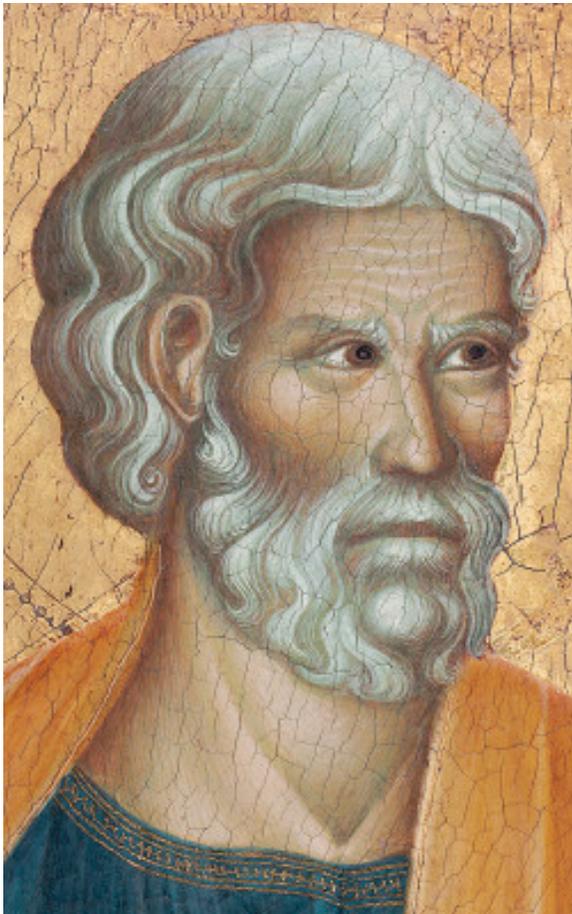
**fig. 2** Grifo di Tancredi, *Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1310, tempera on panel, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Chambéry



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Peter, Grifo di Tancredi, San Gaggio altarpiece, c. 1300, tempera on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence



**fig. 4** Detail, Grifo di Tancredi, *Christ Blessing*, c. 1310, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 5** Detail, Grifo di Tancredi, *Saint Peter*, c. 1310,  
tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington,  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi

- a. *Saint Peter*
- b. *Saint John the Baptist* (Entry fig. 2)
- c. *Christ Blessing*
- d. *Saint James Major*
- e. After Grifo di Tancredi, line drawing of a lost image of Saint Ursula

**NOTES**

- [1] Véronique Damian and Jean-Claude Giroud, *Peintures florentines*, Collections du Musée de Chambéry (Chambéry, 1990), 66–67. The panel entered the museum in 1914 as a gift of Leonce Mesnard. I have been unable to establish the painting’s fate in the time period between the 1851 sale and 1914.
- [2] The fate of this painting is also unknown. It never resurfaced after its sale at the abovementioned auction. However, the drawing of it published in the Artaud de Montor catalog (1843) suffices to show that the collector’s identification of the crowned female saint with Saint Clare of Assisi was mistaken. The martyr saint in question is clearly of royal birth, if not a queen;

George Kaftal plausibly recognized her as Saint Ursula. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 996.

- [3] While the adult Christ appears with some frequency at the center of altarpieces, at least in the area of Lazio, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this iconography is rarer in Tuscany, where the center panel or compartment is usually filled with the Madonna and Child. Cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), nos. 278, 279, 280, 298, 305. Significant exceptions are Meliore's altarpiece in the Uffizi, Florence (no. 9153); that in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (no. 1582) and dating to the early years of the Trecento; and Giotto's polyptych now in the North Carolina Museum of Art at Raleigh, no. GL. 60.17.7. Other *sui generis* cases are presented by the Stefaneschi altarpiece in the Pinacoteca Vaticana, executed for Saint Peter's basilica in Rome and hence reflecting local iconographic conventions, and the polyptych of Taddeo Gaddi formerly in the Bromley Davenport collection, in which the central image represents not the blessing Christ but the *Vir dolorum*. For the latter painting, see Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 20–21. Yet after the early decades of the fourteenth century, altarpieces with Christ at the center disappear completely, only to reappear sporadically in the second half of the century; cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 9–10.
- [4] P. N. Cianfogni and Domenico Moreni, *Memorie storiche dell'Ambrosiana R. Basilica di S. Lorenzo di Firenze*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1804), 1:136–139.
- [5] In Florence, panels with similarly decorated gold grounds are found especially in representations of the Maestà. We may cite, for example, the three versions of the Maestà that have come down to us from the hand of Cimabue, Duccio's *Madonna Rucellai*, or the altarpiece of the Magdalen Master in the church of San Michele at Rovezzano near Florence. See Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998a), 105–112, 132, 136, 248; and Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), pl. 163. It is worth pointing out, however, that the Lucchese master Deodato Orlandi also used this type of decoration on horizontal altarpieces with half-length figures of saints. Examples include the one dated 1300 now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (no. 1586); the dismembered and dispersed polyptych of which the center panel is known, formerly in the Hurd collection in New York, inscribed with the date 1308; and even in a portable tabernacle, like that now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. See Mariagiulia Burrelli and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 260–261; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 160 no. 418; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische*

*Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 256–259.

- [6] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 173, observed that the peculiar profile of the former Artaud de Montor panels seems unique among paintings dating to this period. But this does not necessarily imply, as Garrison believed, that it is the result of modern falsification. Nor does Garrison's doubt regarding the genuineness of the appearance of the paintings in the way they were illustrated in the drawing published in the Artaud de Montor catalog seem justified. It should be borne in mind that the outer frame of the altarpiece has been lost, probably when the figures were separated and their profiles adjusted to the painted internal frame. The external frame originally might have had a different profile, for instance like that of the Sienese triptych no. 11 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, which still preserves its original mixtilinear external frame while the ornamental border that delimits the upper part of the scenes is trefoil shaped. Another similar case is the Florentine Madonna in the Acton collection in Florence, which originally formed the center of an altarpiece; it too is executed on wood with horizontal graining (cf. Garrison 1949, no. 635). Here, the painted inner frame is arch shaped, whereas the outer frame placed over it is triangular in profile. It is therefore difficult to reconstruct with any precision the original external profile of the polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi.

Altarpieces with half-length figures, executed on a single horizontal-grained wooden support, represent an archaic form that Siene painters abandoned around 1300 but that continued to be used sporadically in Florence in the early decades of the fourteenth century. The best known example is the polyptych of Santa Reparata, produced in Giotto's shop no earlier than c. 1310; cf. Giorgio Bonsanti and Alfio Del Serra, in *Capolavori e restauri* (Florence, 1986), 354–357. Cf. also the examples cited in Provenance note 3.

- [7] Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Considérations sur l'état de la peinture en Italie, dans les quatre siècles qui ont précédé celui de Raphaël: Par un membre de l'académie de Cortone; Ouvrage servant de catalogue raisonné à une collection de tableaux des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1808), nos. 30, 31, 34; Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Considérations sur l'état de la peinture en Italie, dans les quatre siècles qui ont précédé celui de Raphaël, par un membre de l'Académie de Cortone (Artaud de Montor): Ouvrage servant de catalogue raisonné à une collection de tableaux des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1811), nos. 35, 36, 39; Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Peintres primitifs: Collection de tableaux rapportée d'Italie* (Paris, 1843), nos. 35, 36, 39.
- [8] Bernard Berenson, "A Newly Discovered Cimabue," *Art in America* 8 (1920): 250–271.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 142–144, 726–733. The mosaics of the Florentine church, executed in the 1270s probably by the Master of Sant’Agata, were restored for the first time in 1297 and then later as well. They are now rather difficult to read, but the figure of Christ, which Berenson compared with the Christ in the Washington painting, belongs to the earliest phase of the program. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, Sec. i, vol. ii, *The Mosaics of the Baptistery of Florena* (Florence 2007), 207 n. 158, 603–607.
- [10] Roberto Paolo Novello, “I mosaici,” in *Il Duomo di Pisa*, ed. Adriano Peroni, 3 vols. (Modena, 1995), 1:286–287, 556–558.
- [11] Alessio Monciatti, in *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Giorgio Bonsanti (Modena, 2002), 503–504.
- [12] *Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition: Loans and Special Features* (New York, 1920), unnumbered catalog; *Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors* (New York, 1924), no. 2; and Raymond Escholier et al., *Exposition de l’art italien de Cimabue à Tiepolo* (Paris, 1935), 51.
- [13] This is the panel from the church of Santa Trinita (no. 8343), variously dated. More recent scholarship has tended to date it to the last decade of the thirteenth century; cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 249–256.
- [14] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 8; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 10; Enzo Carli, “Cimabue,” in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, 12 vols. (Florence, 1949), 3:1614; Pietro Toesca, *Il medioevo*, 2 vols., *Storia dell’arte italiana* 1 (Turin, 1927), 2:1040 n. 48; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 37.
- [15] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 1, *From the 6th Until the End of the 13th Century* (The Hague, 1923), 476, 574; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 5, *The Local Schools of Central and Southern Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1925), 442, fig. 262; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 1, *Dal VI alla fine del XIII secolo* (The Hague, 1932), 495–496, fig. 321; Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244.
- [16] Mario Salmi, “Per il completamento di un politico cimabuesco,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 114.
- [17] Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 19, 47.
- [18] See Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*,

Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 94–98.

- [19] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 1:50.
- [20] The following authorities spoke of “school” or “following” of Cimabue: Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti, eds., *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937* (Florence, 1943), 277; Roberto Salvini, *Cimabue* (Rome, 1946), 23; Roberto Salvini, “Cimabue,” in *Enciclopedia Universale dell’Arte*, ed. Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 15 vols. (Florence, 1960), 3:473; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 472 n. 1; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 172–173; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 9 n. 2; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, *Pittura del Duecento a Firenze* (Florence, 1955), 127; Sergio Samek Ludovici, *Cimabue* (Milan, 1956), 42–44; Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltartabels* (Munich, 1962), 111–112; Mario Salmi, “La donazione Contini Bonacossi,” *Bollettino d’arte* 52 (1967): 223; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 54, 403, 440, 645; Enio Sindona, *L’opera completa di Cimabue e il momento figurativo pregiottesco* (Milan, 1975), 119–120; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:134–135; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 422. Longhi’s 1963 attribution to the Master of San Gaggio, in Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10, was accepted in turn by Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 2:1486 (though the three paintings were also listed among the works of Cimabue on p. 672 of the same publication); Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 15; Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 56; Luisa Marcucci, in *Le Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chambéry* (Chambéry, 1960), n.p., fig. 15; Giovanni Previtali, *La fortuna dei primitivi: Dal Vasari ai neoclassici* (Turin, 1964), 232; Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 26; Carlo Volpe, “La formazione di Giotto nella cultura di Assisi,” in *Giotto e i giotteschi in Assisi* (Rome, 1969), 38; Miklós Boskovits, “Cenni di Pepe (Pepo), detto Cimabue,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1979), 23:452; Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini, *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 416; Alessandra Guerrini,

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“Maestro di San Gaggio,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:625; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 202, 286; Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), 63, 109; Véronique Damian and Jean-Claude Giroud, *Peintures florentines, Collections du Musée de Chambéry* (Chambéry, 1990), 23, 66–67; “Artaud de Montor, Jean Alex Francis,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 2:514.

- [21] Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 122, proposed an integration of the fragmentary inscription of the triptych in the collection of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.
- [22] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 732 n. 1, 809; Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 129; Luciano Bellosi, “La lezione di Giotto,” in *Storia delle arti in Toscana: Il Trecento*, ed. Max Seidel (Florence, 2004), 96; Rolf Bagemihl, “Some Thoughts about Grifo di Tancredi of Florence and a Little-Known Panel at Volterra,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 413–414; Angelo Tartuferi, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2002), 59:398; Sonia Chiodo, in *L’arte a Firenze nell’età di Dante (1250–1300)*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Mario Scalini (Florence, 2004), 110–114; Andrea Staderini, “Un contesto per la collezione di ‘primitivi’ di Alexis-François Artaud de Montor (1772–1849),” *Proporzioni* 5 (2004): 38; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Montano d’Arezzo a San Lorenzo,” in *Le chiese di San Lorenzo e San Domenico: Gli ordini mendicanti a Napoli*, ed. Serena Romano and Nicolas Bock (Naples, 2005), 109.
- [23] Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 202, 286; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 172–173; Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), 63, 109; Angelo Tartuferi, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 87 vols. (Rome, 2002), 59:398; Rolf Bagemihl, “Some Thoughts about Grifo di Tancredi of Florence and a Little-Known Panel at Volterra,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 413–414; Sonia Chiodo, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2009), 62:129. See also Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 56; Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltarretabels* (Munich, 1962), 111–112; Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10.
- [24] The monastery of the Augustinian nuns dedicated to San Gaggio (= Caius), sometimes described as having been founded in the fourteenth century, in

fact already existed in the 1270s, as demonstrated by a testament of 1274; cf. Guido Carocci, *I dintorni di Firenze*, vol. 2, *Sulla sinistra dell'Arno* (Florence, 1907), 289; Robert Davidsohn, *Forschungen zur älteren Geschichte von Florenz*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1896), 4:416. At that time, the community of cloistered nuns, called “donne rinkiuse di San Gaggio,” probably was very small; perhaps they did not even have their own church. That such a church presumably existed around the turn of the century can, however, be inferred from documents of 1299 and 1304, cited by Domenico Moreni, *Notizie storiche dei contorni di Firenze*, vol. 6, *Dalla Porta a Pinti fino a Settignano* (Florence, 1795), 207, which speak of a *monastero* and its *badessa*. Grifo's painting, a *Maestà*, judging from its fame and size, cannot have been destined for the high altar: instead, it adorned the meeting place of a religious confraternity in the church; cf. Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 433–446. It therefore presupposes the existence of a church open to the public and for this reason additionally seems more likely to date after than before c. 1300.

- [25] No. 6115 of the Galleria dell'Accademia was attributed to the Master of Santa Cecilia by Mario Salmi, “Spigolature d'arte toscana,” *L'Arte* 16 (1913): 209–210; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 293–294; Ugo Procacci, *La R. Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze* (Rome, 1936), 22. On the other hand, Roberto Longhi noted in a youthful polyptych by Pacino di Bonaguida, now in the collection of the Cassa di Risparmio of Florence, “un aspetto torvo simile a quello datoci” (a surly expression similar to the one given to us) by the “Maestro di San Gaggio” in the former Artaud de Montor altarpiece. Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10.
- [26] Even in his first intervention, Roberto Longhi noted in the San Gaggio altarpiece and in the panels now in Washington reflections of the “prime sterzature plastiche del Giotto giovane” (the first turns of the wheel towards the plasticity of the young Giotto). Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 19. For his part, Luisa Marcucci expressed the view that “l'autore della tavola di San Gaggio, quando la dipinse...aveva già veduto la Madonna [by Giotto] di Ognissanti” (the author of the San Gaggio altarpiece had, when he painted it, already seen Giotto's Madonna from the Ognissanti), and that this implied that it would date no earlier (or not much earlier) than the second decade of the Trecento. Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 57.
- [27] For these panels, generally (though not unanimously) assigned to the Master of Santa Cecilia, cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec.

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3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 114–121, 132–137.

- [28] Painters of the thirteenth century often represented the blessing Christ with a closed book in his hand. In contrast, examples of Christ holding an open book reveal the problems involved in foreshortening. It is enough to mention in this regard the already cited altarpiece in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the mosaic of Magister Francesco in the apse of Pisa Cathedral. See Mariagiulia Buresi and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 202–203; Adriano Peroni, ed., *Il Duomo di Pisa*, 3 vols. (Modena, 1995), 2, pt. 2: pl. 1571.
- [29] Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244.
- [30] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:134.
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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden supports of *Saint Peter* and *Saint James Major* are single-member poplar panels with horizontal grain.[1] The upper 6.5 cm of the top, the curved sides of the gables, and the 1.3 cm-wide wooden strips on all sides are later additions. Both panels have been thinned and have had a mahogany cradle applied to the reverse. *Christ Blessing* was painted on a two-member wooden support, also with horizontal grain. The join is located approximately 10.3 cm from the top of the panel. This is above the tops of the panels depicting the saints, which explains why they do not have similar joins. The upper 4 cm of *Christ Blessing* and 0.8 cm–1.3 cm-wide strips on all sides are also modern additions. This panel, too, has been thinned and cradled. Examination of the x-radiographs and the backs of the panels reveals evidence of three nail holes vertically aligned down the center of each painting, indicating that the panels once had vertical battens. A piece of the top nail remains in *Saint James Major*. Line drawings published in the catalog of the Artaud de Montor collection [2] prove that the three figures, probably painted originally on one single panel,[3] had already been divided at the time they were acquired by the French collector in the early years of the nineteenth century. At that time, *Christ Blessing* still retained its original triangular gable, whereas the others had curvilinear gables terminating in triangular tops. After the 1851 sale (see *Provenance*), the gables were truncated, possibly in order to frame the panels

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together. The panel now in Chambéry (see below) still preserves the appearance given to it following the cutting of its gable, whereas the tops of the ones now in Washington have been altered, probably after their acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., with the clumsy reconstruction of the gables of *Saint Peter* and *Saint James Major*.<sup>[4]</sup> A very fine layer of fabric had been applied to all panels under the traditional gesso ground. A green layer is present under the flesh tones.<sup>[5]</sup> The ground against which the figures are set is gilt and decorated with punched and hand-incised motifs. The present gold decorations on the drapery of Christ and the inscription on the book are modern, but an older layer of gold is visible under the inscription on the book.

The panels are generally in fine condition, but with many small, inpainted losses. The ornamental borders of the gables are in large part modern.<sup>[6]</sup> The surface coating is slightly discolored.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the wood using cross-sections (see report dated August 17, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Peintres primitifs: Collection de tableaux rapportée d'Italie* (Paris, 1843), 30–31.
- [3] That the panels have horizontal grain despite their longitudinal shape suggests that they were painted on a single panel, like some of the earliest polyptychs we know. This is the case with Vigoroso da Siena's polyptych dated 1291 now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia (no. 32), or the altarpiece, now divided in sections, whose central panel belongs to the Museum of Santa Croce in Florence and one lateral component to an unknown private collection—the work of an early fourteenth-century artist close to the Maestro Daddesco. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 251–252. Analogous is the case of the triptych by Bernardo Daddi, formerly also in Santa Croce and now in the storerooms of the Soprintendenza in Florence, which still remains on its undivided wooden support. See Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 50.
- [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 85, box 230, folder 25,

document the commission of the frame but not the paintings' treatment.

- [5] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and the pigments found were consistent with those used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (see report dated August 17, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [6] Edward B. Garrison was certainly in error when he stated that “the tooling in the gold background...is not original.” Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 173. There is no reason to affirm, as he did, that the shapes of the panels, when still in Paris, “are impossible in the period” and that the painted borders are all modern. The original appearance of the altarpiece was probably somewhere between Vigoroso’s above-cited Perugia panel and the one in the Acton collection in Florence (see Garrison 1949, 160 no. 419), though the latter has simple triangular gables over the lateral figures.
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## PROVENANCE

By 1808 in the collection of Alexis-François Artaud de Montor [1772-1849], Paris, who probably purchased the panels during one of his several periods of residence in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> (his estate sale, Seigneur and Schroth at Hotel des Ventes Mobilières, Paris, 16-17 January 1851, nos. 35, 36, and 39 [with 1937.1.2.a and .c, as by Margaritone d’Arezzo); Julien Gréau [1810-1895], Troyes; by inheritance to his daughter, Marie, comtesse Bertrand de Broussillon, Paris;<sup>[2]</sup> purchased September 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., Paris, New York, and London);<sup>[3]</sup> Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, by 1920;<sup>[4]</sup> returned to (Duveen Brothers, Inc.); sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] On Artaud de Montor, apart from the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Roland Beyer for the University of Strasbourg in 1978, see Jacques Perot, “Canova et les diplomates français à Rome. François Cacault et Alexis Artaud de Montor,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art français* (1980): 219-233, and Andrea Staderini, “Un contesto per la collezione di primitivi di Alexis - François Artaud de Montor (1772-1849),” *Proporzioni. Annali della Fondazione Roberto Longhi* 5 (2004): 23-62. [2] This information on the post-Artaud de Montor provenance of the work was gleaned at the time Duveen Brothers, Inc., purchased the three panels. See the Duveen prospectus, in NGA curatorial files; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 116. [3] Fowles 1976, 116; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 85, box 230, folder 25, and reel 422. The

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Duveen record indicates that they purchased the painting in Paris from Hilaire Gréau, a son of Julien Gréau. [4] The three panels were exhibited as “lent by Carl W. Hamilton” in the New York exhibition in 1920. Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:134) also states that they were formerly in the Hamilton collection, and it is reported that “the Cimabue altarpiece was seen in Hamilton’s New York apartment” by 1920 (see Colin Simpson, *Artfull Partners. Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen*, New York, 1986: 199). However, this and other pictures had actually been given to Hamilton on credit by Duveen Brothers (see Meryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 422) and were probably returned to the dealers by 1924, when they were shown as “lent anonymously” at the exhibition of early Italian paintings in American collections held by the Duveen Galleries in New York. [5] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1920 Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1920, unnumbered catalogue.

1924 Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors, Duveen Brothers, New York, 1924, no. 2, as by Giovanni Cimabue (no. 1 in illustrated 1926 version of catalogue).

1935 Exposition de L'Art Italien de Cimabue à Tiepolo, Petit Palais, Paris, 1935, no. 110.

1979 Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1979, no. 81.

2014 La fortuna dei primitivi: Tesori d'arte dalle collezioni italiane fra Sette e Ottocento [The Fortunes of the Primitives: Artistic Treasures from Italian Collections between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries], Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, 2014, repro.

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Grifo di Tancredi  
Italian, active 1271 - 1303 (or possibly 1328)

## *Saint James Major*

c. 1310

tempera on panel

painted surface (top of gilding): 62.2 × 34.8 cm (24 1/2 × 13 11/16 in.)

painted surface (including painted border): 64.8 × 34.8 cm (25 1/2 × 13 11/16 in.)

overall: 66.7 × 36.7 × 1.2 cm (26 1/4 × 14 7/16 × 1/2 in.)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.2.c

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### ENTRY

Up until the mid-nineteenth century, this panel and its two companions (*Saint Peter* and *Christ Blessing*) were preserved together with two others from the same polyptych [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*): one representing the Baptist [fig. 2] now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry,[1] and the other probably with an image of Saint Ursula, its whereabouts currently unknown.[2] They were parts of an altarpiece that, in view of its dimensions and execution, must have been a commission of some importance, although characterized by iconographic conventions and technical features (execution on a single panel) of an archaizing type. From an iconographic point of view, the bust of the adult Christ (rather than the Madonna and Child) in the central panel, rather uncommon in Tuscany at the time of the execution of the work,[3] and the appearance among the lateral saints of one whose veneration was not particularly widespread (if she really does represent, as would seem to be the case, Saint Ursula), might suggest that the altarpiece was intended for the nuns of the Florentine convent named after this saint and founded in 1309.[4] The elaborate ornamental decoration incised on the gold ground is probably a measure of the importance attached to the work. This type of decoration, preferred by Cimabue, was not common in Florence and was generally used in the thirteenth century only on images of the Maestà.[5] As for the peculiar profiles of the triptych components, and the fact that they seem to have been painted on a single panel, these were aspects of archaizing character but still

fairly widespread in Florentine painting in the early fourteenth century.[6]

Artaud de Montor probably acquired the National Gallery of Art's panels in Italy in the later years of the eighteenth or early years of the nineteenth century. They came to him accompanied by the attribution (wholly unjustified) to "Margaritone d'Arezzo," with which they were later illustrated in the successive catalogs of his collection (1808, 1811, 1843).[7] A century later, Bernard Berenson (1920) suggested an attribution to Cimabue.[8] Publishing the three panels immediately after their acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., in 1919, Berenson considered them executed "as early as 1271...or a little later" and compared them with various late thirteenth-century works, including two apse mosaics—one in San Miniato al Monte in Florence[9] and the other in Pisa Cathedral, the latter a documented work of a "magister Franciscus," who executed it between 1301 and 1302[10]—and the fresco with the scene of the Capture of Christ in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi.[11] The panels were exhibited under the name of Cimabue in 1920, 1924, and 1935, and various subsequent publications accepted the attribution.[12] Among these we may mention the opinions of Osvald Sirén (1922), who compared the three paintings with the artist's late works (in particular with the *Maestà* now in the Uffizi, Florence);[13] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933); Enzo Carli (1949); Pietro Toesca (1927); and Luigi Coletti (1941), all of whom thought that the paintings in the Gallery probably were autograph by the master.[14] Berenson himself restated on various occasions his conviction of the Cimabuesque authorship of the panels. But Raimond Van Marle (1923 and later) placed this in doubt, as did Richard Offner (1924), though he admitted the possibility of a direct intervention of the master, at least in the central panel.[15] Mario Salmi (1935) also excluded the three panels from Cimabue's catalog; additionally, he recognized one of the missing figures of the former Artaud de Montor altarpiece in the panel of the Baptist in the museum in Chambéry.[16] In 1948, Roberto Longhi identified the master of the polyptych with the anonymous artist who executed the *Maestà* no. 6115 in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence.[17] That panel came from the monastery of San Gaggio near Florence,[18] hence the conventional name Longhi bestowed on this artist: Master of San Gaggio. From that moment, the attribution to Cimabue disappeared from the art historical literature, apart from the posthumous edition of Berenson's *Italian Pictures* (1963) and the catalogs of the Gallery.[19] The three paintings thereafter were classified as works by a follower of the master, or ascribed—ever more frequently—to the Master of San Gaggio himself.[20] In 1987, the present writer tentatively proposed the identification of this anonymous master with Grifo di Tancredi,[21] and this proposal has since met with growing consensus.[22] On the

other hand, different opinions have been expressed about the dating of the former Artaud de Montor polyptych: Luiz C. Marques (1987) proposed the date 1275–1280; Edward Garrison (1949), Angelo Tartuferi (1990, 2002), and Rolf Bagemihl (1999), the years between 1280 and 1290; Sonia Chiodo (2009), the last decade of the thirteenth century; and others have preferred a dating around or even after 1300.[23]

An aid for solving the problem of dating may come from the panel that gave its name to the painter, namely the *Maestà* now in the Accademia. This is not dated, but some clues suggest that it was executed in the early years of the fourteenth century.[24] The very circumstance that the earlier literature related the altarpiece in the Accademia to the Master of Santa Cecilia, and the three panels in Washington to the earlier production of Pacino di Bonaguida, implies that their closest stylistic affinities should be sought in works dating to the early decades of the fourteenth century.[25] The influence of the young Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) has even been aired.[26] That seems improbable, for some characteristic aspects of the art of Grifo da Tancredi, such as the incongruities and chaotic perspective of his architectural structures or of his marble thrones, suggest that his models in this phase were derived not from Giotto but from the works of Cimabue and artists of his own generation, as yet unable to accept the rationality of Giotto's way of creating pictorial space. The model for the panel in the Accademia, for example, could have been an image of the type of the *Maestà* of Santa Margherita at Montici, or *Saint Peter Enthroned* (dated 1307) in the church of San Simone in Florence.[27]

If the San Gaggio altarpiece in the Accademia belongs, as I believe, to the first decade of the fourteenth century, a similar dating may also apply to the former Artaud de Montor panels. The two share close affinities. Among the saints in the Florentine *Maestà*, the Baptist in particular is almost a replica of the image of the same saint in the painting now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry, but the Saint Peter [fig. 3] standing alongside the protagonist in the San Gaggio altarpiece also is very close to the representation of that saint in our panels. Their faces are energetically modeled, with marked contrasts of light and shade and characterized by very pronounced cheekbones, short nose, fleshy lips, small eyes, and penetrating gaze. Their facial features and their intense brooding expressions are further enlivened by the undulating curls that frame their faces, while their stiff, simplified drapery, furrowed by few folds and given an almost metallic consistency and sheen, assumes a subordinate role. The artist's unfamiliarity with the rules of

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perspectival foreshortening is also betrayed in the panels now in the Gallery, notably by the rendering of the book held in Christ's left hand [fig. 4]: its pages, instead of opening, improbably seem to bend backwards.[28] Offner (1924) rightly observed that, although the frowning expression of the energetically squared faces [fig. 5] may recall those of the Florentine *caposcuola*, "Cimabue's figures possess a higher intensity." [29] At least during his late phase, Grifo emphasized solemnity and elegance in his figures, delineated with a graphic style that Fern Rusk Shapley correctly deemed "more suave and flowing than in Cimabue's commonly accepted paintings." [30] It is just in this respect that Grifo went beyond the example of Cimabue. His human ideal is gentler, more graceful in movement, neater in dress. He conforms more faithfully to the conventions of the Gothic style in Florentine painting, as did the Master of Santa Cecilia (that is, probably Gaddo Gaddi) and Lippo di Benivieni during these same years. The style of the Washington panels suggests that their dating be placed between the first and the second decade of the fourteenth century. But if we are right in assuming that they were intended for the church of Sant'Orsola in Florence, they cannot have been any earlier than 1309.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi (color images are NGA objects): a. *Saint Peter*; b. *Saint John the Baptist* (fig. 2); c. *Christ Blessing*; d. *Saint James Major*; e. After Grifo di Tancredi, line drawing of a lost image of Saint Ursula



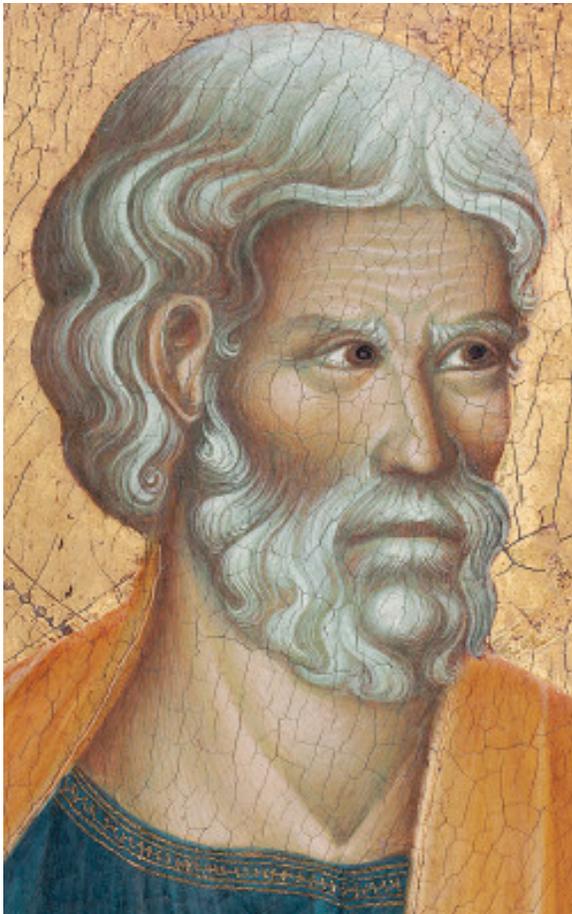
**fig. 2** Grifo di Tancredi, *Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1310, tempera on panel, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Chambéry



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Peter, Grifo di Tancredi, San Gaggio altarpiece, c. 1300, tempera on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence



**fig. 4** Detail, Grifo di Tancredi, *Christ Blessing*, c. 1310, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

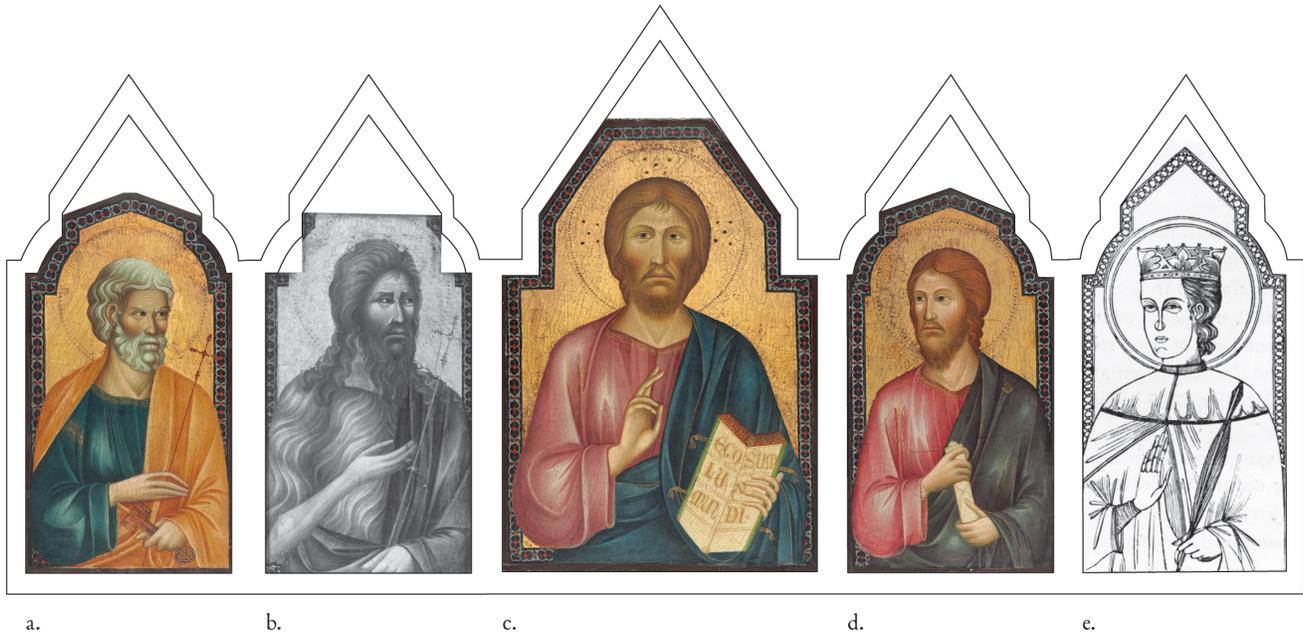


**fig. 5** Detail, Grifo di Tancredi, *Saint Peter*, c. 1310,  
tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington,  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi

- a. *Saint Peter*
- b. *Saint John the Baptist* (Entry fig. 2)
- c. *Christ Blessing*
- d. *Saint James Major*
- e. After Grifo di Tancredi, line drawing of a lost image of Saint Ursula

**NOTES**

- [1] Véronique Damian and Jean-Claude Giroud, *Peintures florentines*, Collections du Musée de Chambéry (Chambéry, 1990), 66–67. The panel entered the museum in 1914 as a gift of Leonce Mesnard. I have been unable to establish the painting’s fate in the time period between the 1851 sale and 1914.
- [2] The fate of this painting is also unknown. It never resurfaced after its sale at the abovementioned auction. However, the drawing of it published in the Artaud de Montor catalog (1843) suffices to show that the collector’s identification of the crowned female saint with Saint Clare of Assisi was mistaken. The martyr saint in question is clearly of royal birth, if not a queen;

George Kaftal plausibly recognized her as Saint Ursula. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 996.

- [3] While the adult Christ appears with some frequency at the center of altarpieces, at least in the area of Lazio, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this iconography is rarer in Tuscany, where the center panel or compartment is usually filled with the Madonna and Child. Cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), nos. 278, 279, 280, 298, 305. Significant exceptions are Meliore's altarpiece in the Uffizi, Florence (no. 9153); that in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (no. 1582) and dating to the early years of the Trecento; and Giotto's polyptych now in the North Carolina Museum of Art at Raleigh, no. GL. 60.17.7. Other *sui generis* cases are presented by the Stefaneschi altarpiece in the Pinacoteca Vaticana, executed for Saint Peter's basilica in Rome and hence reflecting local iconographic conventions, and the polyptych of Taddeo Gaddi formerly in the Bromley Davenport collection, in which the central image represents not the blessing Christ but the *Vir dolorum*. For the latter painting, see Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 20–21. Yet after the early decades of the fourteenth century, altarpieces with Christ at the center disappear completely, only to reappear sporadically in the second half of the century; cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 9–10.
- [4] P. N. Cianfogni and Domenico Moreni, *Memorie storiche dell'Ambrosiana R. Basilica di S. Lorenzo di Firenze*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1804), 1:136–139.
- [5] In Florence, panels with similarly decorated gold grounds are found especially in representations of the Maestà. We may cite, for example, the three versions of the Maestà that have come down to us from the hand of Cimabue, Duccio's *Madonna Rucellai*, or the altarpiece of the Magdalen Master in the church of San Michele at Rovezzano near Florence. See Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998a), 105–112, 132, 136, 248; and Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), pl. 163. It is worth pointing out, however, that the Lucchese master Deodato Orlandi also used this type of decoration on horizontal altarpieces with half-length figures of saints. Examples include the one dated 1300 now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (no. 1586); the dismembered and dispersed polyptych of which the center panel is known, formerly in the Hurd collection in New York, inscribed with the date 1308; and even in a portable tabernacle, like that now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. See Mariagiulia Burrelli and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 260–261; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 160 no. 418; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische*

*Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 256–259.

- [6] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 173, observed that the peculiar profile of the former Artaud de Montor panels seems unique among paintings dating to this period. But this does not necessarily imply, as Garrison believed, that it is the result of modern falsification. Nor does Garrison's doubt regarding the genuineness of the appearance of the paintings in the way they were illustrated in the drawing published in the Artaud de Montor catalog seem justified. It should be borne in mind that the outer frame of the altarpiece has been lost, probably when the figures were separated and their profiles adjusted to the painted internal frame. The external frame originally might have had a different profile, for instance like that of the Sienese triptych no. 11 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, which still preserves its original mixtilinear external frame while the ornamental border that delimits the upper part of the scenes is trefoil shaped. Another similar case is the Florentine Madonna in the Acton collection in Florence, which originally formed the center of an altarpiece; it too is executed on wood with horizontal graining (cf. Garrison 1949, no. 635). Here, the painted inner frame is arch shaped, whereas the outer frame placed over it is triangular in profile. It is therefore difficult to reconstruct with any precision the original external profile of the polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi.

Altarpieces with half-length figures, executed on a single horizontal-grained wooden support, represent an archaic form that Sienese painters abandoned around 1300 but that continued to be used sporadically in Florence in the early decades of the fourteenth century. The best known example is the polyptych of Santa Reparata, produced in Giotto's shop no earlier than c. 1310; cf. Giorgio Bonsanti and Alfio Del Serra, in *Capolavori e restauri* (Florence, 1986), 354–357. Cf. also the examples cited in Provenance note 3.

- [7] Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Considérations sur l'état de la peinture en Italie, dans les quatre siècles qui ont précédé celui de Raphaël: Par un membre de l'académie de Cortone; Ouvrage servant de catalogue raisonné à une collection de tableaux des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1808), nos. 30, 31, 34; Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Considérations sur l'état de la peinture en Italie, dans les quatre siècles qui ont précédé celui de Raphaël, par un membre de l'Académie de Cortone (Artaud de Montor): Ouvrage servant de catalogue raisonné à une collection de tableaux des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1811), nos. 35, 36, 39; Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Peintres primitifs: Collection de tableaux rapportée d'Italie* (Paris, 1843), nos. 35, 36, 39.
- [8] Bernard Berenson, "A Newly Discovered Cimabue," *Art in America* 8 (1920): 250–271.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 142–144, 726–733. The mosaics of the Florentine church, executed in the 1270s probably by the Master of Sant’Agata, were restored for the first time in 1297 and then later as well. They are now rather difficult to read, but the figure of Christ, which Berenson compared with the Christ in the Washington painting, belongs to the earliest phase of the program. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, Sec. i, vol. ii, *The Mosaics of the Baptistery of Florena* (Florence 2007), 207 n. 158, 603–607.
- [10] Roberto Paolo Novello, “I mosaici,” in *Il Duomo di Pisa*, ed. Adriano Peroni, 3 vols. (Modena, 1995), 1:286–287, 556–558.
- [11] Alessio Monciatti, in *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Giorgio Bonsanti (Modena, 2002), 503–504.
- [12] *Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition: Loans and Special Features* (New York, 1920), unnumbered catalog; *Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors* (New York, 1924), no. 2; and Raymond Escholier et al., *Exposition de l’art italien de Cimabue à Tiepolo* (Paris, 1935), 51.
- [13] This is the panel from the church of Santa Trinita (no. 8343), variously dated. More recent scholarship has tended to date it to the last decade of the thirteenth century; cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 249–256.
- [14] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 8; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 10; Enzo Carli, “Cimabue,” in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, 12 vols. (Florence, 1949), 3:1614; Pietro Toesca, *Il medioevo*, 2 vols., *Storia dell’arte italiana* 1 (Turin, 1927), 2:1040 n. 48; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 37.
- [15] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 1, *From the 6th Until the End of the 13th Century* (The Hague, 1923), 476, 574; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 5, *The Local Schools of Central and Southern Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1925), 442, fig. 262; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 1, *Dal VI alla fine del XIII secolo* (The Hague, 1932), 495–496, fig. 321; Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244.
- [16] Mario Salmi, “Per il completamento di un politico cimabuesco,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 114.
- [17] Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 19, 47.
- [18] See Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*,

Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 94–98.

- [19] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 1:50.
- [20] The following authorities spoke of “school” or “following” of Cimabue: Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti, eds., *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937* (Florence, 1943), 277; Roberto Salvini, *Cimabue* (Rome, 1946), 23; Roberto Salvini, “Cimabue,” in *Enciclopedia Universale dell’Arte*, ed. Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 15 vols. (Florence, 1960), 3:473; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 472 n. 1; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 172–173; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 9 n. 2; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, *Pittura del Duecento a Firenze* (Florence, 1955), 127; Sergio Samek Ludovici, *Cimabue* (Milan, 1956), 42–44; Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltartabels* (Munich, 1962), 111–112; Mario Salmi, “La donazione Contini Bonacossi,” *Bollettino d’arte* 52 (1967): 223; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 54, 403, 440, 645; Enio Sindona, *L’opera completa di Cimabue e il momento figurativo pregiottesco* (Milan, 1975), 119–120; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:134–135; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 422. Longhi’s 1963 attribution to the Master of San Gaggio, in Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10, was accepted in turn by Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 2:1486 (though the three paintings were also listed among the works of Cimabue on p. 672 of the same publication); Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 15; Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 56; Luisa Marcucci, in *Le Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chambéry* (Chambéry, 1960), n.p., fig. 15; Giovanni Previtali, *La fortuna dei primitivi: Dal Vasari ai neoclassici* (Turin, 1964), 232; Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 26; Carlo Volpe, “La formazione di Giotto nella cultura di Assisi,” in *Giotto e i giotteschi in Assisi* (Rome, 1969), 38; Miklós Boskovits, “Cenni di Pepe (Pepo), detto Cimabue,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1979), 23:452; Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini, *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 416; Alessandra Guerrini,

“Maestro di San Gaggio,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:625; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 202, 286; Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), 63, 109; Véronique Damian and Jean-Claude Giroud, *Peintures florentines, Collections du Musée de Chambéry* (Chambéry, 1990), 23, 66–67; “Artaud de Montor, Jean Alex Francis,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 2:514.

- [21] Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 122, proposed an integration of the fragmentary inscription of the triptych in the collection of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.
- [22] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 732 n. 1, 809; Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 129; Luciano Bellosi, “La lezione di Giotto,” in *Storia delle arti in Toscana: Il Trecento*, ed. Max Seidel (Florence, 2004), 96; Rolf Bagemihl, “Some Thoughts about Grifo di Tancredi of Florence and a Little-Known Panel at Volterra,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 413–414; Angelo Tartuferi, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2002), 59:398; Sonia Chiodo, in *L’arte a Firenze nell’età di Dante (1250–1300)*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Mario Scalini (Florence, 2004), 110–114; Andrea Staderini, “Un contesto per la collezione di ‘primitivi’ di Alexis-François Artaud de Montor (1772–1849),” *Proporzioni* 5 (2004): 38; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Montano d’Arezzo a San Lorenzo,” in *Le chiese di San Lorenzo e San Domenico: Gli ordini mendicanti a Napoli*, ed. Serena Romano and Nicolas Bock (Naples, 2005), 109.
- [23] Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 202, 286; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 172–173; Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), 63, 109; Angelo Tartuferi, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 87 vols. (Rome, 2002), 59:398; Rolf Bagemihl, “Some Thoughts about Grifo di Tancredi of Florence and a Little-Known Panel at Volterra,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 413–414; Sonia Chiodo, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2009), 62:129. See also Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 56; Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgechichte des toskanischen Hochaltarretabels* (Munich, 1962), 111–112; Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10.
- [24] The monastery of the Augustinian nuns dedicated to San Gaggio (= Caius), sometimes described as having been founded in the fourteenth century, in

fact already existed in the 1270s, as demonstrated by a testament of 1274; cf. Guido Carocci, *I dintorni di Firenze*, vol. 2, *Sulla sinistra dell'Arno* (Florence, 1907), 289; Robert Davidsohn, *Forschungen zur älteren Geschichte von Florenz*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1896), 4:416. At that time, the community of cloistered nuns, called “donne rinkiuse di San Gaggio,” probably was very small; perhaps they did not even have their own church. That such a church presumably existed around the turn of the century can, however, be inferred from documents of 1299 and 1304, cited by Domenico Moreni, *Notizie storiche dei contorni di Firenze*, vol. 6, *Dalla Porta a Pinti fino a Settignano* (Florence, 1795), 207, which speak of a *monastero* and its *badessa*. Grifo's painting, a *Maestà*, judging from its fame and size, cannot have been destined for the high altar: instead, it adorned the meeting place of a religious confraternity in the church; cf. Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 433–446. It therefore presupposes the existence of a church open to the public and for this reason additionally seems more likely to date after than before c. 1300.

- [25] No. 6115 of the Galleria dell'Accademia was attributed to the Master of Santa Cecilia by Mario Salmi, “Spigolature d'arte toscana,” *L'Arte* 16 (1913): 209–210; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Siennese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 293–294; Ugo Procacci, *La R. Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze* (Rome, 1936), 22. On the other hand, Roberto Longhi noted in a youthful polyptych by Pacino di Bonaguida, now in the collection of the Cassa di Risparmio of Florence, “un aspetto torvo simile a quello datoci” (a surly expression similar to the one given to us) by the “Maestro di San Gaggio” in the former Artaud de Montor altarpiece. Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10.
- [26] Even in his first intervention, Roberto Longhi noted in the San Gaggio altarpiece and in the panels now in Washington reflections of the “prime sterzature plastiche del Giotto giovane” (the first turns of the wheel towards the plasticity of the young Giotto). Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 19. For his part, Luisa Marcucci expressed the view that “l'autore della tavola di San Gaggio, quando la dipinse...aveva già veduto la Madonna [by Giotto] di Ognissanti” (the author of the San Gaggio altarpiece had, when he painted it, already seen Giotto's Madonna from the Ognissanti), and that this implied that it would date no earlier (or not much earlier) than the second decade of the Trecento. Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 57.
- [27] For these panels, generally (though not unanimously) assigned to the Master of Santa Cecilia, cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec.

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3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 114–121, 132–137.

[28] Painters of the thirteenth century often represented the blessing Christ with a closed book in his hand. In contrast, examples of Christ holding an open book reveal the problems involved in foreshortening. It is enough to mention in this regard the already cited altarpiece in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the mosaic of Magister Francesco in the apse of Pisa Cathedral. See Mariagiulia Buresi and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 202–203; Adriano Peroni, ed., *Il Duomo di Pisa*, 3 vols. (Modena, 1995), 2, pt. 2: pl. 1571.

[29] Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244.

[30] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:134.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden supports of this work and *Saint Peter* are single-member poplar panels with horizontal grain.[1] The upper 6.5 cm of the top, the curved sides of the gables, and the 1.3 cm-wide wooden strips on all sides are later additions. Both panels have been thinned and have had a mahogany cradle applied to the reverse. *Christ Blessing* was painted on a two-member wooden support, also with horizontal grain. The join is located approximately 10.3 cm from the top of the panel. This is above the tops of the panels depicting the saints, which explains why they do not have similar joins. The upper 4 cm of *Christ Blessing* and 0.8 cm–1.3 cm-wide strips on all sides are also modern additions. This panel, too, has been thinned and cradled. Examination of the x-radiographs and the backs of the panels reveals evidence of three nail holes vertically aligned down the center of each painting, indicating that the panels once had vertical battens. A piece of the top nail remains in *Saint James Major*. Line drawings published in the catalog of the Artaud de Montor collection[2] prove that the three figures, probably painted originally on one single panel,[3] had already been divided at the time they were acquired by the French collector in the early years of the nineteenth century. At that time, *Christ Blessing* still retained its original triangular gable, whereas the others had curvilinear gables terminating in triangular tops. After the 1851 sale (see *Provenance*), the gables were truncated, possibly in order to frame the panels

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together. The panel now in Chambéry (see below) still preserves the appearance given to it following the cutting of its gable, whereas the tops of the ones now in Washington have been altered, probably after their acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., with the clumsy reconstruction of the gables of this panel and *Saint Peter*.<sup>[4]</sup> A very fine layer of fabric had been applied to all panels under the traditional gesso ground. A green layer is present under the flesh tones.<sup>[5]</sup> The ground against which the figures are set is gilt and decorated with punched and hand-incised motifs. The present gold decorations on the drapery of Christ and the inscription on the book are modern, but an older layer of gold is visible under the inscription on the book.

The panels are generally in fine condition, but with many small, inpainted losses. The ornamental borders of the gables are in large part modern.<sup>[6]</sup> The surface coating is slightly discolored.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the wood using cross-sections (see report dated August 17, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Peintres primitifs: Collection de tableaux rapportée d'Italie* (Paris, 1843), 30–31.
- [3] That the panels have horizontal grain despite their longitudinal shape suggests that they were painted on a single panel, like some of the earliest polyptychs we know. This is the case with Vigoroso da Siena's polyptych dated 1291 now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia (no. 32), or the altarpiece, now divided in sections, whose central panel belongs to the Museum of Santa Croce in Florence and one lateral component to an unknown private collection—the work of an early fourteenth-century artist close to the Maestro Daddesco. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 251–252. Analogous is the case of the triptych by Bernardo Daddi, formerly also in Santa Croce and now in the storerooms of the Soprintendenza in Florence, which still remains on its undivided wooden support. See Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 50.
- [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 85, box 230, folder 25,

document the commission of the frame but not the paintings' treatment.

- [5] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and the pigments found were consistent with those used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (see report dated August 17, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [6] Edward B. Garrison was certainly in error when he stated that “the tooling in the gold background...is not original.” Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 173. There is no reason to affirm, as he did, that the shapes of the panels, when still in Paris, “are impossible in the period” and that the painted borders are all modern. The original appearance of the altarpiece was probably somewhere between Vigoroso’s above-cited Perugia panel and the one in the Acton collection in Florence (see Garrison 1949, 160 no. 419), though the latter has simple triangular gables over the lateral figures.
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## PROVENANCE

By 1808 in the collection of Alexis-François Artaud de Montor [1772-1849], Paris, who probably purchased the panels during one of his several periods of residence in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> (his estate sale, Seigneur and Schroth at Hotel des Ventes Mobilières, Paris, 16-17 January 1851, nos. 35, 36, and 39 [with 1937.1.2.a and .b, as by Margaritone d’Arezzo); Julien Gréau [1810-1895], Troyes; by inheritance to his daughter, Marie, comtesse Bertrand de Broussillon, Paris;<sup>[2]</sup> purchased September 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., Paris, New York, and London);<sup>[3]</sup> Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, by 1920;<sup>[4]</sup> returned to (Duveen Brothers, Inc.); sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] On Artaud de Montor, apart from the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Roland Beyer for the University of Strasbourg in 1978, see Jacques Perot, “Canova et les diplomates français à Rome. François Cacault et Alexis Artaud de Montor,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art français* (1980): 219-233, and Andrea Staderini, “Un contesto per la collezione di primitivi di Alexis - François Artaud de Montor (1772-1849),” *Proporzioni. Annali della Fondazione Roberto Longhi* 5 (2004): 23-62. [2] This information on the post-Artaud de Montor provenance of the work was gleaned at the time Duveen Brothers, Inc., purchased the three panels. See the Duveen prospectus, in NGA curatorial files; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 116. [3] Fowles 1976, 116; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 85, box 230, folder 25, and reel 422. The

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Duveen record indicates that they purchased the painting in Paris from Hilaire Gréau, a son of Julien Gréau. [4] The three panels were exhibited as “lent by Carl W. Hamilton” in the New York exhibition in 1920. Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:134) also states that they were formerly in the Hamilton collection, and it is reported that “the Cimabue altarpiece was seen in Hamilton’s New York apartment” by 1920 (see Colin Simpson, *Artfull Partners. Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen*, New York, 1986: 199). However, this and other pictures had actually been given to Hamilton on credit by Duveen Brothers (see Meryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 422) and were probably returned to the dealers by 1924, when they were shown as “lent anonymously” at the exhibition of early Italian paintings in American collections held by the Duveen Galleries in New York. [5] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1920 Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1920, unnumbered catalogue.

1924 Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors, Duveen Brothers, New York, 1924, no. 2, as by Giovanni Cimabue (no. 1 in illustrated 1926 version of catalogue).

1935 Exposition de L'Art Italien de Cimabue à Tiepolo, Petit Palais, Paris, 1935, no. 110.

1979 Berenson and the Connoisseurship of Italian Painting, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1979, no. 81.

2014 La fortuna dei primitivi: Tesori d'arte dalle collezioni italiane fra Sette e Ottocento [The Fortunes of the Primitives: Artistic Treasures from Italian Collections between the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries], Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, 2014, repro.

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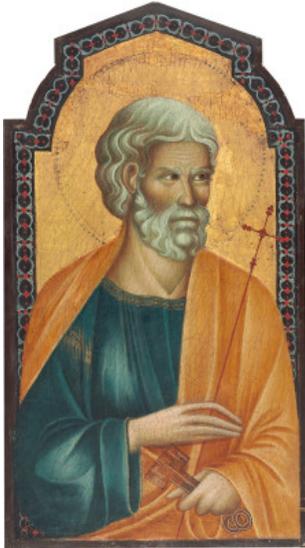
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Grifo di Tancredi  
Italian, active 1271 - 1303 (or possibly 1328)

## *Saint Peter*

c. 1310

tempera on panel

painted surface (top of gilding): 61.5 × 34.5 cm (24 3/16 × 13 9/16 in.)

painted surface (including painted border): 64.2 × 34.5 cm (25 1/4 × 13 9/16 in.)

overall: 66.2 × 36.6 × 1 cm (26 1/16 × 14 7/16 × 3/8 in.)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.2.a

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### ENTRY

Up until the mid-nineteenth century, this panel and its two companions (*Christ Blessing* and *Saint James Major*) were preserved together with two others from the same polyptych [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*): one representing the Baptist [fig. 2] now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry,[1] and the other probably with an image of Saint Ursula, its whereabouts currently unknown.[2] They were parts of an altarpiece that, in view of its dimensions and execution, must have been a commission of some importance, although characterized by iconographic conventions and technical features (execution on a single panel) of an archaizing type. From an iconographic point of view, the bust of the adult Christ (rather than the Madonna and Child) in the central panel, rather uncommon in Tuscany at the time of the execution of the work,[3] and the appearance among the lateral saints of one whose veneration was not particularly widespread (if she really does represent, as would seem to be the case, Saint Ursula), might suggest that the altarpiece was intended for the nuns of the Florentine convent named after this saint and founded in 1309.[4] The elaborate ornamental decoration incised on the gold ground is probably a measure of the importance attached to the work. This type of decoration, preferred by Cimabue, was not common in Florence and was generally used in the thirteenth century only on images of the *Maestà*.<sup>[5]</sup> As for the peculiar profiles of the triptych components, and the fact that they seem to have been painted on a single panel, these were aspects of archaizing character but still

fairly widespread in Florentine painting in the early fourteenth century.[6]

Artaud de Montor probably acquired the National Gallery of Art's panels in Italy in the later years of the eighteenth or early years of the nineteenth century. They came to him accompanied by the attribution (wholly unjustified) to "Margaritone d'Arezzo," with which they were later illustrated in the successive catalogs of his collection (1808, 1811, 1843).[7] A century later, Bernard Berenson (1920) suggested an attribution to Cimabue.[8] Publishing the three panels immediately after their acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., in 1919, Berenson considered them executed "as early as 1271...or a little later" and compared them with various late thirteenth-century works, including two apse mosaics—one in San Miniato al Monte in Florence[9] and the other in Pisa Cathedral, the latter a documented work of a "magister Franciscus," who executed it between 1301 and 1302[10]—and the fresco with the scene of the Capture of Christ in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi.[11] The panels were exhibited under the name of Cimabue in 1920, 1924, and 1935, and various subsequent publications accepted the attribution.[12] Among these we may mention the opinions of Osvald Sirén (1922), who compared the three paintings with the artist's late works (in particular with the *Maestà* now in the Uffizi, Florence);[13] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933); Enzo Carli (1949); Pietro Toesca (1927); and Luigi Coletti (1941), all of whom thought that the paintings in the Gallery probably were autograph by the master.[14] Berenson himself restated on various occasions his conviction of the Cimabuesque authorship of the panels. But Raimond Van Marle (1923 and later) placed this in doubt, as did Richard Offner (1924), though he admitted the possibility of a direct intervention of the master, at least in the central panel.[15] Mario Salmi (1935) also excluded the three panels from Cimabue's catalog; additionally, he recognized one of the missing figures of the former Artaud de Montor altarpiece in the panel of the Baptist in the museum in Chambéry.[16] In 1948, Roberto Longhi identified the master of the polyptych with the anonymous artist who executed the *Maestà* no. 6115 in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence.[17] That panel came from the monastery of San Gaggio near Florence,[18] hence the conventional name Longhi bestowed on this artist: Master of San Gaggio. From that moment, the attribution to Cimabue disappeared from the art historical literature, apart from the posthumous edition of Berenson's *Italian Pictures* (1963) and the catalogs of the Gallery.[19] The three paintings thereafter were classified as works by a follower of the master, or ascribed—ever more frequently—to the Master of San Gaggio himself.[20] In 1987, the present writer tentatively proposed the identification of this anonymous master with Grifo di Tancredi,[21] and this proposal has since met with growing consensus.[22] On the

other hand, different opinions have been expressed about the dating of the former Artaud de Montor polyptych: Luiz C. Marques (1987) proposed the date 1275–1280; Edward Garrison (1949), Angelo Tartuferi (1990, 2002), and Rolf Bagemihl (1999), the years between 1280 and 1290; Sonia Chiodo (2009), the last decade of the thirteenth century; and others have preferred a dating around or even after 1300.[23]

An aid for solving the problem of dating may come from the panel that gave its name to the painter, namely the *Maestà* now in the Accademia. This is not dated, but some clues suggest that it was executed in the early years of the fourteenth century.[24] The very circumstance that the earlier literature related the altarpiece in the Accademia to the Master of Santa Cecilia, and the three panels in Washington to the earlier production of Pacino di Bonaguida, implies that their closest stylistic affinities should be sought in works dating to the early decades of the fourteenth century.[25] The influence of the young Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) has even been aired.[26] That seems improbable, for some characteristic aspects of the art of Grifo da Tancredi, such as the incongruities and chaotic perspective of his architectural structures or of his marble thrones, suggest that his models in this phase were derived not from Giotto but from the works of Cimabue and artists of his own generation, as yet unable to accept the rationality of Giotto's way of creating pictorial space. The model for the panel in the Accademia, for example, could have been an image of the type of the *Maestà* of Santa Margherita at Montici, or *Saint Peter Enthroned* (dated 1307) in the church of San Simone in Florence.[27]

If the San Gaggio altarpiece in the Accademia belongs, as I believe, to the first decade of the fourteenth century, a similar dating may also apply to the former Artaud de Montor panels. The two share close affinities. Among the saints in the Florentine *Maestà*, the Baptist in particular is almost a replica of the image of the same saint in the painting now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chambéry, but the Saint Peter [fig. 3] standing alongside the protagonist in the San Gaggio altarpiece also is very close to the representation of that saint in our panels. Their faces are energetically modeled, with marked contrasts of light and shade and characterized by very pronounced cheekbones, short nose, fleshy lips, small eyes, and penetrating gaze. Their facial features and their intense brooding expressions are further enlivened by the undulating curls that frame their faces, while their stiff, simplified drapery, furrowed by few folds and given an almost metallic consistency and sheen, assumes a subordinate role. The artist's unfamiliarity with the rules of

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perspectival foreshortening is also betrayed in the panels now in the Gallery, notably by the rendering of the book held in Christ's left hand [fig. 4]: its pages, instead of opening, improbably seem to bend backwards.[28] Offner (1924) rightly observed that, although the frowning expression of the energetically squared faces [fig. 5] may recall those of the Florentine *caposcuola*, "Cimabue's figures possess a higher intensity." [29] At least during his late phase, Grifo emphasized solemnity and elegance in his figures, delineated with a graphic style that Fern Rusk Shapley correctly deemed "more suave and flowing than in Cimabue's commonly accepted paintings." [30] It is just in this respect that Grifo went beyond the example of Cimabue. His human ideal is gentler, more graceful in movement, neater in dress. He conforms more faithfully to the conventions of the Gothic style in Florentine painting, as did the Master of Santa Cecilia (that is, probably Gaddo Gaddi) and Lippo di Benivieni during these same years. The style of the Washington panels suggests that their dating be placed between the first and the second decade of the fourteenth century. But if we are right in assuming that they were intended for the church of Sant'Orsola in Florence, they cannot have been any earlier than 1309.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



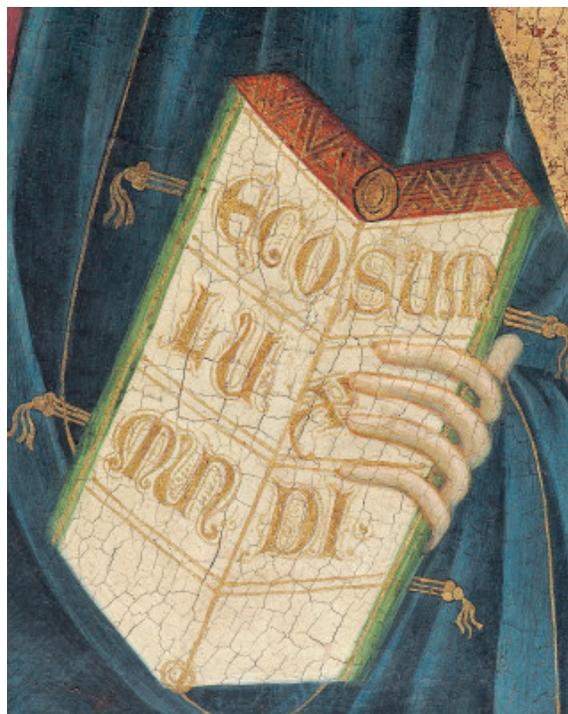
**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi (color images are NGA objects): a. *Saint Peter*; b. *Saint John the Baptist* (fig. 2); c. *Christ Blessing*; d. *Saint James Major*; e. After Grifo di Tancredi, line drawing of a lost image of Saint Ursula



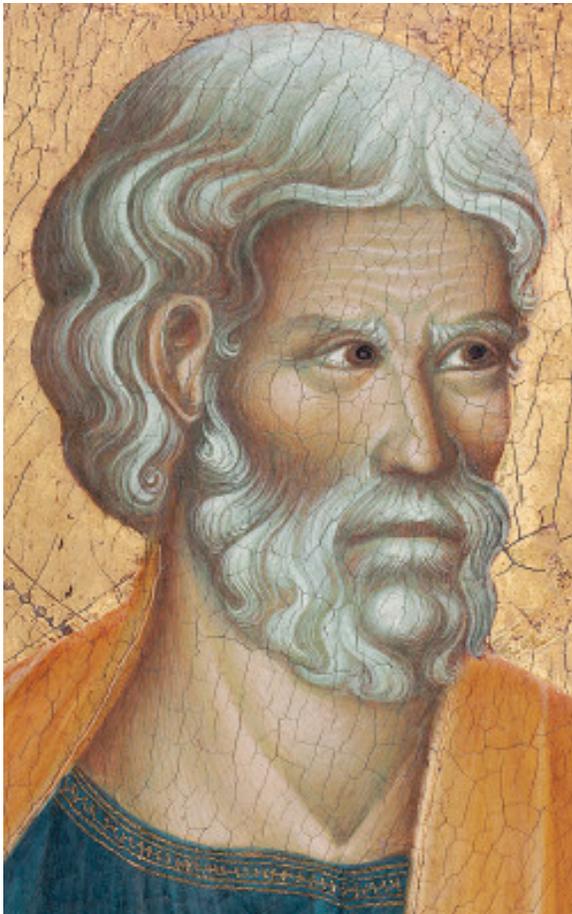
**fig. 2** Grifo di Tancredi, *Saint John the Baptist*, c. 1310, tempera on panel, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Chambéry



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Peter, Grifo di Tancredi, San Gaggio altarpiece, c. 1300, tempera on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence



**fig. 4** Detail, Grifo di Tancredi, *Christ Blessing*, c. 1310, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 5** Detail, Grifo di Tancredi, *Saint Peter*, c. 1310,  
tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington,  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi

- a. *Saint Peter*
- b. *Saint John the Baptist* (Entry fig. 2)
- c. *Christ Blessing*
- d. *Saint James Major*
- e. After Grifo di Tancredi, line drawing of a lost image of Saint Ursula

**NOTES**

- [1] Véronique Damian and Jean-Claude Giroud, *Peintures florentines*, Collections du Musée de Chambéry (Chambéry, 1990), 66–67. The panel entered the museum in 1914 as a gift of Leonce Mesnard. I have been unable to establish the painting’s fate in the time period between the 1851 sale and 1914.
- [2] The fate of this painting is also unknown. It never resurfaced after its sale at the abovementioned auction. However, the drawing of it published in the Artaud de Montor catalog (1843) suffices to show that the collector’s identification of the crowned female saint with Saint Clare of Assisi was mistaken. The martyr saint in question is clearly of royal birth, if not a queen;

George Kaftal plausibly recognized her as Saint Ursula. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 996.

- [3] While the adult Christ appears with some frequency at the center of altarpieces, at least in the area of Lazio, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, this iconography is rarer in Tuscany, where the center panel or compartment is usually filled with the Madonna and Child. Cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), nos. 278, 279, 280, 298, 305. Significant exceptions are Meliore's altarpiece in the Uffizi, Florence (no. 9153); that in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (no. 1582) and dating to the early years of the Trecento; and Giotto's polyptych now in the North Carolina Museum of Art at Raleigh, no. GL. 60.17.7. Other *sui generis* cases are presented by the Stefaneschi altarpiece in the Pinacoteca Vaticana, executed for Saint Peter's basilica in Rome and hence reflecting local iconographic conventions, and the polyptych of Taddeo Gaddi formerly in the Bromley Davenport collection, in which the central image represents not the blessing Christ but the *Vir dolorum*. For the latter painting, see Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 20–21. Yet after the early decades of the fourteenth century, altarpieces with Christ at the center disappear completely, only to reappear sporadically in the second half of the century; cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 9–10.
- [4] P. N. Cianfogni and Domenico Moreni, *Memorie storiche dell'Ambrosiana R. Basilica di S. Lorenzo di Firenze*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1804), 1:136–139.
- [5] In Florence, panels with similarly decorated gold grounds are found especially in representations of the Maestà. We may cite, for example, the three versions of the Maestà that have come down to us from the hand of Cimabue, Duccio's *Madonna Rucellai*, or the altarpiece of the Magdalen Master in the church of San Michele at Rovezzano near Florence. See Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998a), 105–112, 132, 136, 248; and Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), pl. 163. It is worth pointing out, however, that the Lucchese master Deodato Orlandi also used this type of decoration on horizontal altarpieces with half-length figures of saints. Examples include the one dated 1300 now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (no. 1586); the dismembered and dispersed polyptych of which the center panel is known, formerly in the Hurd collection in New York, inscribed with the date 1308; and even in a portable tabernacle, like that now in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. See Mariagiulia Burrelli and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 260–261; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 160 no. 418; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische*

*Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 256–259.

- [6] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 173, observed that the peculiar profile of the former Artaud de Montor panels seems unique among paintings dating to this period. But this does not necessarily imply, as Garrison believed, that it is the result of modern falsification. Nor does Garrison's doubt regarding the genuineness of the appearance of the paintings in the way they were illustrated in the drawing published in the Artaud de Montor catalog seem justified. It should be borne in mind that the outer frame of the altarpiece has been lost, probably when the figures were separated and their profiles adjusted to the painted internal frame. The external frame originally might have had a different profile, for instance like that of the Sienese triptych no. 11 in the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, which still preserves its original mixtilinear external frame while the ornamental border that delimits the upper part of the scenes is trefoil shaped. Another similar case is the Florentine Madonna in the Acton collection in Florence, which originally formed the center of an altarpiece; it too is executed on wood with horizontal graining (cf. Garrison 1949, no. 635). Here, the painted inner frame is arch shaped, whereas the outer frame placed over it is triangular in profile. It is therefore difficult to reconstruct with any precision the original external profile of the polyptych by Grifo di Tancredi.

Altarpieces with half-length figures, executed on a single horizontal-grained wooden support, represent an archaic form that Sienese painters abandoned around 1300 but that continued to be used sporadically in Florence in the early decades of the fourteenth century. The best known example is the polyptych of Santa Reparata, produced in Giotto's shop no earlier than c. 1310; cf. Giorgio Bonsanti and Alfio Del Serra, in *Capolavori e restauri* (Florence, 1986), 354–357. Cf. also the examples cited in Provenance note 3.

- [7] Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Considérations sur l'état de la peinture en Italie, dans les quatre siècles qui ont précédé celui de Raphaël: Par un membre de l'académie de Cortone; Ouvrage servant de catalogue raisonné à une collection de tableaux des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1808), nos. 30, 31, 34; Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Considérations sur l'état de la peinture en Italie, dans les quatre siècles qui ont précédé celui de Raphaël, par un membre de l'Académie de Cortone (Artaud de Montor): Ouvrage servant de catalogue raisonné à une collection de tableaux des XIIe, XIIIe, XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1811), nos. 35, 36, 39; Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Peintres primitifs: Collection de tableaux rapportée d'Italie* (Paris, 1843), nos. 35, 36, 39.
- [8] Bernard Berenson, "A Newly Discovered Cimabue," *Art in America* 8 (1920): 250–271.

- [9] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 142–144, 726–733. The mosaics of the Florentine church, executed in the 1270s probably by the Master of Sant’Agata, were restored for the first time in 1297 and then later as well. They are now rather difficult to read, but the figure of Christ, which Berenson compared with the Christ in the Washington painting, belongs to the earliest phase of the program. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, Sec. i, vol. ii, *The Mosaics of the Baptistery of Florena* (Florence 2007), 207 n. 158, 603–607.
- [10] Roberto Paolo Novello, “I mosaici,” in *Il Duomo di Pisa*, ed. Adriano Peroni, 3 vols. (Modena, 1995), 1:286–287, 556–558.
- [11] Alessio Monciatti, in *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Giorgio Bonsanti (Modena, 2002), 503–504.
- [12] *Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition: Loans and Special Features* (New York, 1920), unnumbered catalog; *Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors* (New York, 1924), no. 2; and Raymond Escholier et al., *Exposition de l’art italien de Cimabue à Tiepolo* (Paris, 1935), 51.
- [13] This is the panel from the church of Santa Trinita (no. 8343), variously dated. More recent scholarship has tended to date it to the last decade of the thirteenth century; cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 249–256.
- [14] Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 8; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 10; Enzo Carli, “Cimabue,” in *Enciclopedia cattolica*, 12 vols. (Florence, 1949), 3:1614; Pietro Toesca, *Il medioevo*, 2 vols., *Storia dell’arte italiana* 1 (Turin, 1927), 2:1040 n. 48; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 37.
- [15] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 1, *From the 6th Until the End of the 13th Century* (The Hague, 1923), 476, 574; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 5, *The Local Schools of Central and Southern Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1925), 442, fig. 262; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 1, *Dal VI alla fine del XIII secolo* (The Hague, 1932), 495–496, fig. 321; Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244.
- [16] Mario Salmi, “Per il completamento di un politico cimabuesco,” *Rivista d’arte* 17 (1935): 114.
- [17] Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 19, 47.
- [18] See Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*,

Cataloghi della Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 94–98.

- [19] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 1:50.
- [20] The following authorities spoke of “school” or “following” of Cimabue: Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti, eds., *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937* (Florence, 1943), 277; Roberto Salvini, *Cimabue* (Rome, 1946), 23; Roberto Salvini, “Cimabue,” in *Enciclopedia Universale dell’Arte*, ed. Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 15 vols. (Florence, 1960), 3:473; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 472 n. 1; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 172–173; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 9 n. 2; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, *Pittura del Duecento a Firenze* (Florence, 1955), 127; Sergio Samek Ludovici, *Cimabue* (Milan, 1956), 42–44; Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltarretabels* (Munich, 1962), 111–112; Mario Salmi, “La donazione Contini Bonacossi,” *Bollettino d’arte* 52 (1967): 223; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 54, 403, 440, 645; Enio Sindona, *L’opera completa di Cimabue e il momento figurativo pregiottesco* (Milan, 1975), 119–120; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:134–135; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 422. Longhi’s 1963 attribution to the Master of San Gaggio, in Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10, was accepted in turn by Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 2:1486 (though the three paintings were also listed among the works of Cimabue on p. 672 of the same publication); Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 15; Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 56; Luisa Marcucci, in *Le Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chambéry* (Chambéry, 1960), n.p., fig. 15; Giovanni Previtali, *La fortuna dei primitivi: Dal Vasari ai neoclassici* (Turin, 1964), 232; Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan, 1967), 26; Carlo Volpe, “La formazione di Giotto nella cultura di Assisi,” in *Giotto e i giotteschi in Assisi* (Rome, 1969), 38; Miklós Boskovits, “Cenni di Pepe (Pepo), detto Cimabue,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 1979), 23:452; Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini, *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 416; Alessandra Guerrini,

“Maestro di San Gaggio,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:625; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 202, 286; Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), 63, 109; Véronique Damian and Jean-Claude Giroud, *Peintures florentines, Collections du Musée de Chambéry* (Chambéry, 1990), 23, 66–67; “Artaud de Montor, Jean Alex Francis,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 2:514.

- [21] Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 122, proposed an integration of the fragmentary inscription of the triptych in the collection of the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.
- [22] Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 732 n. 1, 809; Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 129; Luciano Bellosi, “La lezione di Giotto,” in *Storia delle arti in Toscana: Il Trecento*, ed. Max Seidel (Florence, 2004), 96; Rolf Bagemihl, “Some Thoughts about Grifo di Tancredi of Florence and a Little-Known Panel at Volterra,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 413–414; Angelo Tartuferi, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2002), 59:398; Sonia Chiodo, in *L’arte a Firenze nell’età di Dante (1250–1300)*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Mario Scalini (Florence, 2004), 110–114; Andrea Staderini, “Un contesto per la collezione di ‘primitivi’ di Alexis-François Artaud de Montor (1772–1849),” *Proporzioni* 5 (2004): 38; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Montano d’Arezzo a San Lorenzo,” in *Le chiese di San Lorenzo e San Domenico: Gli ordini mendicanti a Napoli*, ed. Serena Romano and Nicolas Bock (Naples, 2005), 109.
- [23] Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 202, 286; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 172–173; Angelo Tartuferi, *La pittura a Firenze nel Duecento* (Florence, 1990), 63, 109; Angelo Tartuferi, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 87 vols. (Rome, 2002), 59:398; Rolf Bagemihl, “Some Thoughts about Grifo di Tancredi of Florence and a Little-Known Panel at Volterra,” *Arte cristiana* 87 (1999): 413–414; Sonia Chiodo, “Grifo di Tancredi,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 2009), 62:129. See also Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 56; Hellmut Hager, *Die Anfänge des italienischen Altarbildes: Untersuchungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte des toskanischen Hochaltarretabels* (Munich, 1962), 111–112; Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10.
- [24] The monastery of the Augustinian nuns dedicated to San Gaggio (= Caius), sometimes described as having been founded in the fourteenth century, in

fact already existed in the 1270s, as demonstrated by a testament of 1274; cf. Guido Carocci, *I dintorni di Firenze*, vol. 2, *Sulla sinistra dell'Arno* (Florence, 1907), 289; Robert Davidsohn, *Forschungen zur älteren Geschichte von Florenz*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1896), 4:416. At that time, the community of cloistered nuns, called “donne rinkiuse di San Gaggio,” probably was very small; perhaps they did not even have their own church. That such a church presumably existed around the turn of the century can, however, be inferred from documents of 1299 and 1304, cited by Domenico Moreni, *Notizie storiche dei contorni di Firenze*, vol. 6, *Dalla Porta a Pinti fino a Settignano* (Florence, 1795), 207, which speak of a *monastero* and its *badessa*. Grifo's painting, a *Maestà*, judging from its fame and size, cannot have been destined for the high altar: instead, it adorned the meeting place of a religious confraternity in the church; cf. Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 433–446. It therefore presupposes the existence of a church open to the public and for this reason additionally seems more likely to date after than before c. 1300.

- [25] No. 6115 of the Galleria dell'Accademia was attributed to the Master of Santa Cecilia by Mario Salmi, “Spigolature d'arte toscana,” *L'Arte* 16 (1913): 209–210; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 293–294; Ugo Procacci, *La R. Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze* (Rome, 1936), 22. On the other hand, Roberto Longhi noted in a youthful polyptych by Pacino di Bonaguida, now in the collection of the Cassa di Risparmio of Florence, “un aspetto torvo simile a quello datoci” (a surly expression similar to the one given to us) by the “Maestro di San Gaggio” in the former Artaud de Montor altarpiece. Roberto Longhi, “In traccia di alcuni anonimi trecentisti,” *Paragone* 14 (1963): 10.
- [26] Even in his first intervention, Roberto Longhi noted in the San Gaggio altarpiece and in the panels now in Washington reflections of the “prime sterzature plastiche del Giotto giovane” (the first turns of the wheel towards the plasticity of the young Giotto). Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 19. For his part, Luisa Marcucci expressed the view that “l'autore della tavola di San Gaggio, quando la dipinse...aveva già veduto la Madonna [by Giotto] di Ognissanti” (the author of the San Gaggio altarpiece had, when he painted it, already seen Giotto's Madonna from the Ognissanti), and that this implied that it would date no earlier (or not much earlier) than the second decade of the Trecento. Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 1, *I dipinti toscani del secolo XIII* (Rome, 1958), 57.
- [27] For these panels, generally (though not unanimously) assigned to the Master of Santa Cecilia, cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec.

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3, vol. 1, *The St. Cecilia Master and His Circle*, new ed. (Florence, 1986), 114–121, 132–137.

[28] Painters of the thirteenth century often represented the blessing Christ with a closed book in his hand. In contrast, examples of Christ holding an open book reveal the problems involved in foreshortening. It is enough to mention in this regard the already cited altarpiece in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa and the mosaic of Magister Francesco in the apse of Pisa Cathedral. See Mariagiulia Buresi and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 202–203; Adriano Peroni, ed., *Il Duomo di Pisa*, 3 vols. (Modena, 1995), 2, pt. 2: pl. 1571.

[29] Richard Offner, “A Remarkable Exhibition of Italian Paintings,” *The Arts* 5 (1924): 244.

[30] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:134.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden supports of this work and *Saint James Major* are single-member poplar panels with horizontal grain.[1] The upper 6.5 cm of the top, the curved sides of the gables, and the 1.3 cm-wide wooden strips on all sides are later additions. Both panels have been thinned and have had a mahogany cradle applied to the reverse. *Christ Blessing* was painted on a two-member wooden support, also with horizontal grain. The join is located approximately 10.3 cm from the top of the panel. This is above the tops of the panels depicting the saints, which explains why they do not have similar joins. The upper 4 cm of *Christ Blessing* and 0.8 cm–1.3 cm-wide strips on all sides are also modern additions. This panel, too, has been thinned and cradled. Examination of the x-radiographs and the backs of the panels reveals evidence of three nail holes vertically aligned down the center of each painting, indicating that the panels once had vertical battens. A piece of the top nail remains in *Saint James Major*. Line drawings published in the catalog of the Artaud de Montor collection[2] prove that the three figures, probably painted originally on one single panel,[3] had already been divided at the time they were acquired by the French collector in the early years of the nineteenth century. At that time, *Christ Blessing* still retained its original triangular gable, whereas the others had curvilinear gables terminating in triangular tops. After the 1851 sale (see *Provenance*), the gables were truncated, possibly in order to frame the panels

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together. The panel now in Chambéry (see below) still preserves the appearance given to it following the cutting of its gable, whereas the tops of the ones now in Washington have been altered, probably after their acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., with the clumsy reconstruction of the gables of this panel and *Saint James Major*.<sup>[4]</sup> A very fine layer of fabric had been applied to all panels under the traditional gesso ground. A green layer is present under the flesh tones.<sup>[5]</sup> The ground against which the figures are set is gilt and decorated with punched and hand-incised motifs. The present gold decorations on the drapery of Christ and the inscription on the book are modern, but an older layer of gold is visible under the inscription on the book.

The panels are generally in fine condition, but with many small, inpainted losses. The ornamental borders of the gables are in large part modern.<sup>[6]</sup> The surface coating is slightly discolored.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the wood using cross-sections (see report dated August 17, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Alexis-François Artaud de Montor, *Peintres primitifs: Collection de tableaux rapportée d'Italie* (Paris, 1843), 30–31.
- [3] That the panels have horizontal grain despite their longitudinal shape suggests that they were painted on a single panel, like some of the earliest polyptychs we know. This is the case with Vigoroso da Siena's polyptych dated 1291 now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia (no. 32), or the altarpiece, now divided in sections, whose central panel belongs to the Museum of Santa Croce in Florence and one lateral component to an unknown private collection—the work of an early fourteenth-century artist close to the Maestro Daddesco. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 251–252. Analogous is the case of the triptych by Bernardo Daddi, formerly also in Santa Croce and now in the storerooms of the Soprintendenza in Florence, which still remains on its undivided wooden support. See Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 50.
- [4] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 85, box 230, folder 25,

document the commission of the frame but not the paintings' treatment.

- [5] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and the pigments found were consistent with those used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (see report dated August 17, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [6] Edward B. Garrison was certainly in error when he stated that “the tooling in the gold background...is not original.” Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 173. There is no reason to affirm, as he did, that the shapes of the panels, when still in Paris, “are impossible in the period” and that the painted borders are all modern. The original appearance of the altarpiece was probably somewhere between Vigoroso’s above-cited Perugia panel and the one in the Acton collection in Florence (see Garrison 1949, 160 no. 419), though the latter has simple triangular gables over the lateral figures.
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## PROVENANCE

By 1808 in the collection of Alexis-François Artaud de Montor [1772-1849], Paris, who probably purchased the panels during one of his several periods of residence in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> (his estate sale, Seigneur and Schroth at Hotel des Ventes Mobilières, Paris, 16-17 January 1851, nos. 35, 36, and 39 [with 1937.1.2.b and .c, as by Margaritone d’Arezzo); Julien Gréau [1810-1895], Troyes; by inheritance to his daughter, Marie, comtesse Bertrand de Broussillon, Paris;<sup>[2]</sup> purchased September 1919 by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., Paris, New York, and London);<sup>[3]</sup> Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, by 1920;<sup>[4]</sup> returned to (Duveen Brothers, Inc.); sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] On Artaud de Montor, apart from the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Roland Beyer for the University of Strasbourg in 1978, see Jacques Perot, “Canova et les diplomates français à Rome. François Cacault et Alexis Artaud de Montor,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art français* (1980): 219-233, and Andrea Staderini, “Un contesto per la collezione di primitivi di Alexis - François Artaud de Montor (1772-1849),” *Proporzioni. Annali della Fondazione Roberto Longhi* 5 (2004): 23-62. [2] This information on the post-Artaud de Montor provenance of the work was gleaned at the time Duveen Brothers, Inc., purchased the three panels. See the Duveen prospectus, in NGA curatorial files; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 116. [3] Fowles 1976, 116; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 85, box 230, folder 25, and reel 422. The

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Duveen record indicates that they purchased the painting in Paris from Hilaire Gréau, a son of Julien Gréau. [4] The three panels were exhibited as “lent by Carl W. Hamilton” in the New York exhibition in 1920. Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:134) also states that they were formerly in the Hamilton collection, and it is reported that “the Cimabue altarpiece was seen in Hamilton’s New York apartment” by 1920 (see Colin Simpson, *Artfull Partners. Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen*, New York, 1986: 199). However, this and other pictures had actually been given to Hamilton on credit by Duveen Brothers (see Meryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 422) and were probably returned to the dealers by 1924, when they were shown as “lent anonymously” at the exhibition of early Italian paintings in American collections held by the Duveen Galleries in New York. [5] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Subject Files, box 2, Gallery Archives, NGA; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1920 Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1920, unnumbered catalogue.

1924 Loan Exhibition of Important Early Italian Paintings in the Possession of Notable American Collectors, Duveen Brothers, New York, 1924, no. 2, as by Giovanni Cimabue (no. 1 in illustrated 1926 version of catalogue).

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*Saint Peter*

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# Lippo Memmi

Also known as

Filippo di Memmo

Sieneese, active 1317/1347

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Son of the Sieneese painter Memmo di Filippuccio, Lippo probably was born towards the end of the thirteenth century and trained in his father's shop. His earliest signed and dated work (1317), the *Maestà*, is in the Palazzo Pubblico in San Gimignano, the city where his father was long active. Similar in composition and style to the more famous version of the same theme painted two years earlier by Simone Martini (Sieneese, active from 1315; died 1344) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, the fresco implies the existence of artistic relations between the two at this time. These relations would become even closer in the following years, leading to collaboration between the two, sometimes in the execution of the same work, and even to ties of blood. Simone married Lippo's sister in 1324.

A proper evaluation of Lippo's oeuvre is now hampered both by the inclusion of some works by Simone Martini that have come down to us in poor condition and by attempts to assign some of his paintings to other artists. Donato Martini and Federico (or Tederico) Memmi, respectively brothers of Simone and Lippo, painters of whom no authenticated works are known, have been proposed on various occasions, for example, as attributions for paintings that should more properly be given to Lippo Memmi himself. Some scholars have gone so far as almost to eliminate Lippo's activity as an independent master altogether, preferring to speak of an indistinguishable *bottega* of members of the Memmi family.[1] These attempts lead to no convincing results. Sometimes, admittedly, in particular in the *Annunciation and Saints* now in the Uffizi, Florence, the stylistic kinship between the two brothers-in-law is so close as to make it difficult to distinguish the work of the one from the other. It would be mistaken, however, to consider Lippo merely as an able imitator of the style of Simone. His considerable artistic stature clearly emerges from various signed works, which also permit a satisfactory reconstruction of his career.

After painting the robust figures arrayed in rather wooden poses on either side of the Virgin in the San Gimignano *Maestà* and in the *Madonna dei raccomandati* in

Orvieto Cathedral, also a signed work although probably executed with the help of an assistant, Lippo developed a more delicate style, skillfully combining the needs of linear elegance and subtlety of modeling with the volumetric compactness of three-dimensional bodies. Works exemplifying this more suave and aristocratic style include such paintings as the polyptych painted for Pisa Cathedral (now in the church of San Niccolò, Casciana Alta); the *Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas* in the Pisan church of Santa Caterina, probably painted shortly after the canonization of the saint (1323); and the signed Madonna in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg (Germany). In 1325 or in the years immediately following, Lippo painted a polyptych for the church of San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa, whose panels have now been dispersed among the museums of Altenburg, Avignon, Douai, Palermo, and Pisa.[2] The finesse of modeling and the exquisite rhythmic modulations of the design of this latter polyptych—a work that Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574) claimed bore the signature of Lippo—have led some scholars to remove it from the painter's oeuvre and to reassign it to “Barna,” an artist who was not cited in documents known today. However, in his *Commentarii*, Lorenzo Ghiberti claimed that Barna was the master of the New Testament cycle in the Collegiata of San Gimignano. Since the words “Lipus de senis pinsit” are found scratched into the plaster in various passages of the cycle, we may assume that Lippo was the real author of the works assigned to Barna.

In 1333 Lippo painted the figure of the female Saint (Massima?) in the triptych of the Annunciation in Siena Cathedral, signed together with Simone, and, in the same year, placed his own signature on the diptych now divided between the Gemäldegalerie of Berlin and a private collection. To the fourth decade we can assign, apart from some precious small panels for private devotion, some important public commissions: the *Madonna del Popolo* from the church of the Servi in Siena (now in the Museo Diocesano) and the Madonna no. 595 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, the two lateral panels of which are now in a private collection.[3] After having worked with his brother-in-law in 1344 for the Ospedale della Scala in Siena, in 1347 Lippo signed a now-lost panel in the Franciscan church in the papal city of Avignon. In this same year the painter is once again recorded in Siena, where sometime later he painted his last work known to us, for the church of San Domenico: a fresco of the Madonna and Child with saints (now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale), which bears his signature and the fragmentary date “MCCCL ...” Faithful partner and *fratello in arte* of Simone Martini, Lippo created works that would constitute, no less than that of his brother-in-law, a firm point of reference for the main Sienese painters of the second half of the fourteenth

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century.

[1] Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 14–22; Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi, eds., *Simone Martini e “chompagni”* (Florence, 1985), 82–102; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 172–188, 328–336 et passim.

[2] Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps, eds., *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg* (Siena, 2008), 28–37.

[3] Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi, eds., *Simone Martini e “chompagni”* (Florence, 1985), 90–93.

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Lippo Memmi  
Sienese, active 1317/1347

## *Madonna and Child with Donor*

1325/1330

tempera on panel

painted surface: 50.8 × 23.5 cm (20 × 9 1/4 in.)

overall: 51.5 × 24.2 × 0.5 cm (20 1/4 × 9 1/2 × 3/16 in.)

framed: 70 × 36.2 × 5.1 cm (27 9/16 × 14 1/4 × 2 in.)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.11

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### ENTRY

The painting's iconography is based on the type of the *Hodegetria* Virgin.[1] It presents, however, a modernized version of this formula, in keeping with the "humanized" faith and sensibility of the time; instead of presenting her son to the observer as in the Byzantine model, Mary's right hand touches his breast, thus indicating him as the predestined sacrificial lamb. As if to confirm this destiny, the child draws his mother's hand towards him with his left hand. The gesture of his other hand, outstretched and grasping the Madonna's veil, can be interpreted as a further reference to his Passion and death.[2]

The painting probably was originally the left wing of a diptych. The half-length Madonna and Child frequently was combined with a representation of the Crucifixion, with or without the kneeling donor. In our panel, the donor, an unidentified prelate, is seen kneeling to the left of the Madonna; his position on the far left of the composition itself suggests that the panel was intended as a pendant to a matching panel to the right. In any case, the image was intended for the donor's private devotion.[3]

Ever since its first public appearance at the London exhibition of Siennese painting in 1904, this panel has been recognized as a work by Lippo Memmi. The attribution to the fourteenth-century Siennese master has seldom been placed in doubt since that time.[4] If the painting's attribution can be considered perfectly convincing, its date is open to question; the art historical literature has expressed various views on the dating. The date usually proposed for our *Madonna and Child* is c. 1330, but some authorities have pushed this either backward to the 1320s or forward to 1335.[5] The lack of any securely dated works by the artist before 1333 (apart, of course, from the great fresco of the *Maestà* in San Gimignano dated 1317, which hardly lends itself to stylistic comparison with small panels like ours) justifies this lack of certainty. It should be said, however, that the identification of Lippo with the so-called Master of the Triumph of Saint Thomas—that is, the master of the painting of the same name in the church of Santa Caterina at Pisa—has been revived and has begun to gain ground. If, as various clues suggest, this proposal is likely to be correct,[6] a further chronological point of reference for Lippo's career would thus be obtained, for the Santa Caterina panel must have been painted in close proximity to the canonization of Thomas Aquinas in 1323. Another fact that should be borne in mind, in reflecting on the chronological sequence of Lippo's works is a gradual enrichment of technique, particularly the tendency to pass "from a pictorial treatment of luminous and two-dimensional effect to a softer, more atmospheric, more richly charged modeling, also involving a more three-dimensional effect." [7] Some art historians have viewed this change primarily as a consequence of Lippo's adjustment to the manner of Simone Martini (Siennese, active from 1315; died 1344), but it would be more correct to speak of his gradual espousal of the ideals of Gothic elegance, not simply his dependence on his brother-in-law's stylistic development.[8] The various punch marks used to decorate this painting include several that can also be recognized in paintings attributed to Simone and executed in the period between 1320 and 1333, or even later. Some of these punches recur in the *Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas* and in other panels attributable to the Pisan phase of Lippo's activity, hence executed in the period 1320/1325.[9]

Given these observations, a date for the National Gallery of Art's *Madonna* of slightly later than the *Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas* can be supported with some confidence. This conclusion is also reinforced by stylistic considerations, for the clear-cut and energetic design of the Pisan painting is still exempt from such features as the accomplished curvilinear rhythms and delicate chiaroscuro modeling proposed in the painting being discussed here. A *terminus ante quem*,

on the other hand, is provided by the Madonna [fig. 1] in Berlin (Gemäldegalerie) dated 1333: its more elongated, aristocratic proportions and more spacious and refined compositional layout indicate the artist's gradual adoption of a fully gothicizing manner. From these considerations, therefore, a date for the Washington Madonna in the period 1325/1330 can be deduced—a date that also holds good, in all probability, for a painting particularly close in style, namely the polyptych formerly in the church of San Niccolò at Casciana Alta, near Pisa.[10] Despite some archaizing aspects (such as the round-arched upper termination of the panels of the main register), the altarpiece seems, in its figural style, to belong to the same phase as our panel. Mary [fig. 2] is more lissome in physique and assumes a more composed and elegant pose than in previous paintings by Lippo, while the curly-headed child [fig. 3], who opens his lips to pronounce words of blessing, would seem closely akin to the idea proposed in the Gallery panel [fig. 4]. The fact that the face of Saint Thomas is more subtly naturalistic in its modeling than that of the same saint in the undated Pisan panel (c. 1323) suggests a slightly later date.

Lippo, we may infer, embarked on a new stylistic phase in the years around 1325. This led him not only to dedicate ever-growing attention to reserved elegance of pose but also to refine his technique. He now tried to accentuate the realistic effects of his images. His efforts in this direction are testified by the acutely characterized portrait of the donor [fig. 5] in the Washington Madonna: the flaccid, unshaven features show evident signs of old age and poor health. But no less subtle and acute an observation is shown in the treatment of the child's close-fitting blouse that wrinkles and puckers under the firm touch of Mary's finger.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child*, 1333, tempera on panel, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin. Image: bpk, Berlin/Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin/Joerg P. Anders/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 2** Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, Museo Nazionale, Pisa. Image courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici Paesaggistici Storici Artistici ed Etnoantropologici per le Province de Pisa e Livorno



**fig. 3** Detail of Christ, Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, Museo Nazionale, Pisa. Image courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici Paesaggistici Storici Artistici ed Etnoantropologici per le Province de Pisa e Livorno



**fig. 4** Detail of Christ, Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child with Donor*, 1325/1330, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 5** Detail of donor, Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child with Donor*, 1325/1330, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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#### NOTES

- [1] See Christine Angelidi and Titos Papamastorakis, “The Veneration of the Virgin Hodegetria and the Hodegon Monastery,” in *The Mother of God: The Representation of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and

London, 2000), 373–387.

- [2] On the motif of the child drawing the Virgin's hand towards himself and its possible significance, cf. Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168–169. See also Shorr 1954, 116–117, on the significance of the veil on which the child concentrates his attention.
- [3] Cf. Wolfgang Kermer, *Studien zum Diptychon in der sakralen Malerei: Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Düsseldorf, 1967), 83–89. On the genre of diptychs during this period, see Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 31–71; on the figures of devotees kneeling in prayer, see 107–140.
- [4] George Martin Richter (1941) was alone in conjecturing an attribution of the painting to Andrea di Vanni (Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413), though specifying that it must have been produced in the workshop of Lippo Memmi. Rainer Brandl (1985) believed the attribution to Lippo unjustified; he insisted on its stylistic affinities with the paintings of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) in Assisi and Orvieto. See George Martin Richter, "The New National Gallery in Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177; Rainer Brandl, *Die Tafelbilder des Simone Martini: Ein Beitrag zur Kunst Sienas im Trecento* (Frankfurt am Main; and New York, 1985), 85 n. 1.
- [5] Scholars who have proposed a dating to the 1320s are: Joseph Polzer (1971), Carlo Volpe (1982), Rainer Brandl (1985), and Eliot W. Rowlands (1996). Those supporting a dating to c. 1330 or shortly after are: Cristina De Benedictis (1974, 1979), Giovanna Damiani (1985), Miklós Boskovits (1986, 1988), Pierluigi Leone de Castris (2003), and Sabina Spannocchi (2009). The date 1335 or after was suggested in the catalogs of the National Gallery of Art (1941, 1965, 1985), as well as by Fern Rusk Shapley (1979), Serenella Castri (1992), De Benedictis (1996), and Meryle Secrest (2004). See Joseph Polzer, "Observations on Known Paintings and a New Altarpiece by Francesco Traini," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 386–387; Carlo Volpe, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 186; Rainer Brandl, *Die Tafelbilder des Simone Martini: Ein Beitrag zur Kunst Sienas im Trecento* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 1985), 85 n. 1; Eliot W. Rowlands, *The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art: Italian Paintings, 1300–1800* (Kansas City, MO, 1996), 36, 38; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8–9; Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 21, 93; Giovanna Damiani, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni,"* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 92; Miklós Boskovits, "Sul trittico di Simone Martini e di Lippo Memmi," *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 76 n. 33; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei:*

*Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 78, 81; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 181, 283; Sabina Spannocchi, "Lippo e Tederigo Memmi," in *La Collegiata di San Gimignano*, vol. 2, *L'architettura, i cicli pittorici murali e i loro restauri*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli (Siena, 2009), 452; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 133; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 89; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 230, 251; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:330–331; Serenella Castri, "Memmi, Lippo (Lippo di Memmo di Filippuccio)," in *Dizionario della pittura e dei pittori*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo and Bruno Toscano, 6 vols. (Turin, 1992), 3:581; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:735; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 458.

[6] Traditionally attributed to Francesco Traini, the panel in the Pisan church of Santa Caterina was later reduced to anonymity by the creation of an eponymous Master of the Triumph of Saint Thomas by Millard Meiss, "The Problem of Francesco Traini," *The Art Bulletin* 15 (1933): 97–173, an artist perhaps identifiable with "Barna," according to Hermann Beenken, "Notizien und Nachrichten. Malerei: Italien 14 Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 3 (1934): 73. It was then reattributed, albeit cautiously, to Lippo Memmi by Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xxx, lxxv n. 90. Long ignored in the art historical literature, this hypothesis was resuscitated and reinforced in more recent years by Antonio Caleca, "Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un'ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1," *Critica d'arte* 41 (1976): 49–59; Antonio Caleca, "Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un'ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 2," *Critica d'arte* 42 (1977): 55–80; Miklós Boskovits, "Il gotico senese rivisitato: Proposte e commenti su una mostra," *Arte cristiana* 71 (1983): 264; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 75, 202; Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni"*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 94–98; Giovanni Previtali, "Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini," in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 153, 156; Joseph Polzer, "The Triumph of Thomas Panel in Santa Caterina, Pisa: Meaning and Date," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 37 (1993): 29–70; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732.

[7] Cf. Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni"*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 100. Hitherto, Lippo's stylistic development had often been interpreted merely as a gradual approximation

of Simone's style. For example, Bonnie Apgar Bennett wrote, "Lippo Memmi's artistic career into the 1320s can be most accurately characterized as a progressive acceptance of Simone's style." Bonnie Apgar Bennett, *Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini's "fratello in arte": The Image Revealed by His Documented Works* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1977), 114.

- [8] The two artists must have worked in partnership since the second decade, as implied by their presence during the same years in various Tuscan and Umbrian towns. At San Gimignano, Lippo signed the fresco of the Maestà in 1317, and Simone painted one of his youthful altarpieces. Cf. Cristina De Benedictis, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni"*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 47–50; and Dillian Gordon, "Simone Martini's Altarpiece for S. Agostino, San Gimignano," *The Burlington Magazine* 133 (1991): 771. In Pisa, Lippo painted his Triumph of Saint Thomas in the church of Santa Caterina not long after Simone's polyptych in the same church (1319–1320); and in Orvieto, Simone executed polyptychs in part preserved in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in the town, and Lippo was commissioned to paint his *Madonna dei raccomandati* for the cathedral.
- [9] Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) stated that the punches used in the decoration of the Gallery's painting also appeared in works by Simone Martini, such as the youthful polyptych now divided among the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (punch 16 a, according to Frinta's enumeration); the polyptych in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Orvieto; the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence (Frinta's I 70); the polyptych in Pisa dating to 1319–1320; and the folding Orsini altarpiece, now divided among the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, the Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, and the Musée du Louvre, Paris. See Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 310–311, 321, 487–488; and, for the Orsini altarpiece, Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 362–363.
- [10] Cf. Antonino Caleca, *Mostra del restauro di opere delle province di Pisa e Livorno* (Pisa, 1971), 22–25; Joanna Cannon, "Simone Martini, the Dominicans and the Early Sienese Polyptych," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 45 (1982): 85–86. The close stylistic affinity between the polyptych of Casciana Alta and the panel in Washington was already pointed out by Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8–9; Carlo Volpe, *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 186; Angelo Tartuferi, "Appunti su Simone Martini e 'chompagni,'" *Arte cristiana* 74 (1986): 85, 91–92 n. 29; and Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier

(Berlin, 1988), 78.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The panel is composed of a single piece of wood trimmed along the lower edge. At some point in the painting's history, the original triangular gable was cut just above the Virgin's halo. The gable was reconstructed with modern wood during an undocumented restoration, probably conducted in 1927–1928.[1] The wooden support was thinned to 5 mm and cradled, and the vertical edges covered by strips of modern wood, probably at the same time that the gable was added. The modern replacement of the missing top of the gable (c. 12–16 cm) has been gilded and its border decorated with punches that imitate the original ones along the vertical edges of the panel. The painting was executed on a white gesso ground, with gilding over a layer of red bole in the ground behind the figures. A green imprimatura can be seen under the flesh tones. The paint was applied in thin layers with little texture except for a discernible thickness in the Virgin's blue cloak. A split about 6 cm long runs upwards from the center of the lower edge of the panel. There is a loss in the gilding at the upper left edge, and another loss is visible in the lower left corner. There is inpainting in the Virgin's cloak and in the child's robe, as well as in some scratches in the faces.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] A photograph (Braun & C., Paris, no. 29710), probably taken on the occasion of the London exhibition in 1904, shows the painting in the same condition (with the gable cut and the major losses only roughly inpainted) as in the reproduction in Robert Langton Douglas's note (1927) published on the occasion of the sale of the Benson collection. The painting presumably was restored soon after its acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., whose policy was to restore paintings immediately, and sometimes rather drastically, after their acquisition. See Robert Langton Douglas, "I dipinti senesi della Collezione Benson passati da Londra in America," *Rassegna d'arte senese e del costume* 1, no. 5 (1927): 103 repro; Meryle Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (New York, 2004), 334.

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## NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS

*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

### PROVENANCE

Private collection, Paris; purchased c. 1896 through (Thos. Agnew and Sons, Ltd., London) by Robert Henry [1850–1929] and Evelyn Holford [1856–1943] Benson, London and Buckhurst Park, Surrey;[1] sold 1927 with the entire Benson collection to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);[2] purchased 15 December 1936 by The Andrew W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[3] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] According to Peter Wake, grandson of Robert Benson (letter, Wake to Anna Voris, 2 February 1976, in NGA curatorial files), based on Benson's own handwritten records the painting was "bought in Paris about 1896 through Agnew." [2] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 206, box 351, folders 2 and 3, and reel 207, box 352, folders 1 and 2 (copies in NGA curatorial files). See also Robert Langton Douglas, "I dipinti senesi della Collezione Benson passati da Londra in America," *Rassegna d'Arte Senese e del Costume* 1/5, no. 3 (May-June 1927): 99-105; Frank E. Washburn Freund, "Die Sammlung Benson," *Der Cicerone* 19 (1927): 495-502; Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 183-184. [3] The original invoice for a large group of objects purchased from Duveen Brothers, Inc. by the Mellon Trust is in NGA archives (Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2; copy in NGA curatorial files).

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1904 Exhibition of Pictures of the School of Siena, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1904, no. 19.

1927 Loan Exhibition of the Benson Collection of Old Italian Masters, City of Manchester Art Gallery, 1927, no. 101.

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- 103, fig. 105.
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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

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Lippo Memmi  
Sienese, active 1317/1347

## *Saint John the Baptist*

probably c. 1325

tempera on panel

painted surface (incised line to incised line): 88.7 × 42.2 cm (34 15/16 × 16 5/8 in.)

painted surface (original panel): 92.5 × 44 cm (36 7/16 × 17 5/16 in.)

overall: 94.3 × 45.3 cm (37 1/8 × 17 13/16 in.)

framed: 99.1 × 48.3 × 6 cm (39 × 19 × 2 3/8 in.)

Inscription: on the saint's scroll: ECCE AGNUS DEI. ECCE QUI TOLLIT PECCATUM MUNDI] (Behold the Lamb of God; behold him who [taketh away the sins of the world]; from John 1:29)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.291

### ENTRY

The panel presents the Baptist according to the traditional iconography:[1] with shaggy hair and beard, camel-skin tunic, prophetic scroll in his left hand, and right hand extended in blessing in the oriental fashion.[2] It is evidently the fragment of a polyptych whose style, format, and proportions suggest that it was executed in the circle of the Sienese master Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) around 1320–1330.[3] In the 1930s, Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà concluded that the painting formed part of the same polyptych to which the panel of Saint Peter [fig. 1] in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, and that of Saint Paul [fig. 2] in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York belonged. She added to these the Madonna and Child [fig. 3] in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.[4] Some years later, Helen Comstock linked the panel being discussed here with another of Saint John the Evangelist [fig. 4], now in the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven, and with those of Saints Louis of Toulouse [fig. 5] and Francis [fig. 6] in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena.[5] At this point, the reconstruction of the dismantled altarpiece, consisting of seven panels, might have seemed complete. But not all art historians accepted it: some detected sufficient stylistic disparities between its separate components to cast doubt on their common origin. For example, Klara Steinweg (1956) considered the Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist and Saints Peter and Paul to be

parts of two different polyptychs, the second of which might be identified, she proposed, with that recorded by Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574) as a work by Lippo Memmi in the church of San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa.[6] Gertrude Coor (1961) also found this hypothesis attractive.[7] Though her main interest was the stylistic problems relating to the seven panels now dispersed among various museums, she cogently pointed out that the provenance of the two panels now in Siena, from Colle Val d'Elsa, rendered improbable the identification of the complex with the one in Pisa described by Vasari. Coor later developed her reconstruction of the polyptych by observing that the original frame that has survived on the panels in New Haven and Siena presupposed the existence of a second tier of smaller panels above the central Madonna and Child and the six lateral saints. In her view, a bust of Christ in the Musée de la Chartreuse in Douai and the two saints of the Vallombrosan Order in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg (Germany) could have formed part of this upper register.[8] Cristina De Benedictis (1974) proposed an alternative reconstruction:[9] the panel in Washington, together with those in Berlin, New Haven, New York, and Paris, formed part of a five-part complex formerly in the church of San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa. This altarpiece, in her view, likely would have been furnished with a predella consisting of a series of busts of apostles, now divided among the National Gallery of Art and other collections.[10] But she argued that the panels of Saint Francis and Saint Louis now in the Pinacoteca in Siena could not have formed part of it.

The hypothesis that has met with most support and that probably comes closer to the truth was formulated by Michael Mallory (1974, 1975) and by Marianne Lonjon (cited in Laclotte 1978).[11] Both accepted the reconstruction of the main register of the complex as a heptptych with a provenance from Colle Val d'Elsa. While not excluding the possibility that the above-cited busts of apostles might have belonged to the predella of the same complex, they maintained that the upper register was formed not by the panels in Altenburg and Douai but by the half-length figures of Mary Magdalene [fig. 7] in the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence; Saint Clare [fig. 8] in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Saint Agnes [fig. 9] and Saint Anthony [fig. 10] in the Frick Art Museum in Pittsburgh; and Saint Elizabeth of Hungary [fig. 11] in the Museo Poldi Pezzoli in Milan.[12] An additional panel of the gable zone, representing a half-length Saint Augustine [fig. 12] and now belonging to the Salini collection, Asciano, has been identified in more recent years.[13] What is still lacking from the complex reconstructed in this way [fig. 13] (see also *Reconstruction*) is the central panel of the upper register. The central panel of the main register also remains in dispute, since the Madonna now

in Berlin shows some physical discrepancies from the six lateral saints.[14] Finally, in 1995, Alessandro Bagnoli advanced convincing arguments to trace the origin of this altarpiece back to the church of San Francesco in San Gimignano.[15]

As for the authorship of the painting in the Gallery, Raimond van Marle immediately discarded the attribution to Taddeo di Bartolo proposed in the sale catalog (1932) in favor of Simone Martini.[16] The panel was published under Simone's name by van Marle (1934), although in an expertise written as the 1934 volume was in press, presumably produced for the art dealer Jacques Goudstikker, van Marle had already suggested this attribution.[17] Various other art historians expressed similar opinions in handwritten expertises: Bernard Berenson, Giuseppe Fiocco, Roberto Longhi, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi.[18] The attribution to Simone was repeated by Helen Comstock (1939), Suida (1940), Robert Langton Douglas (in *Duveen Pictures* 1941), George Martin Richter (1941), and Alfred M. Frankfurter (1944).[19] The panel continued to bear an attribution to Simone in the catalogs of the Gallery until 1959. However, already in the 1930s, some authors expressed doubts, and some proposed an alternative attribution to Lippo Memmi (Simone's brother-in-law). Hermann Beenken (1935) rejected Simone Martini's authorship.[20] Guglielmo Matthiae (1935) associated the painting with Lippo Memmi, while in a private communication Robert Langton Douglas firmly supported an attribution to Lippo.[21] For his part, F. Mason Perkins referred the painting to a "pupil or follower of Simone Martini." [22] Richard Offner, in a draft review of the exhibition of Italian primitives at the Gallery, never published, concluded his comment on the painting by pointing out, "Lippo's style commits the Baptist to his authorship." [23] Klara Steinweg (1956), in turn, classified the painting as "Simonesque"; Maria Cristina Gozzoli (1970) and Sebastiana Delogu Ventroni (1972) classified it as a work by Simone's shop.[24] Giovanni Previtali (1985) felt that he could not wholly reject Simone's personal involvement: referring to the *Saint John the Baptist* being discussed here and its companion panels, he asked, "Is it really possible wholly to exclude Simone's intervention from these extraordinary quintessences of aristocratic deportment and dignified elegance?" [25] Another hypothesis that has been proposed is that the polyptych in question is the collaborative work of various painters active in Lippo's shop, including the mythical "Barna." [26] The date of the painting is also contested: proposals fluctuate between 1315 and 1335, even though more recent studies in general accept its execution in the 1320s.[27]

The uncertainties about the attribution and date of *Saint John the Baptist* depend in large measure on art historians' different judgments about the extent of Lippo Memmi's oeuvre and of its stylistic autonomy. Various scholars have wondered whether the changes that can be observed in the paintings attributed to him are indicative of the master's stylistic development, or of the intervention of particularly talented assistants, such as Lippo's brother Tederico, or others. It seems very unlikely, however, that the proportions of the figures painted in Lippo's shop could have been elongated, the drawing given added complexity of rhythm, and the modeling softened depending on the relative talents and skills of the artist's various collaborators. The starting point for a dispassionate consideration of the question must be the presupposition, apparently banal (though often placed in doubt), that the signed works, unless proof to the contrary is forthcoming, imply that the work in question is substantially an autograph of the artist who signed it.[28] The few secure dates at our disposal regarding the output of the two brothers-in-law, Lippo Memmi and Simone Martini, who worked in close contact at least since the 1320s, would suggest that although there is admittedly a substantial corollary between their styles, their individual characteristics never became interchangeable. I think it is right to maintain, therefore, that the polyptych of which the Washington Baptist formed part, with its slender and aristocratic figures of meditative poise and restrained movements, should be inserted in Lippo's catalog in a phase undoubtedly subsequent to his fresco in the Palazzo Pubblico in San Gimignano (1317), but preceding the phase in which the artist signed and dated (1333) the ascetic and nervous figure of the Baptist formerly in the Golovin collection in New York, which originally formed a diptych together with the signed Madonna (no. 1081) in Berlin. In these panels, the amplitude of gold ground not occupied by figures, the pointed arch upper termination, and the pursuit of preciousness in the elaboration of the decorative elements, especially in the prominent bands of punched ornament, testify to an advanced stage in the artist's development.[29] The external profiling of the three panels that still retain their original frame, the trapezoidal termination above the inscribed Gothic arch, and the slender pinnacles of the upper register all are features that appear more modern than those of the polyptych from the church of San Niccolò at Casciana Alta, near Pisa. In the latter, undoubtedly painted after 1323,[30] the individual panels of the altarpiece have squatter proportions and an upper termination in the form of a trilobate round arch. Moreover, the panels with rectangular external profile are surmounted by triangular gables, reviving in simplified form the type of Simone's Pisan polyptych dating to 1319/1320. From a strictly stylistic point of view, various

elements suggest a dating of the Casciana Alta complex after the altarpiece with the *Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas* in the church of Santa Caterina in Pisa, a work probably realized shortly after the saint's canonization in 1323.[31] However prestigious a commission it may have been, that work is characterized by a more summary modeling, a more emphatic use of an incisive contour line, and a less subtle hand in exploiting soft chiaroscuro effects in modeling the forms, compared to the panels discussed here.[32]

One of Lippo's paintings for which a plausible date is available is the polyptych of 1325 formerly over the high altar of the church of San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa, described by Vasari in his *vita* of Simone and now divided among the museums of Altenburg, Douai, Palermo (Galleria Nazionale), and Pisa. This is in fact the work by Lippo that approaches most closely in style the polyptych of which our Baptist originally formed part.[33]

Despite the uncertainties that various scholars express both about the name of the artist and about its date, transmitted by the sources but often placed in doubt, it can be said with some confidence, in the light of our present-day knowledge of Trecento painting in Siena, that both Lippo's signature and the year of execution of the Pisan polyptych are entirely plausible. Unfortunately, because of the loss of the original frames and the arbitrary alterations to the external profiling of the main panels of this altarpiece, typological comparison with the San Gimignano polyptych is no longer feasible. All we can say is that the airy composition of the individual panels and the use, at least in the gabled ones, of the pointed arch motif with inscribed trefoil, suggest their dating to the same period. A further, albeit vague, piece of evidence of their chronological proximity might be the presence of the same punched motif in both the Washington panel [fig. 14] and the panel of Saint Peter now in Palermo.[34] But it is above all the accomplished drawing, especially evident in the harmonious curvilinear rhythms of the contours; the self-assured elegance of the poses; and the softness of the modeling that testify that the two complexes were executed in the same phase of Lippo's art. Sufficient evidence does not exist to establish with certainty whether the one polyptych takes precedence over the other in date, even though I am inclined to think that the altarpiece painted for the Franciscans in San Gimignano is somewhat later than the other, to which the sources attach the date 1325. One thing is certain: the *Washington Saint John the Baptist* was painted in the artist's full maturity, the phase in which his output reached its highest levels. That explains, even if it cannot justify, the now obsolete attribution to Simone Martini.



**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Peter*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Musée du Louvre, Paris. © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Gérard Blot



**fig. 2** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Paul*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, gold ground, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Coudert Brothers, 1888



**fig. 3** Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin. Image: bpk, Berlin/Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen, Berlin/Joerg P. Anders/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Lippo Memmi, *Saint John the Evangelist*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Yale University Art Gallery, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, B. A. 1896. Image: Yale University Art Gallery



**fig. 5** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Francis*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena. Image courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali



**fig. 6** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Louis of Toulouse*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena



**fig. 7** Lippo Memmi, *Mary Magdalene*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Museum Appropriation Fund 21.250. Image: Erik Gould, courtesy of the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence



**fig. 8** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Clare*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Irma N. Straus, 1964



**fig. 9** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Agnes*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Frick Art and Historical Center, Pittsburgh



**fig. 10** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Anthony*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Frick Art and Historical Center, Pittsburgh



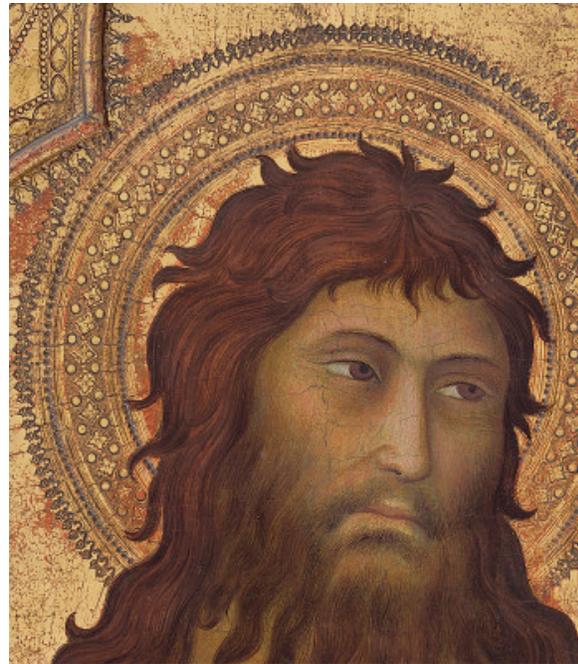
**fig. 11** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Museo Poldo Pezzoli, Milan.  
Image: Fondazione Artistica Poldo Pezzoli "Onlus"



**fig. 12** Lippo Memmi, *Saint Augustine*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, Salini collection, Castello di Gallico, Asciano, Siena



**fig. 13** Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Lippo Memmi. Bottom tier: a. *Saint Louis of Toulouse* (fig. 6); b. *Saint Paul* (fig. 2); c. *Saint John the Baptist*; d. *Madonna and Child* (fig. 3); e. *Saint John the Evangelist* (fig. 4); f. *Saint Peter* (fig. 1); g. *Saint Francis* (fig. 5). Upper tier: h. *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary* (fig. 11); i. *Saint Augustine* (fig. 12); j. *Mary Magdalene* (fig. 7); k. *Saint Anthony* (fig. 10); l. *Saint Clare* (fig. 8); m. *Saint Agnes* (fig. 9)



**fig. 14** Detail of halo, Lippo Memmi, *Saint John the Baptist*, probably c. 1325, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by Lippo Memmi.

Bottom tier:

- a. *Saint Louis of Toulouse* (Entry fig. 6)
- b. *Saint Paul* (Entry fig. 2)
- c. *Saint John the Baptist*
- d. *Madonna and Child* (Entry fig. 3)
- e. *Saint John the Evangelist* (Entry fig. 4)
- f. *Saint Peter* (Entry fig. 1)
- g. *Saint Francis* (Entry fig. 5)

Upper tier:

- h. *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary* (Entry fig. 11)
- i. *Saint Augustine* (Entry fig. 12)
- j. *Mary Magdalene* (Entry fig. 7)
- k. *Saint Anthony* (Entry fig. 10)
- l. *Saint Clare* (Entry fig. 8)
- m. *Saint Agnes* (Entry fig. 9)

## NOTES

- [1] See George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 549–550; Alexandre Masseron, *Saint Jean Baptiste dans l'art* (Paris, 1957).
- [2] The blessing gesture used in the Greek Church is performed with the forefinger, ring finger, and little finger extended or, as in Lippo's panel, with thumb, forefinger, and little finger extended. See E. Fehrenbach, "Bénir (manière de)," in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, ed. Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, 15 vols. (Paris, 1925), 2, pt. 1:746–758.
- [3] On the formats of Sieneese polyptychs, and in particular of Simone in the period indicated, cf. Joanna Cannon, "Simone Martini, the Dominicans and the Early Sieneese Polyptych," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 45 (1982): 69–93.
- [4] Musée du Louvre, Paris, no. M.I. 690, 94 × 44.2 cm; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, no. 88.3.99, 93.3 × 43.7 cm; Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin, no. 1067, 77.5 × 55.5 cm (calculating only the dimensions of the original part of this panel, which was cropped at an early date and later elongated in its upper part by a 9 cm-high modern addition). Federico Zeri reported Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà's manuscript opinion; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 51. However, Raimond van Marle had perhaps already recognized the New York and Paris panels as probable components of the same multipart altarpiece, noting stylistic affinities between these two works and the Madonna in Berlin. Raimond van Marle, *Simone Martini et les peintres de son école* (Strasbourg, 1920), 108–109.
- [5] The paintings in question are: Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, no. 1943.239, 104.9 × 44.6 cm; Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena, nos. 49 (105 × 46 cm), 48 (105 × 46 cm); cf. Helen Comstock, "The World's Fair and Other Exhibitions," *Connoisseur* 103 (1939): 275–277.
- [6] "[Lippo] fece...in San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno...la tavola a tempera che oggi è sopra l'altar maggiore, dentrovi una Nostra Donna, San Piero, San Paolo e San Giovan Batista ed altri Santi; e in questa pose Lippo il suo nome" (Lippo made in San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno the tempera painting that today stands on the high altar, in which is Our Lady, Saint Peter, Saint Paul, and Saint John the Baptist, and other saints; and Lippo put his name to this painting): Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878), 1:554–555. Klara Steinweg cautiously suggested that the two panels of Saint Peter and Saint Paul (now respectively in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, and the Metropolitan Museum of

Art, New York) belonged to this polyptych. Klara Steinweg, "Beiträge zu Simone Martini und seiner Werkstatt," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7 (1956): 168 n. 23.

- [7] Gertrude Coor, "Two Unknown Paintings by the Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas and Some Closely Related Works," *Pantheon* 19 (1961): 131–132, 135 n. 25.
- [8] Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai, no. 1135, 52 × 28.5 cm: see Françoise Baligand, *Le Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai* (Paris, 1999), 18; Lindenau-Museum, Altenburg, nos. 44–45, 57, 5 × 26 cm each: see Robert Oertel, *Frühe italienische Renaissance in Altenburg: Beschreibender Katalog der Gemälde des 13. bis 16. Jahrhunderts im Staatlichen Lindenau-Museum* (Berlin, 1961), 75–76; Daniela Parenti, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, eds. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 28–37.
- [9] Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 7–8.
- [10] The busts in question are here considered works produced by *Simone Martini's* shop (see *Saint Matthew, Saint Simon, Saint James Major, and Saint Judas Thaddeus*).
- [11] Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 187–202; Michael Mallory, "Thoughts Concerning the 'Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas,'" *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 18–20; Marianne Lonjon, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Resson, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19.
- [12] Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, no. 21.250, 51.5 × 24.5 cm; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, no. 64.189.2, 39.4 × 19.1 cm (painted surface; with modern frame, 48.3 × 20.3 cm); Frick Art Museum, Pittsburgh, no. 1970.38, 40 × 18.9 cm (painted surface of each; with modern frame, 63.3 × 24 cm and 63.3 × 24.5 cm, respectively); and Museo Poldi Pezzoli, Milan, no. 3343, 50.5 × 22 cm.
- [13] Federico Zeri first recognized the panel as belonging to the polyptych being discussed here in 1976 (Zeri to Marianne Lonjon); cf. Marianne Lonjon, "Précisions sur la provenance du retable dit 'de Colle di Val d'Elsa' de Lippo Memmi," *La revue des musées de France* 56 (2006): 38, n. 2. Cristina De Benedictis subsequently published it as an image of Saint Augustine, whereas Lonjon identified the saint in question as the patron of San Gimignano. However, the fact that the saint wears the black cloak of the Augustinian canons makes the former proposal more convincing. Cf. Cristina De Benedictis, "Mario Salmi collezionista," in *Studi di storia dell'arte sul Medioevo e il Rinascimento: Nel centenario della nascita di Mario Salmi*

(Florence, 1992), 125–136.

- [14] Hayden Maginnis's observation (1977) of the differences between the punched decoration of the Madonna in Berlin and that of the panels thought to have formed the main register of the polyptych seemed convincing to the present writer (1988), who noted that the back of the panel of the Madonna lacks the layer of gesso present in other panels of the polyptych. From this and a few other small differences, the conclusion has been drawn (and largely shared in the art historical literature) that the Berlin Madonna cannot have formed part of the polyptych from the Franciscans of San Gimignano. Further reflection (and also closer inspection of the back of the Berlin panel, which reveals that it has been slightly thinned and probably stripped of the layer of gesso with which it was originally covered) has now strengthened my suspicion that the painting in question, whose stylistic and chronological closeness to the other components of the San Gimignano polyptych is generally recognized, could possibly have formed part of it. Cf. Hayden B.J. Maginnis, "The Literature of Sienese Trecento Painting 1945–1975," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 40 (1977): 289; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 75.
- [15] Alessandro Bagnoli, "La chiesa di San Francesco a Colle di Val d'Elsa: Intenti per un restauro globale," in *Restauri e recuperi in terra di Siena: XI Settimana dei Beni Culturali*, ed. Cecilia Alessi and Cristina Gnoni Mavarelli (Badesse–Monteriggioni [Siena], 1995).
- [16] *Collection Comte Oriola, formée en Italie de 1860-1896 env.: Tableaux, sculptures, tapisseries . . . acquis en grande partie des collections Bardini, Borghese etc., vente publique à Amsterdam, direction Mensing & Fils, le 13 avril 1932* (Amsterdam, 1932), lot. 3.
- [17] Undated copy of expertise in NGA curatorial files. Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 210; Raimond van Marle, *Italiaansche Kunst in Nederlandsch Bezeit* (Amsterdam, 1934), 85.
- [18] Copies of the expertises by Bernard Berenson, Giuseppe Fiocco, Roberto Longhi, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi are in NGA curatorial files.
- [19] See Helen Comstock, "The World's Fair and Other Exhibitions," *Connoisseur* 103 (1939): 277; Wilhelm Suida, "Die Sammlung Kress: New York," *Pantheon* 26 (1940): 274; Robert Langton Douglas, in *Duveen Brothers, Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 13. Cf. also Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 121, box 266, folder 18 (copy in NGA curatorial files); George Martin Richter, "The New National Gallery in Washington," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177; and Alfred M. Frankfurter, *The Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New

York, 1944), 21 (repro.), 63.

- [20] Hermann Beenken, "Review of *Le scuole della pittura italiana II* by Raimond van Marle," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 4 (1935): 356.
- [21] Guglielmo Matthiae, "In margine all'esposizione d'arte italiana ad Amsterdam," *Rivista del R. Istituto d'archeologia e storia dell'arte* 5 (1935): 217. For Robert Langton Douglas's opinion, cf. Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 13, and Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 121, box 266, folder 18.
- [22] Manuscript opinion, dated March 23, 1940 (copy in NGA curatorial files).
- [23] Unpublished draft review intended for *Art News* (copy in NGA curatorial files).
- [24] Klara Steinweg, "Beiträge zu Simone Martini und seiner Werkstatt," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7 (1956): 167; Cristina Maria Gozzoli, in Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli, *L'opera completa di Simone Martini* (Milan, 1970), 105 no. 54; Sebastiana Delogu Ventroni, *Barna da Siena* (Pisa, 1972), 59.
- [25] Giovanni Previtali, "Introduzione," in *Simone Martini e "chompagni"*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 28.
- [26] Ever since 1952, when Federico Zeri firmly asserted the authorship of Lippo Memmi, most art historians have accepted this attribution (with the exceptions mentioned above); Federico Zeri, "An Exhibition of Mediterranean Primitives," *The Burlington Magazine* 94 (1952): 321. But sometimes the polyptych has been given to "Barna" and hence reassigned to the Memmi shop, as part of the recent tendency to consider the paintings previously cataloged under the name Barna as part of the production of the *bottega* "of the Memmi family." Charles Seymour (1970) thus considered it executed at least in part by "Barna." Giovanni Previtali (1988) also described it as a production of the family shop. Alessandro Conti (1986) spoke with regard to the Gallery Baptist of a so-called Master of Asciano (the anonymous master to whom he attributed the Madonna in the local museum, usually given to Barna), and Giulietta Chelazzi Dini (1985) considered at least the Saint Francis and Saint Louis of Toulouse in the Pinacoteca of Siena to be the work of the Master of the Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas (Santa Caterina, Pisa), sometimes attributed to Barna, but perhaps identifiable, according to Chelazzi Dini, with the young Francesco Traini. There are also those who have supported the common authorship of Lippo and his brother Tederico for the San Gimignano polyptych (Bagnoli 1999, Leone De Castris 2003). See Charles Seymour, *Early Italian Paintings in the Yale University Art Gallery* (New Haven and London, 1970), 92; Giovanni Previtali, "Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini," in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*,

ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 160, 161, 166 n. 22, 26; Alessandro Conti, "Simone Martini e 'chompagni': Siena, Pinacoteca Nazionale, March 27–October 31, 1985," *Bollettino d'arte* 71, no. 35–36 (1986): 102; Giulietta Chelazzi Dini, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni"*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 88; Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 142, 151 n. 184; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 181, 218 n. 49.

- [27] Conjecturing the authorship of Simone Martini, Raimond van Marle (1934, 1935) proposed the date c. 1320, followed by Alfred Frankfurter (1944). *Duveen Pictures* 1941 repropoed the same attribution but suggested a dating to the years 1315–1320. A dating to 1325–1330 was supported by Gertrude Coor (1961), Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979), Millard Meiss (1977), NGA 1985, Cristina De Benedictis in her more recent contributions (1992, 1996), and Marianne Lonjon (2006). Antonino Caleca (1976), for his part, vaguely dated the panel to the decade 1320–1330, while Alessandro Bagnoli (1999) proposed its execution in the years 1323–1325, and Pierluigi Leone De Castris (2003) in those between 1326 and 1328. De Benedictis (1974) initially suggested a dating to c. 1330, followed by Michael Mallory (1974, 1975); Michel Laclotte (1978); Federico Zeri (in Zeri and Gardner, 1980); Keith Christiansen (1982); and Mauro Natale, Alessandra Mottola Molfino, and Joyce Brusa (1982). See Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 210, fig. 142; Raimond van Marle, "La pittura all'esposizione d'arte antica italiana di Amsterdam," *Bollettino d'arte* 27 (1935): 297, fig. 4; Alfred M. Frankfurter, *The Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New York, 1944), 21, 63; Duveen Brothers, *Duveen Pictures in Public Collections of America* (New York, 1941), no. 13; Gertrude Coor, "Two Unknown Paintings by the Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas and Some Closely Related Works," *Pantheon* 19 (1961): 129–130, 133–134 n. 15, 135 n. 25; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 49, fig. 126; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:331–333; Millard Meiss, "Notes on a Dated Diptych by Lippo Memmi," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto and Paolo Dal Poggetto, 2 vols. (Milan, 1977), 1:139; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 231; Cristina De Benedictis, "Mario Salmi collezionista," in *Studi di storia dell'arte sul Medioevo e il Rinascimento: Nel centenario della nascita di Mario Salmi* (Florence, 1992), 129; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:733; Marianne Lonjon, "Précisions sur la provenance du retable dit 'de Colle di Val d'Elsa' de Lippo Memmi," *La revue des musées de France* 56 (2006): 34, 38 n. 1, 39 n. 13; Antonino Caleca, "Tre politici di Lippo Memmi, un'ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1," *Critica d'arte* 41 (1976): 53, fig. 59;

Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 142, 151 n. 184; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 181, 218 n. 49; Cristina De Benedictis, “A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco,” *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8; Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 187–188; Michael Mallory, “Thoughts Concerning the ‘Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas,’” *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 18–20; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Federico Zeri, in Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 50–52; Keith Christiansen, “Fourteenth-Century Italian Altarpieces,” *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 40 (1982): 26, fig. 25; Mauro Natale, Alessandra Mottola Molfino, and Joyce Brusa, *Museo Poldi Pezzoli*, vol. 1, *Dipinti* (Milan, 1982), 145.

[28] In particular, Giovanni Previtali cast doubt on the credibility of Lippo’s signature: he suggested that in the polyptych of San Paolo a Ripa d’Arno in Pisa, a work signed by Lippo according to the sources and now dispersed among the museums in Altenburg, Palermo, Pisa and elsewhere, the drawing and at least part of the execution should be attributed to Simone Martini, and that this master was also partially responsible for the execution of the Madonna in the church of the Servi in Siena, signed by Lippo. Previtali also believed that an intervention by Lippo was probable in the execution of the polyptych in the Museo dell’Opera del Duomo of Orvieto, although it bears the signature of Simone Martini. See Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione,” in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 27–28. This latter hypothesis more recently was revived by Bagnoli, who maintained with some assurance the common authorship of Simone and Lippo for the polyptych in Orvieto. See Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 142.

[29] The former Golovin Baptist is particularly suited to comparison with the painting in Washington; cf. *An Exhibition of Italian Panels and Manuscripts from the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries in Honor of Richard Offner* (Hartford, 1965), 24, no. 24; Millard Meiss, “Notes on a Dated Diptych by Lippo Memmi,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto and Paolo Dal Poggetto, 2 vols. (Milan, 1977), 1:137–139. Admittedly, after the drastic cleaning to which the New York painting has been subjected it is difficult to assess its modeling, but its composition, its restless contours, or the impulsive gesture of the saint himself can leave no doubt about the panel’s belonging to a later stylistic phase than the Baptist in the Gallery.

[30] For the polyptych of Casciana Alta, originally intended for Pisa Cathedral,

the presence of Saint Thomas Aquinas, canonized on July 18, 1323, constitutes a secure *terminus post quem*. But even irrespective of this date, the more elongated proportions of the figures and the delicacy of the chiaroscuro imply that the polyptych was painted several years after Simone's polyptych in Santa Caterina in Pisa. On the polyptych of Casciana Alta, see in particular Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni,"* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 94–102.

- [31] With regard to the Santa Caterina altarpiece, for which the contribution of Michael Mallory (1975) remains fundamental, the so-called Master of the Triumph of Saint Thomas to whom Mallory and some other scholars attributed it is now generally identified with Lippo (or Lippo and shop). See Michael Mallory, "Thoughts Concerning the 'Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas,'" *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 9–20. The caution of suspecting that a second artist worked alongside Lippo Memmi, one devoid of any real art historical substance or even biographical foundation—such as Tederico Memmi, a documented personality but perhaps not an artist, or "Barna," likely a wholly fictitious character—seems unjustified.
- [32] In the Pisan altarpiece, particularly eloquent analogies with the San Gimignano polyptych are offered by the figure of Saint Paul to the upper left (to be compared with the image of the same saint now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) and some faces among the friars and religious people gathered at Saint Thomas's feet, similar in facial type to the Saint Louis in Siena. The Triumph of Saint Thomas nevertheless lacks the pursuit of the nobility of features, with its subtly modulated profile, and the measured, curvilinear rhythms of the contours of the tunics and mantles that distinguish the panel of the *Baptist* in the Gallery and its companion paintings.
- [33] The figures of the Pisan polyptych seem taller and more slender, and they move with greater ease, than the figures of the Baptist or of Saints Peter and Paul in the complex destined for San Gimignano. This might also depend on the unusual iconography (the representation of the saints seated on faldstools), but their solemn and composed attitude, the faces modeled with subtly filtered light, and the delicate shading that minutely explores each detail of the form anticipate phenomena that characterize Lippo's paintings in the early 1330s. Another aspect that invites comparison between the Pisa and San Gimignano polyptychs is the dynamic calligraphy, intermittent in tension, of the contour lines. In the Gallery's panel and its companions, the artist's preoccupation with decorative elements, and especially his concern with embellishing even the outer edges of the painted surface with punched motifs, suggest that the San Gimignano polyptych is slightly later in date than the Pisa polyptych of 1325.
- [34] Mojmir S. Frinta (1998) pointed out the presence of the punch mark he called "complex tetra-lobe (tetrafoil)" both in the panel in the Gallery and in

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the former Chiaramonte Bordonaro Saint Peter (now in the Galleria Nazionale in Palermo). This punch also recurs in other Lippo works, including the Casciana Alta polyptych and the triptych of the Annunciation dated 1333 in the Uffizi, Florence, executed in collaboration with Simone Martini. See Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 400.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The wooden support consists of a single-member panel with vertical grain. The pointed arch retains the first molding of its original engaged frame. Stephen Pichetto thinned and cradled the panel in 1938–1939 (at present the wood is 1.3–1.5 cm thick).[1] Probably on the same occasion the edges of the panel were cut along the pointed arch.

The painting was executed on a gesso ground. An underdrawing of thin contour lines is visible with infrared reflectography,[2] and a green underpainting is present beneath the flesh tones. The gilded areas were prepared with an orange-red layer of bole. Punchwork decorates the halo as well as the outer edges of the gold ground and the curved spandrels between the pointed external arch and the trefoil-shaped inner frame.

The painted surface is in relatively good condition, but a vertical check extends approximately 6.5 cm from the bottom edge of the panel, and another is visible only on the reverse. There are small paint losses, which are especially heavy in the red drapery, and some abrasion in the gold ground. A 2 cm-wide strip of paint and gilding along the side and bottom edges is later restoration and has discolored. A nineteenth-century frame was present and covered this strip until the 1938–1939 treatment.[3] The painting was treated again in 1955 by Mario Modestini. Areas of the red drapery were extensively glazed during one or both of these treatments. A thick and discolored layer of varnish now covers the surface.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Cf. Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 49; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:333.

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- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera fitted with an N2606-10 or N214 lead sulphide tube.
- [3] The painting is reproduced within a nineteenth-century frame of rectangular shape both in the 1932 sale catalog and by Raimond van Marle (in 1934 and 1935). Apparently, it maintained the appearance given to it during an undocumented nineteenth-century restoration and was not subjected to any further treatment before its acquisition by Duveen Brothers, Inc., by 1938. See Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 210, fig. 142; Raimond van Marle, "La pittura all'esposizione d'arte antica italiana di Amsterdam," *Bollettino d'arte* 27 (1935): 297, fig. 4.
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### PROVENANCE

Probably church of San Francesco, San Gimignano, until 1553;<sup>[1]</sup> church of San Giovanni Battista, San Gimignano, until 1782/1787;<sup>[2]</sup> church of San Francesco, Colle Val d'Elsa, between 1787 and mid-nineteenth century.<sup>[3]</sup> Graf von Oriola, Schloss Budesheim, Oberhessen; (his sale, Mensing & Fils at Frederik Muller & Co., Amsterdam, 13 April 1932, no. 3, as by Taddeo di Bartolo).<sup>[4]</sup> (Jacques Goudstikker, Amsterdam), by 1934;<sup>[5]</sup> purchased February 1937 through (Paul Cassierer & Co., Amsterdam) by (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[6]</sup> sold June 1938 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[7]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] In 1865 Francesco Brogi saw two of the original companion panels to the NGA's painting in the church of the Franciscans of Colle Val d'Elsa (not published until 1897: Francesco Brogi, *Inventario generale degli oggetti d'arte della provincia di Siena*, Siena, 1897: 158). However, it has been convincingly suggested (Alessandro Bagnoli, "La Chiesa di San Francesco a Colle di Val d'Elsa, intenti per un restauro globale," in *Restauri e Recupero in terra di Siena. XI Settimana dei Beni Culturali*, Sienna, December 1995: n.p.; Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini*, Milan, 1999: 151 n. 184; Marianne Lonjon, "Précisions sur la provenance du retable dit 'de Colle val d'Elsa' de Lippo Memmi," *Revue des Musée de France* 56, no. 2 [2006]: 31-40) that they were transferred there only in the late eighteenth century from the church of the same order in San Gimignano; it may be presumed that they had originally adorned its high altar. Situated outside the city walls, the church of San Francesco in San Gimignano was demolished in 1553, when, by order of Cosimo I de' Medici, a new system of fortifications was erected around the city. [2] After the 1553 demolition of their church of San Francesco, the Franciscans moved

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inside the city of San Gimignano, settling in the convent annexed to the church of San Giovanni Battista. In 1782 Duke Leopold suppressed this convent, forcing the friars to make another move. [3] The community of friars moved to the convent of San Francesco in Colle Val d'Elsa in 1787, likely bringing with them all the church furnishings from San Gimignano. As mentioned above (note 1), two companion panels, Memmi's *Saint Francis* and *Saint Louis of Toulouse* (both now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena), were recorded by Francesco Brogi in 1865 as hanging in the sacristy of the Franciscan church of Colle. The other panels of the dismembered altarpiece were no longer there at this time. [4] The auction catalog offered for sale a "Collection Comte Oriola, formée en Italie de 1860-1896 env.," without further explanation. Lot 1 of the sale was a detached fresco by Perugino representing the Pietà, which apparently remained unsold (now in the collection of the Cassa di Risparmio in Florence). Walter and Elisabeth Paatz (*Die Kirchen von Florenz. Ein kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch*, 6 vols., Frankfurt am Main, 1940-1953: 4 [1952]: 649-650, n. 35) cite the fresco as belonging to the heirs of Graf Oriola in Büdesheim, Oberhessen, the location of the collection. The year 1883 is stated as the date of Graf Oriola's acquisition. An Italian stone relief representing the *Profile Portrait of a Man*, lot 46 of the 1932 sale in Amsterdam, which similarly found its way into the Kress Foundation's collection in 1938 and subsequently into the Philbrook Art Center in Tulsa, is also stated to have belonged to the Oriola Collection in Büdensheim; see Ulrich Middeldorf, *Sculptures from the Samuel H. Kress Collection. European Sculptures*, London, 1976: 67. It is possible that the "Comte Oriola" named in the sale catalogue referred to Eduard Ernst Lobo da Silveira (1809-1862) and his sons, Waldemar (1854-1910) and Joachim (1858-1907) Lobo da Silveira, all of whom were known as Graf von Oriola. They were the son and grandsons, respectively, of a Portuguese minister, Joaquim José Lobo da Silveira (1772-1846), who was given a title in the Prussian nobility by Friedrich Wilhelm III, king of Prussia (1770-1840) and who resettled his family in Prussia. Waldemar had Schloss Büdesheim constructed in 1885 near an older castle of the same name, and Joachim was a naval attaché in the German embassy in Italy. [5] Goudstikker lent the painting to an exhibition in Amsterdam in 1934. On the life and career of the Dutch dealer see Charlotte Wiefhoff, "De Kunsthandelaar Jacques Goudstikker 1897 - 1940," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 32 (1982): 249-278. [6] Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 119, box 264, folder 8; reel 121, box 266, folder 18 (copies in NGA curatorial files). [7] The bill of sale for eight paintings, including this one, is dated 21 June 1938; payments were to extend through

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November 1939. The attributions on the bill, in this case to Simone Martini, were those of Bernard Berenson. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 329, box 474, folder 5 (copies in NGA curatorial files).

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# Lorenzetti, Pietro

Sieneese, active 1306 - 1345

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The art historical literature generally asserts that the great Sieneese painter cited in a document of 1320 as “*Petrus quondam Lorenzetti*” and who signed himself as “*Petrus Laurentii*” is to be identified with the Petruccio di Lorenzo paid in 1306 for a panel, now lost, painted for the Sieneese government. If that is the case, then his date of birth is unlikely to have been any later than 1280.[1] The prestigious commission presupposes, in fact, that he must have been a well-established artist by this date. On the other hand, Pietro’s first securely dated work is the polyptych in the *pieve* of Santa Maria in Arezzo, commissioned from him by the bishop of that city in 1320.

The lack of documentary evidence for any previous work has given rise to many uncertainties in the reconstruction of his period of apprenticeship and first phase of activity. However, there is now general consensus that his mural cycle in the transept and chapel of Saint John in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi (two images of the Madonna and Child with saints, stories of the Passion of Christ, and Saint Francis receiving the stigmata) should be dated prior to 1320, though according to some authorities, their execution could have been prolonged into the third decade. A series of panel paintings may also be assignable to Pietro’s early career, including the signed *Madonna and Child Enthroned* and the great painted crucifix in the Museo Diocesano of Cortona; the *Crucifixion* in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts; and the dispersed polyptych formed by the *Madonna of Montichiello* (now in the Museo Diocesano in Pienza) and the series of half-length saints divided between the Museo Horne in Florence and the Musée de Tessé in Le Mans. These works show Pietro to be a master of extraordinary ability who feels the influence of Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sieneese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319) but also shows his indebtedness to the compositional rigor, understanding of physical density, and monumentality of form of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337), as well as the passionate expressive charge of the sculptures of Giovanni Pisano.

The misread or mistakenly reconstructed date of some important works has also prompted discussion, or raised doubts, about Pietro's career in the period of his maturity. His paintings for the Opera del Duomo in Siena in 1326 have been lost. Thus, a key work for reconstructing Pietro's career in the third decade remains the polyptych signed and dated 1329 from the Sienese church of the Carmine (now divided among the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena, and the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven). To the same period art historians have assigned various precious panels of small dimensions as well as the frescoes in the chapter house of San Francesco in Siena, painted in collaboration with his brother Ambrogio. Fragments of the latter decoration survive that are attributable to Pietro's hand, notably the Crucifixion and a figure of the risen Christ, exemplifying, according to Carlo Volpe, an "austere and severe style . . . that appears almost to contradict the chromatic and narrative gothic richness of the stories . . . of Assisi."<sup>[2]</sup> But the stylistic shift to which these paintings testify can perhaps be understood also as the response of the Lorenzetti brothers, on the basis of their Florentine experiences, to certain manifestations of the courtly-aristocratic art of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in these years. Ambrogio is documented in Florence on several occasions between 1319 and 1332, while the presence even earlier of the still youthful Pietro in that city is testified by the *Saint Lucy* in the church of Santa Lucia dei Magnoli.

In the 1330s, the artist's style underwent a further transformation under the influence of Pietro's frequent collaboration with his brother, with whom he painted the frescoes, now lost, on the facade of the Ospedale della Scala, signed by both and dated 1335. From this partnership derives the artist's greater attention to elegance of form and delicacy in chiaroscuro modeling that are also to be observed in the three saints, dated 1332, in the Pinacoteca of Siena. A further instance of the collaboration between the two brothers is the diptych (*Madonna and Child and Crucifixion*) now divided between the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Pietro executed the Madonna and Ambrogio the other leaf. One of the most significant testimonies of these years is the dismembered *pala* of Beata Umiltà, painted for the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Florence. Now divided between the Uffizi, Florence, and the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, it is an extraordinary example of Pietro's sober narrative style and great poetic delicacy, though it is fair to say that scholars have not been unanimous in dating it nor even recognizing it as the work of his hand.<sup>[3]</sup>

As for the artist's final phase, few works datable to the 1340s are generally ascribed to the artist; some of them are sometimes given instead to an anonymous Dijon Master.[4] Only the signed Madonna with a provenance from the church of San Francesco at Pistoia (Uffizi, Florence)[5] and the altarpiece of extraordinary modernity with the Birth of the Virgin (Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena), also signed and dated 1342, are undoubted autograph works of these years. The fresco (*Annunciation and Saints*) in the church of Castiglione del Bosco (Montalcino), dated 1345 and considered by various art historians to be the work of assistants, is the last work attributable to Pietro. It closes the catalog of his works in a minor key, with accents of almost rustic sobriety.

[1] Cf. Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854):194. It was the Siennese custom to calculate the year *ad incarnationem*—that is, from March 25—so the date cited in the document, February 25, 1305, is to be understood in modern style as 1306.

[2] Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 38.

[3] Ernest T. DeWald, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Cambridge, MA, 1930), 30–31, and subsequently various other scholars have excluded this important painting from the catalog of Pietro Lorenzetti. Attribution is complicated by the fact that the original inscription, which probably contained the date of execution, was replaced in the nineteenth century by another bearing a date in Roman figures, sometimes read as 1316 and sometimes as 1341; cf. Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 85–89.

[4] Cf. Hayden B.J. Maginnis, "The So-Called Dijon Master: For J.R. Lander," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 43 (1980): 121–138.

[5] The inscription of this painting, like that of the San Giovanni Evangelista altarpiece, has suffered restoration, and the date included in it has been variously read as 1315 or 1316 or 1340, or even assumed to have read 1343 in its original form; cf. Luisa Marcucci, *Gallerie nazionali di Firenze*, vol. 2, *I dipinti toscani del secolo xiv* (Rome, 1965), 157–158.

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Pietro Lorenzetti  
Sienese, active 1306 - 1345

# *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels* [entire triptych]

probably 1340

tempera on panel transferred to canvas

Inscription: middle panel, across the bottom edge, on a fragment of the old frame set into the present one: [PETRUS] L[A]JURENTII DE SENIS [ME] PI[N]XIT [ANNO] D[OMI]NI MCCCX...I [1]

[1] This inscription is illustrated as figure 1 of the entry for the painting in the NGA Online Edition, *Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* by Miklós Boskovits, launched 2016.

Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg 1941.5.1.a-c

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## ENTRY

The central *Madonna and Child* of this triptych, which also includes *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel* [right panel] and *Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel* [left panel], proposes a peculiar variant of the so-called *Hodegetria* type. The Christ child is supported on his mother's left arm and looks out of the painting directly at the observer, whereas Mary does not point to her son with her right hand, as is usual in similar images, but instead offers him cherries. The child helps himself to the proffered fruit with his left hand, and with his other is about to

pop one of them into his mouth.[1] Another unusual feature of the painting is the smock worn by the infant Jesus: it is embellished with a decorative band around the chest; a long, fluttering, pennant-like sleeve (so-called *manicottolo*);[2] and metal studs around his shoulders. The group of the Madonna and Child is flanked by two female saints. The saint to the left can be recognized as Saint Mary Magdalene by the cylindrical pyx of ointment in her hand,[3] while Saint Catherine of Alexandria is identified by her crown and by the wheel of martyrdom she supports with her right hand, half concealing it below her mantle.[4] Both this saint and the two angels in the gable above Mary's head bear a palm in their hand.[5]

Though signed and dated by the artist [fig. 1],[6] the triptych in the National Gallery of Art is rarely cited in the art historical literature. An impressive series of letters from experts whom Felix M. Warburg or Alessandro Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) had consulted in 1926 about the three panels (then separately framed) confirmed their fine state, extraordinary historical importance, and attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti.[7] Nevertheless, the panels were illustrated but cited only fleetingly in the art historical literature. For example, Ernest De Wald (1929) denied their attribution to Pietro, explaining that "the panels are evidently of Lorenzettian derivation but...the heads are all softer and broader than Pietro's style. Much of this [he added] may of course be due to the clever retouching."[8] For his part, Emilio Cecchi (1930) included the three panels in his catalog of Pietro's work and dedicated a brief comment to them, emphasizing that their "solemn plasticity" is typical of the painter's last creative phase.[9] Bernard Berenson (1932, 1936, 1968) concurred with the attribution but cited the panels as dated 1321.[10] Raimond van Marle (1934) also accepted the attribution and Berenson's reading of the fragmentary date.[11] In the previous year, Giulia Sinibaldi (1933) had limited herself to citing the paintings among those ascribed to Pietro, but she took no position on the question.[12] The triptych was ignored by most of the specialized literature in the following decades, with the exception of the successive catalogs of the Gallery itself (1942, 1965, 1968), though curiously they failed to point out the artist's signature.[13] Only in the catalog of 1965 was this mentioned: "a worn inscription on bottom of old part of frame of middle panel," and the date tentatively interpreted as 1321.[14] It was not until the 1970s that the triptych began to be regularly cited as the work of Pietro Lorenzetti (Fredericksen and Zeri 1972; Laclotte 1976) or, as in the case of Mojmir S. Frinta (1976), as the work of one of his assistants, on the basis of the punch marks that also appear in paintings by Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio.[15] Frinta conjectured that the triptych could be attributable to Mino Parcis, a minor master who was apparently documented in Pietro's shop in

1321 and was perhaps the father of Jacopo di Mino.[16] The same scholar reassigned to Mino some works hitherto attributed to Pietro himself in his last phase and given by others to an anonymous artist called the “Dijon Master.” Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) entertained similar doubts: “Whether the attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti can be fully accepted remains somewhat uncertain.”[17] She wondered whether the Gallery triptych might not have been a work by the same assistant of Pietro who had painted a Madonna now in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (donation by Charles Loeser) and some other stylistically akin panels. However, Shapley cited a letter written by De Wald to Charles Parkhurst at the Gallery in 1942, reporting that he had examined the infrared photographs made during restoration at the Gallery and, on that basis, could now confirm Pietro’s hand.[18]

After the catalog entry written by Shapley (1979), with the exception of Frinta’s volume (1998), in which the triptych continued to be classified as a product of Lorenzetti’s shop, art historians seem to have agreed that the Washington paintings should be recognized as an autograph work by Pietro himself.[19] Those accepting this position include not only the catalog of the Gallery (NGA 1985) but also Carlo Volpe (1989), Erling S. Skaug (1994), Cristina De Benedictis (1996), Alessio Monciatti (2002), Keith Christiansen (2003), Rudolf Hiller von Gærtringen (2004), Michela Becchis (2005), Ada Labriola (2008), and Laurence B. Kanter (2010).[20]

Bearing in mind the triptych’s state of preservation, made almost unrecognizable by inpainting aimed at concealing the damage suffered by the painted surface, it is difficult to express a balanced judgment of its authorship. Even old photographs of the panels, made prior to their latest restoration, do not assist much in that regard [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4]. Some of its general features—the extreme sobriety of the composition, dominated by massive figures presented in almost frontal pose and filling almost entirely the space at their disposal, and the form of the panels themselves, terminating above in a simple pointed arch—surely are those one would expect to find in the paintings by Pietro Lorenzetti in the period around 1340, when the artist was apparently fascinated by the sober grandeur of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in his final phase. Undoubtedly “Lorenzettian” is the figures’ clothing, made of heavy stuff and with draperies falling perpendicularly in a few simplified or pointed folds, which barely discloses or suggests the form of the underlying body. Similar forms and compositional devices can be found in the *Birth of the Virgin* in the Museo dell’Opera del Duomo in Siena, dated 1342 but commissioned and planned in 1335,[21] the Madonna now in the Uffizi, Florence,

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with a provenance from Pistoia, whose fragmentary date [22] has been variously read; and the polyptych no. 50 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, recognized by some (if not all) art historians as executed by Pietro with studio assistance and dating to the late years of the fourth decade.[23] Unfortunately, perhaps also because of the Washington triptych's compromised state, the analysis of the punched ornament provides no useful indications to confirm or deny the conclusions reached by an interpretation of the stylistic data, but it should be observed that the decorative motifs of the dress of Saint Catherine are very similar to those of the cloth of honor of the Madonna in the Uffizi and seem to confirm that the two works belong to the same period.

A detail that has hitherto escaped attention could offer a clue as to the triptych's original destination: it was perhaps commissioned for a church not in Siena but in Pisa, where apparently the motif of the Christ child eating cherries was popular in the fourteenth century. Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574), who erroneously attributed the fresco of the Lives of the Anchorites in the Camposanto to the painter he called "Pietro Laurati" (that is, Pietro Lorenzetti), reported that the artist spent a period in Pisa, and so the unusual iconography of the central panel of the triptych might have been adopted in deference to the wishes of a patron in that city.[24] In any case, the stylistic character seems to coincide with the evidence of the signature and the date preserved on the fragment of the original frame that has come down to us. As for the possible intervention of studio assistants, the state of preservation of the painting today prevents, in my view, speculations of this kind. Doubts perhaps can be raised about the inscription itself, because we do not know how it was recovered and inserted into the existing frame. But it is hardly probable that the signature of the artist and the date 1340 (or 1341 or 1342) would have been added to the painting by another hand, concordant with the features of this particular phase in Pietro's career.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## NOTES

- [1] On the iconography of the Virgin of *Hodegetria* type, see note 1 in the entry on *Enthroned Madonna and Child*. Cherries, symbols of the Annunciation and the Incarnation of Christ but also of the blood of the Redeemer, frequently accompany representations of the Madonna and Child in fifteenth-century paintings; far less frequently do they appear in paintings of the previous century. Cf. Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance: Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence, 1977), 89–93. Nevertheless, cf. some versions of the Madonna and Child painted by painters active in Pisa, such as Francesco Neri da Volterra in his panel at San Benedetto a Settimo, Spinello Aretino in a painting commissioned from him in Pisa (no. 3130, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart), and Cecco di Pietro in a panel in the Musée in Tours and in another similar panel in the church of San Torpè at Pisa: cf. Mariagiulia Burrese, ed., *Pisa e l'area pisana, I luoghi della fede* (Milan, 2000), 137–138; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Italies: Peintures des musées de la région Centre*, ed. Annie Gilet and Éric Moinet (Paris, 1996), 75–76. For a Siennese example of the child carrying cherries in his hand, cf. the panel by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the parish church of Roccalbenga, Siena; see Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 212–214. Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) interpreted the motif as “fruit of Heaven”; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 112.
- [2] In Tuscan panels of the early fourteenth century, the child at times appears naked, at times dressed in a tunic and mantle *all'antica*, or a garment that recalls the shirt or dalmatic used by celebrants on certain liturgical occasions. Sometimes, however, as in the *Maestà* by Simone Martini (Siennese, active from 1315; died 1344) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, or in the *Madonna and Child* by Pietro Lorenzetti himself in the pieve of Castiglione d'Orcia, the child wears a dress that bears no relation to the liturgical conventions of the day, such as a smock furnished with prominent buttons or laces, which probably reflects children's garments of the time. See Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 113–115. To this group belong, from the fourth and fifth decades of the fourteenth century onwards, images representing the child dressed in smocks with short but very wide sleeves, such as that illustrated in our painting or in some panels by Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) (Madonna no. 553 in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, or Madonna no. 1923.35 in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts). On the development of the fashion of the *manicottolo* and its reflections in painting of the early fourteenth century, see Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 41–54.
- [3] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 717–720.

- [4] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 2, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence, 1965), 255–266.
- [5] Apart from the scene of the Annunciation of the Death of Mary, in which Gabriel generally hands a palm branch to her, this attribute is alien to the iconography of the angels; cf. “Engel,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, Basel, and Vienna, 1968), 1:626–642. In the present context, the motif probably is meant as a symbol of triumph, as in various biblical narratives—for example, in that relating to the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:34, 40), or an important military victory of Simon Maccabeus (1 Mac 13:51), or the entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Mt 21:8; Jn 12:12).
- [6] It is not clear when or how the fragment containing the inscription of the lost original frame was removed. It already had been removed from the original frame, and was incorporated into the frame that was on the painting when the current frame was commissioned in 1941–1942. The literature long ignored the inscription, probably due to difficulties in reading it. Its transcription was published for the first time in the NGA catalog of 1965, with the date interpreted as MCCCXXI. This was repeated in NGA 1985, although Charles Parkhurst had already sent the transcription to the Frick Art Reference Library and Robert Langton Douglas in 1946 (letters of August 1 and 2, 1946, copies in NGA curatorial files). Parkhurst’s reading was published by Fern Rusk Shapley (1979). See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [7] The expertises in question were furnished by such leading art historians of the time as Wilhelm von Bode (“Pietro Lorenzetti...ein Hauptwerk”), Georg Gronau (“ein Hauptwerk nicht nur des Pietro Lorenzetti sondern der Sienesischen Malerei”), Detlev von Hadeln (“Pietro Lorenzetti. Since years I have not seen in the market a work of such a high rank by an earlier Italian master”), Roberto Longhi (“una delle creazioni più solenni della maturità di Pietro Lorenzetti”), August L. Mayer (“Pietro Lorenzetti...one of the most important works of the Italian School of the Trecento”), and Wilhelm Suida (“eine charakteristische Arbeit des Pietro Lorenzetti...Die Erhaltung aller Teile ist eine vorzuegliche”). Restorers Stephen Pichetto (“Pietro Lorenzetti... the general state of the painting is almost perfect”) and Hammond Smith (oral opinion, cited by Contini in a letter to Felix Warburg of January 3, 1927: “he [Smith] considered it as one of the most important works of the 1300 Italian period in the finest possible state of preservation”) were no less fulsome in their praise. Documents in NGA curatorial files.
- [8] Ernest T. DeWald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): 162 n. 1.

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- [9] Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), 37.
- [10] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 293; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 252; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:221.
- [11] Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 361.
- [12] Giulia Sinibaldi, *I Lorenzetti* (Siena, 1933), 175.
- [13] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 135, 251; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 68.
- [14] “Reading of the date uncertain,” adds the catalog entry, evidently drawing on information made available by Berenson’s Indices. National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77.
- [15] Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 109, 312, 429, 646; Michel Laclotte, “Un ‘Saint Evêque’ de Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 18 n. 7; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, “Deletions from the Oeuvre of Pietro Lorenzetti and Related Works by the Master of the Beata Umiltà, Mino Parcis da Siena and Iacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976): 290.
- [16] There is no historical evidence of this painter other than the fact that he is mentioned in a document drawn up at Arezzo on September 21, 1321, in the role of witness, together with Pietro Lorenzetti. Cf. Andrea Mariotti, “Modulo di progettazione del Polittico di Arezzo di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Critica d’arte* 15 (1968): 36, no. 100. But, as far as one is able to judge from the partial publication of the document, this citation implies neither that Mino was Pietro’s assistant nor that he was the father of Jacopo di Mino.
- [17] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [18] Ernest De Wald to Charles Parkhurst, August 25, 1942, letter in NGA curatorial files.
- [19] Cf. Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 61, 97, 336, 483.
- [20] National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated*

*Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 195–196; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:226, 228; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:884, 892; Alessio Monciatti, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” in *Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti*, ed. Chiara Frugoni (Florence, 2002), 80, 82; Keith Christiansen, “Paul Delaroche’s Crucifixion by Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Apollo* 157 (2003): 14 nn. 17, 19; Rudolf Hiller von Gærtringen, *Italienische Gemälde im Städel 1300–1550: Toskana und Umbrien*, Kataloge der Gemälde im Städelschen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main (Mainz, 2004), 152 n. 44; Michela Becchis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2005), 65:809; Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 42; Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

- [21] For the document of the commission, see Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1:194.
- [22] The date can now be read as M.CCC.X, but the nineteenth-century restoration integrated the inscription, with the result that various readings of it have been proposed (1315, 1316, 1340, 1341). In 1799, however, when the painting entered the Uffizi, Florence, the date 1343 reportedly was visible in the inscription. Cf. Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 166. The stylistic data confirm that the work must have been painted around 1340 or shortly after.
- [23] Often ascribed to the *bottega* or school of Pietro Lorenzetti, the work was claimed as an autograph of Pietro himself by Carlo Volpe (1951). In his monograph (1989), Volpe dated the painting to the years 1340–1345, but the close kinship in style with Ambrogio would, in my view, make a dating in the late 1330s more plausible. See Carlo Volpe, “Proposte per il problema di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 2, no. 23 (1951): 13; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 197–198.
- [24] Cf. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878–1885), 1:473. On the otherwise rare motif of the cherries in Trecento painting, cf. note 1 above. Recently, Laurence Kanter noted that five of the six punches used in the Washington painting “do not recur in any other painting by Lorenzetti, nor in any other Sieneese painting,” and he wondered if it could have been painted in Florence, based on the fact that at least one of the punches is found there as early as 1337 and that the shape of the panels in the Washington altarpiece is more commonly encountered in Florentine than in Sieneese carpentry. Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the*

*Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Stephen Pichetto transferred the three parts of this triptych from the three original wooden panels to a canvas support in 1941–1942. The paintings may already have been transferred from the original wooden panels to newer panel supports in an earlier treatment as well.[1] The current frame was made on the occasion of the 1941–1942 treatment. It incorporates a strip of wood bearing the date and artist's signature from the original frame [fig. 1]. The ground is a white gesso layer, incised with a rough outline of the figures. The gold ground is applied on a red bole preparation, and the halos are decorated with punchwork. Gold leaf was used to create the decorative trim details on the drapery of the figures. The paint layers of the central panel are badly worn and have been heavily restored in the course of various treatments.[2] The inpainting is particularly extensive in the Madonna's robes, but the shadows in the saints' faces are also heavily reinforced and remodeled, making the painting difficult to assess. In addition, the gold-leafed details in all of the paintings have been strengthened.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Photographs in NGA curatorial files show the paintings during the transfer performed by Stephen Pichetto. The photographs show four layers of fabric between the gesso and the panel. A single layer of fabric typically would have been used to prepare panels in Trecento Italy.
- [2] The examination report of the NGA painting conservation department states, “There are at least two or three generations of retouching hidden below the discolored varnish layer” (see report dated September 9, 1988, in NGA conservation files). Unfortunately, no documentation exists of the various restorations of the triptych that took place prior to the 1941–1942 treatment, one of which may have occurred after its acquisition by Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi in 1926. Correspondence between Contini-Bonacossi and Stephen Pichetto discussed the possible treatment of the paintings at this time, but it is unclear if they were actually treated. See Ann Hoenigswald, “Stephen Pichetto, Conservator of the Kress Collection, 1927–1949,” in *Studying and Conserving Paintings: Occasional Papers on the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London, 2006), 30, 37. At some point, the paintings apparently were energetically cleaned and generously retouched, in order to render the much-abraded forms more easily readable. Emilio Cecchi’s monograph (1930) reproduced the triptych probably before this treatment (figs. 2, 3, and 4). The inpainting in this reproduction appeared to be more discreet than in the illustration published in the monograph by Ernest De Wald (1929); he apparently used a more recent set of photographs. In De Wald’s publication, the three panels still were separated, and the modeling appeared reinforced by further retouching. Cf. Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), pls. 104–106; Ernest T. De Wald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): pls. 99–101.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably the art market, Florence, by 1924;<sup>[1]</sup> (Alessandro Contini, Rome), by 1926;<sup>[2]</sup> sold 1927 to Felix M. Warburg [1871-1937], New York;<sup>[3]</sup> by inheritance to his wife, Frieda Schiff Warburg [1876-1958], New York; gift 1941 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> Raimond van Marle (*The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, The Hague, 1924: 2:363) reports, rather imprecisely, “A short time ago . . . half-length figures [similar, according to NGA systematic catalogue Miklós Boskovits, to Pietro’s panels nos. 79, 81 and 82 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena] were offered for sale in Florence.” Nonetheless, adds the author, “these may have been products of Pietro’s bottega only.” Miklós Boskovits did not know of other panels of half-length

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

saints attributable to the elder Lorenzetti on the art market at that time and thought it very likely that van Marle was referring to the NGA paintings. [2] Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) gathered expertises (in NGA curatorial files) on the triptych in 1926, so it must have been in his possession by then. [3] Correspondence about the panels among Warburg, Contini, Paul Sachs (Warburg's advisor), and the restorers Hammond Smith and Stephen Pichetto began in 1926, but stops in 1927, the year Warburg probably bought the three panels (correspondence in NGA curatorial files). When Ernest Theodore De Wald published the triptych in 1929 (*Art Studies: Medieval Renaissance and Modern* [1929]: 34 n. 1, and figs. 99-101), it already belonged to the Warburg collection.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 221, pl. 5.

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Pietro Lorenzetti  
Sienese, active 1306 - 1345

## *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*

probably 1340

tempera on panel transferred to canvas

painted surface: 98 × 49.2 cm (38 9/16 × 19 3/8 in.)

overall: 99.5 × 52.3 cm (39 3/16 × 20 9/16 in.)

Inscription: across the bottom edge, on a fragment of the old frame set into the present one: [PETRUS] L[A]URENTII DE SENIS [ME] PI[N]XIT [ANNO] D[OMI]NI MCCC...I [1]

[1] This inscription is illustrated as figure 1 of the entry for the painting in the NGA Online Edition, *Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* by Miklós Boskovits, launched 2016.

Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg  
1941.5.1.b

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### ENTRY

The central Madonna and Child of this triptych, which also includes *Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel [left panel]* and *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel [right panel]*, proposes a peculiar variant of the so-called *Hodegetria* type. The Christ child is supported on his mother's left arm and looks out of the painting directly at the observer, whereas Mary does not point to her son with her right hand, as is usual in similar images, but instead offers him cherries. The child helps himself to the proffered fruit with his left hand, and with his other is about to pop one of them into his mouth.[1] Another unusual feature of the painting is the smock worn by the infant Jesus: it is embellished with a decorative band around the chest; a long, fluttering, pennant-like sleeve (so-called *manicottolo*);[2] and metal studs around his shoulders. The group of the Madonna and Child is flanked by two female saints. The saint to the left can be recognized as Saint Mary Magdalene by

the cylindrical pyx of ointment in her hand,[3] while Saint Catherine of Alexandria is identified by her crown and by the wheel of martyrdom she supports with her right hand, half concealing it below her mantle.[4] Both this saint and the two angels in the gable above Mary's head bear a palm in their hand.[5]

Though signed and dated by the artist [fig. 1],[6] the triptych in the National Gallery of Art is rarely cited in the art historical literature. An impressive series of letters from experts whom Felix M. Warburg or Alessandro Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) had consulted in 1926 about the three panels (then separately framed) confirmed their fine state, extraordinary historical importance, and attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti.[7] Nevertheless, the panels were illustrated but cited only fleetingly in the art historical literature. For example, Ernest De Wald (1929) denied their attribution to Pietro, explaining that "the panels are evidently of Lorenzettian derivation but...the heads are all softer and broader than Pietro's style. Much of this [he added] may of course be due to the clever retouching."[8] For his part, Emilio Cecchi (1930) included the three panels in his catalog of Pietro's work and dedicated a brief comment to them, emphasizing that their "solemn plasticity" is typical of the painter's last creative phase.[9] Bernard Berenson (1932, 1936, 1968) concurred with the attribution but cited the panels as dated 1321.[10] Raimond van Marle (1934) also accepted the attribution and Berenson's reading of the fragmentary date.[11] In the previous year, Giulia Sinibaldi (1933) had limited herself to citing the paintings among those ascribed to Pietro, but she took no position on the question.[12] The triptych was ignored by most of the specialized literature in the following decades, with the exception of the successive catalogs of the Gallery itself (1942, 1965, 1968), though curiously they failed to point out the artist's signature.[13] Only in the catalog of 1965 was this mentioned: "a worn inscription on bottom of old part of frame of middle panel," and the date tentatively interpreted as 1321.[14] It was not until the 1970s that the triptych began to be regularly cited as the work of Pietro Lorenzetti (Fredericksen and Zeri 1972; Laclotte 1976) or, as in the case of Mojmir S. Frinta (1976), as the work of one of his assistants, on the basis of the punch marks that also appear in paintings by Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio.[15] Frinta conjectured that the triptych could be attributable to Mino Parcis, a minor master who was apparently documented in Pietro's shop in 1321 and was perhaps the father of Jacopo di Mino.[16] The same scholar reassigned to Mino some works hitherto attributed to Pietro himself in his last phase and given by others to an anonymous artist called the "Dijon Master." Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) entertained similar doubts: "Whether the attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti can be fully accepted remains somewhat uncertain."[17] She wondered

whether the Gallery triptych might not have been a work by the same assistant of Pietro who had painted a Madonna now in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (donation by Charles Loeser) and some other stylistically akin panels. However, Shapley cited a letter written by De Wald to Charles Parkhurst at the Gallery in 1942, reporting that he had examined the infrared photographs made during restoration at the Gallery and, on that basis, could now confirm Pietro's hand.[18]

After the catalog entry written by Shapley (1979), with the exception of Frinta's volume (1998), in which the triptych continued to be classified as a product of Lorenzetti's shop, art historians seem to have agreed that the Washington paintings should be recognized as an autograph work by Pietro himself.[19] Those accepting this position include not only the catalog of the Gallery (NGA 1985) but also Carlo Volpe (1989), Erling S. Skaug (1994), Cristina De Benedictis (1996), Alessio Monciatti (2002), Keith Christiansen (2003), Rudolf Hiller von Gaertringen (2004), Michela Becchis (2005), Ada Labriola (2008), and Laurence B. Kanter (2010).[20]

Bearing in mind the triptych's state of preservation, made almost unrecognizable by inpainting aimed at concealing the damage suffered by the painted surface, it is difficult to express a balanced judgment of its authorship. Even old photographs of the panels, made prior to their latest restoration, do not assist much in that regard [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4]. Some of its general features—the extreme sobriety of the composition, dominated by massive figures presented in almost frontal pose and filling almost entirely the space at their disposal, and the form of the panels themselves, terminating above in a simple pointed arch—surely are those one would expect to find in the paintings by Pietro Lorenzetti in the period around 1340, when the artist was apparently fascinated by the sober grandeur of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in his final phase. Undoubtedly “Lorenzettian” is the figures' clothing, made of heavy stuff and with draperies falling perpendicularly in a few simplified or pointed folds, which barely discloses or suggests the form of the underlying body. Similar forms and compositional devices can be found in the *Birth of the Virgin* in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena, dated 1342 but commissioned and planned in 1335,[21] the Madonna now in the Uffizi, Florence, with a provenance from Pistoia, whose fragmentary date [22] has been variously read; and the polyptych no. 50 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, recognized by some (if not all) art historians as executed by Pietro with studio assistance and dating to the late years of the fourth decade.[23] Unfortunately, perhaps also because of the Washington triptych's compromised state, the analysis of the

punched ornament provides no useful indications to confirm or deny the conclusions reached by an interpretation of the stylistic data, but it should be observed that the decorative motifs of the dress of Saint Catherine are very similar to those of the cloth of honor of the Madonna in the Uffizi and seem to confirm that the two works belong to the same period.

A detail that has hitherto escaped attention could offer a clue as to the triptych's original destination: it was perhaps commissioned for a church not in Siena but in Pisa, where apparently the motif of the Christ child eating cherries was popular in the fourteenth century. Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574), who erroneously attributed the fresco of the Lives of the Anchorites in the Camposanto to the painter he called "Pietro Laurati" (that is, Pietro Lorenzetti), reported that the artist spent a period in Pisa, and so the unusual iconography of the central panel of the triptych might have been adopted in deference to the wishes of a patron in that city.[24] In any case, the stylistic character seems to coincide with the evidence of the signature and the date preserved on the fragment of the original frame that has come down to us. As for the possible intervention of studio assistants, the state of preservation of the painting today prevents, in my view, speculations of this kind. Doubts perhaps can be raised about the inscription itself, because we do not know how it was recovered and inserted into the existing frame. But it is hardly probable that the signature of the artist and the date 1340 (or 1341 or 1342) would have been added to the painting by another hand, concordant with the features of this particular phase in Pietro's career.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## NOTES

- [1] On the iconography of the Virgin of *Hodegetria* type, see note 1 in the entry on *Enthroned Madonna and Child*. Cherries, symbols of the Annunciation and the Incarnation of Christ but also of the blood of the Redeemer, frequently accompany representations of the Madonna and Child in fifteenth-century paintings; far less frequently do they appear in paintings of the previous century. Cf. Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance: Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence, 1977), 89–93. Nevertheless, cf. some versions of the Madonna and Child painted by painters active in Pisa, such as Francesco Neri da Volterra in his panel at San Benedetto a Settimo, Spinello Aretino in a painting commissioned from him in Pisa (no. 3130, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart), and Cecco di Pietro in a panel in the Musée in Tours and in another similar panel in the church of San Torpè at Pisa: cf. Mariagiulia Burrese, ed., *Pisa e l'area pisana, I luoghi della fede* (Milan, 2000), 137–138; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Italies: Peintures des musées de la région Centre*, ed. Annie Gilet and Éric Moinet (Paris, 1996), 75–76. For a Siennese example of the child carrying cherries in his hand, cf. the panel by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the parish church of Roccalbenga, Siena; see Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 212–214. Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) interpreted the motif as “fruit of Heaven”; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 112.
- [2] In Tuscan panels of the early fourteenth century, the child at times appears naked, at times dressed in a tunic and mantle *all'antica*, or a garment that recalls the shirt or dalmatic used by celebrants on certain liturgical occasions. Sometimes, however, as in the *Maestà* by Simone Martini (Siennese, active from 1315; died 1344) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, or in the *Madonna and Child* by Pietro Lorenzetti himself in the pieve of Castiglione d'Orcia, the child wears a dress that bears no relation to the liturgical conventions of the day, such as a smock furnished with prominent buttons or laces, which probably reflects children's garments of the time. See Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 113–115. To this group belong, from the fourth and fifth decades of the fourteenth century onwards, images representing the child dressed in smocks with short but very wide sleeves, such as that illustrated in our painting or in some panels by Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) (Madonna no. 553 in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, or Madonna no. 1923.35 in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts). On the development of the fashion of the *manicottolo* and its reflections in painting of the early fourteenth century, see Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 41–54.
- [3] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 717–720.

- [4] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 2, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence, 1965), 255–266.
- [5] Apart from the scene of the Annunciation of the Death of Mary, in which Gabriel generally hands a palm branch to her, this attribute is alien to the iconography of the angels; cf. “Engel,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, Basel, and Vienna, 1968), 1:626–642. In the present context, the motif probably is meant as a symbol of triumph, as in various biblical narratives—for example, in that relating to the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:34, 40), or an important military victory of Simon Maccabeus (1 Mac 13:51), or the entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Mt 21:8; Jn 12:12).
- [6] It is not clear when or how the fragment containing the inscription of the lost original frame was removed. It already had been removed from the original frame, and was incorporated into the frame that was on the painting when the current frame was commissioned in 1941–1942. The literature long ignored the inscription, probably due to difficulties in reading it. Its transcription was published for the first time in the NGA catalog of 1965, with the date interpreted as MCCCXXI. This was repeated in NGA 1985, although Charles Parkhurst had already sent the transcription to the Frick Art Reference Library and Robert Langton Douglas in 1946 (letters of August 1 and 2, 1946, copies in NGA curatorial files). Parkhurst’s reading was published by Fern Rusk Shapley (1979). See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [7] The expertises in question were furnished by such leading art historians of the time as Wilhelm von Bode (“Pietro Lorenzetti...ein Hauptwerk”), Georg Gronau (“ein Hauptwerk nicht nur des Pietro Lorenzetti sondern der Sienesischen Malerei”), Detlev von Hadeln (“Pietro Lorenzetti. Since years I have not seen in the market a work of such a high rank by an earlier Italian master”), Roberto Longhi (“una delle creazioni più solenni della maturità di Pietro Lorenzetti”), August L. Mayer (“Pietro Lorenzetti...one of the most important works of the Italian School of the Trecento”), and Wilhelm Suida (“eine charakteristische Arbeit des Pietro Lorenzetti...Die Erhaltung aller Teile ist eine vorzuegliche”). Restorers Stephen Pichetto (“Pietro Lorenzetti... the general state of the painting is almost perfect”) and Hammond Smith (oral opinion, cited by Contini in a letter to Felix Warburg of January 3, 1927: “he [Smith] considered it as one of the most important works of the 1300 Italian period in the finest possible state of preservation”) were no less fulsome in their praise. Documents in NGA curatorial files.
- [8] Ernest T. DeWald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): 162 n. 1.

- [9] Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), 37.
- [10] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 293; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 252; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:221.
- [11] Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 361.
- [12] Giulia Sinibaldi, *I Lorenzetti* (Siena, 1933), 175.
- [13] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 135, 251; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 68.
- [14] “Reading of the date uncertain,” adds the catalog entry, evidently drawing on information made available by Berenson’s Indices. National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77.
- [15] Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 109, 312, 429, 646; Michel Laclotte, “Un ‘Saint Evêque’ de Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 18 n. 7; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, “Deletions from the Oeuvre of Pietro Lorenzetti and Related Works by the Master of the Beata Umilità, Mino Parcis da Siena and Iacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976): 290.
- [16] There is no historical evidence of this painter other than the fact that he is mentioned in a document drawn up at Arezzo on September 21, 1321, in the role of witness, together with Pietro Lorenzetti. Cf. Andrea Mariotti, “Modulo di progettazione del Polittico di Arezzo di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Critica d’arte* 15 (1968): 36, no. 100. But, as far as one is able to judge from the partial publication of the document, this citation implies neither that Mino was Pietro’s assistant nor that he was the father of Jacopo di Mino.
- [17] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [18] Ernest De Wald to Charles Parkhurst, August 25, 1942, letter in NGA curatorial files.
- [19] Cf. Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 61, 97, 336, 483.
- [20] National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated*

*Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 195–196; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:226, 228; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:884, 892; Alessio Monciatti, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” in *Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti*, ed. Chiara Frugoni (Florence, 2002), 80, 82; Keith Christiansen, “Paul Delaroche’s Crucifixion by Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Apollo* 157 (2003): 14 nn. 17, 19; Rudolf Hiller von Gærtringen, *Italienische Gemälde im Städel 1300–1550: Toskana und Umbrien*, Kataloge der Gemälde im Städelischen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main (Mainz, 2004), 152 n. 44; Michela Becchis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2005), 65:809; Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 42; Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

- [21] For the document of the commission, see Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1:194.
- [22] The date can now be read as M.CCC.X, but the nineteenth-century restoration integrated the inscription, with the result that various readings of it have been proposed (1315, 1316, 1340, 1341). In 1799, however, when the painting entered the Uffizi, Florence, the date 1343 reportedly was visible in the inscription. Cf. Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 166. The stylistic data confirm that the work must have been painted around 1340 or shortly after.
- [23] Often ascribed to the *bottega* or school of Pietro Lorenzetti, the work was claimed as an autograph of Pietro himself by Carlo Volpe (1951). In his monograph (1989), Volpe dated the painting to the years 1340–1345, but the close kinship in style with Ambrogio would, in my view, make a dating in the late 1330s more plausible. See Carlo Volpe, “Proposte per il problema di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 2, no. 23 (1951): 13; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 197–198.
- [24] Cf. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878–1885), 1:473. On the otherwise rare motif of the cherries in Trecento painting, cf. note 1 above. Recently, Laurence Kanter noted that five of the six punches used in the Washington painting “do not recur in any other painting by Lorenzetti, nor in any other Sieneese painting,” and he wondered if it could have been painted in Florence, based on the fact that at least one of the punches is found there as early as 1337 and that the shape of the panels in the Washington altarpiece is more commonly encountered in Florentine than in Sieneese carpentry. Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the*

*Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

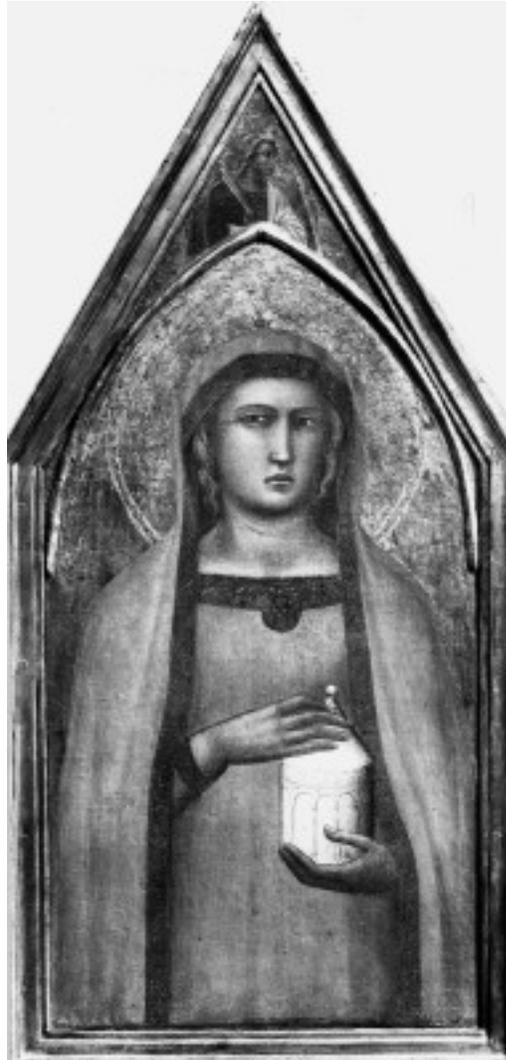
Stephen Pichetto transferred this image and its companions *Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel* [left panel] and *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel* [right panel], forming part of a triptych, from the three original wooden panels to a canvas support in 1941–1942. The paintings may already have been transferred from the original wooden panels to newer panel supports in an earlier treatment as well.[1] The current frame was made on the occasion of the 1941–1942 treatment. It incorporates a strip of wood bearing the date and artist's signature from the original frame [fig. 1]. The ground is a white gesso layer, incised with a rough outline of the figures. The gold ground is applied on a red bole preparation, and the halos are decorated with punchwork. Gold leaf was used to create the decorative trim details on the drapery of the figures. The paint layers of the central panel are badly worn and have been heavily restored in the course of various treatments.[2] The inpainting is particularly extensive in the Madonna's robes, but the shadows in the saints' faces are also heavily reinforced and remodeled, making the painting difficult to assess. In addition, the gold-leafed details in all of the paintings have been strengthened.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Photographs in NGA curatorial files show the paintings during the transfer performed by Stephen Pichetto. The photographs show four layers of fabric between the gesso and the panel. A single layer of fabric typically would have been used to prepare panels in Trecento Italy.
- [2] The examination report of the NGA painting conservation department states, “There are at least two or three generations of retouching hidden below the discolored varnish layer” (see report dated September 9, 1988, in NGA conservation files). Unfortunately, no documentation exists of the various restorations of the triptych that took place prior to the 1941–1942 treatment, one of which may have occurred after its acquisition by Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi in 1926. Correspondence between Contini-Bonacossi and Stephen Pichetto discussed the possible treatment of the paintings at this time, but it is unclear if they were actually treated. See Ann Hoenigswald, “Stephen Pichetto, Conservator of the Kress Collection, 1927–1949,” in *Studying and Conserving Paintings: Occasional Papers on the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London, 2006), 30, 37. At some point, the paintings apparently were energetically cleaned and generously retouched, in order to render the much-abraded forms more easily readable. Emilio Cecchi’s monograph (1930) reproduced the triptych probably before this treatment (figs. 2, 3, and 4). The inpainting in this reproduction appeared to be more discreet than in the illustration published in the monograph by Ernest De Wald (1929); he apparently used a more recent set of photographs. In De Wald’s publication, the three panels still were separated, and the modeling appeared reinforced by further retouching. Cf. Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), pls. 104–106; Ernest T. De Wald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): pls. 99–101.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably the art market, Florence, by 1924;<sup>[1]</sup> (Alessandro Contini, Rome), by 1926;<sup>[2]</sup> sold 1927 to Felix M. Warburg [1871-1937], New York;<sup>[3]</sup> by inheritance to his wife, Frieda Schiff Warburg [1876-1958], New York; gift 1941 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> Raimond van Marle (*The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, The Hague, 1924: 2:363) reports, rather imprecisely, “A short time ago . . . half-length figures [similar, according to NGA systematic catalogue Miklós Boskovits, to Pietro’s panels nos. 79, 81 and 82 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena] were offered for sale in Florence.” Nonetheless, adds the author, “these may have been products of Pietro’s bottega only.” Miklós Boskovits did not know of other panels of half-length

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saints attributable to the elder Lorenzetti on the art market at that time and thought it very likely that van Marle was referring to the NGA paintings. [2] Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) gathered expertises (in NGA curatorial files) on the triptych in 1926, so it must have been in his possession by then. [3] Correspondence about the panels among Warburg, Contini, Paul Sachs (Warburg's advisor), and the restorers Hammond Smith and Stephen Pichetto began in 1926, but stops in 1927, the year Warburg probably bought the three panels (correspondence in NGA curatorial files). When Ernest Theodore De Wald published the triptych in 1929 (*Art Studies: Medieval Renaissance and Modern* [1929]: 34 n. 1, and figs. 99-101), it already belonged to the Warburg collection.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 221, pl. 5.

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Pietro Lorenzetti  
Sienese, active 1306 - 1345

## *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel* *[right panel]*

probably 1340

tempera on panel transferred to canvas

painted surface: 88.1 × 41.5 cm (34 11/16 × 16 5/16 in.)

overall: 92 × 44.1 cm (36 1/4 × 17 3/8 in.)

Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg  
1941.5.1.c

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### ENTRY

The central *Madonna and Child* of this triptych, which also includes this panel of Saint Catherine and *Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel* [*left panel*], proposes a peculiar variant of the so-called *Hodegetria* type. The Christ child is supported on his mother's left arm and looks out of the painting directly at the observer, whereas Mary does not point to her son with her right hand, as is usual in similar images, but instead offers him cherries. The child helps himself to the proffered fruit with his left hand, and with his other is about to pop one of them into his mouth.[1] Another unusual feature of the painting is the smock worn by the infant Jesus: it is embellished with a decorative band around the chest; a long, fluttering, pennant-like sleeve (so-called *manicottolo*);[2] and metal studs around his shoulders. The group of the Madonna and Child is flanked by two female saints. The saint to the left can be recognized as Saint Mary Magdalene by the cylindrical pyx of ointment in her hand,[3] while Saint Catherine of Alexandria is identified by her crown and by the wheel of martyrdom she supports with her right hand, half concealing it below her mantle.[4] Both this saint and the two angels in the gable above Mary's head bear a palm in their hand.[5]

Though signed and dated by the artist [fig. 1],[6] the triptych in the National Gallery of Art is rarely cited in the art historical literature. An impressive series of letters from experts whom Felix M. Warburg or Alessandro Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) had consulted in 1926 about the three panels (then separately framed) confirmed their fine state, extraordinary historical importance, and attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti.[7] Nevertheless, the panels were illustrated but cited only fleetingly in the art historical literature. For example, Ernest De Wald (1929) denied their attribution to Pietro, explaining that “the panels are evidently of Lorenzettian derivation but...the heads are all softer and broader than Pietro’s style. Much of this [he added] may of course be due to the clever retouching.”[8] For his part, Emilio Cecchi (1930) included the three panels in his catalog of Pietro’s work and dedicated a brief comment to them, emphasizing that their “solemn plasticity” is typical of the painter’s last creative phase.[9] Bernard Berenson (1932, 1936, 1968) concurred with the attribution but cited the panels as dated 1321.[10] Raimond van Marle (1934) also accepted the attribution and Berenson’s reading of the fragmentary date.[11] In the previous year, Giulia Sinibaldi (1933) had limited herself to citing the paintings among those ascribed to Pietro, but she took no position on the question.[12] The triptych was ignored by most of the specialized literature in the following decades, with the exception of the successive catalogs of the Gallery itself (1942, 1965, 1968), though curiously they failed to point out the artist’s signature.[13] Only in the catalog of 1965 was this mentioned: “a worn inscription on bottom of old part of frame of middle panel,” and the date tentatively interpreted as 1321.[14] It was not until the 1970s that the triptych began to be regularly cited as the work of Pietro Lorenzetti (Fredericksen and Zeri 1972; Laclotte 1976) or, as in the case of Mojmir S. Frinta (1976), as the work of one of his assistants, on the basis of the punch marks that also appear in paintings by Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio.[15] Frinta conjectured that the triptych could be attributable to Mino Parcis, a minor master who was apparently documented in Pietro’s shop in 1321 and was perhaps the father of Jacopo di Mino.[16] The same scholar reassigned to Mino some works hitherto attributed to Pietro himself in his last phase and given by others to an anonymous artist called the “Dijon Master.” Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) entertained similar doubts: “Whether the attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti can be fully accepted remains somewhat uncertain.”[17] She wondered whether the Gallery triptych might not have been a work by the same assistant of Pietro who had painted a Madonna now in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (donation by Charles Loeser) and some other stylistically akin panels. However, Shapley cited a letter written by De Wald to Charles Parkhurst at the Gallery in

1942, reporting that he had examined the infrared photographs made during restoration at the Gallery and, on that basis, could now confirm Pietro's hand.[18]

After the catalog entry written by Shapley (1979), with the exception of Frinta's volume (1998), in which the triptych continued to be classified as a product of Lorenzetti's shop, art historians seem to have agreed that the Washington paintings should be recognized as an autograph work by Pietro himself.[19] Those accepting this position include not only the catalog of the Gallery (NGA 1985) but also Carlo Volpe (1989), Erling S. Skaug (1994), Cristina De Benedictis (1996), Alessio Monciatti (2002), Keith Christiansen (2003), Rudolf Hiller von Gaertringen (2004), Michela Becchis (2005), Ada Labriola (2008), and Laurence B. Kanter (2010).[20]

Bearing in mind the triptych's state of preservation, made almost unrecognizable by inpainting aimed at concealing the damage suffered by the painted surface, it is difficult to express a balanced judgment of its authorship. Even old photographs of the panels, made prior to their latest restoration, do not assist much in that regard [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4]. Some of its general features—the extreme sobriety of the composition, dominated by massive figures presented in almost frontal pose and filling almost entirely the space at their disposal, and the form of the panels themselves, terminating above in a simple pointed arch—surely are those one would expect to find in the paintings by Pietro Lorenzetti in the period around 1340, when the artist was apparently fascinated by the sober grandeur of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in his final phase. Undoubtedly “Lorenzettian” is the figures' clothing, made of heavy stuff and with draperies falling perpendicularly in a few simplified or pointed folds, which barely discloses or suggests the form of the underlying body. Similar forms and compositional devices can be found in the *Birth of the Virgin* in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena, dated 1342 but commissioned and planned in 1335;[21] the Madonna now in the Uffizi, Florence, with a provenance from Pistoia, whose fragmentary date [22] has been variously read; and the polyptych no. 50 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, recognized by some (if not all) art historians as executed by Pietro with studio assistance and dating to the late years of the fourth decade.[23] Unfortunately, perhaps also because of the Washington triptych's compromised state, the analysis of the punched ornament provides no useful indications to confirm or deny the conclusions reached by an interpretation of the stylistic data, but it should be observed that the decorative motifs of the dress of Saint Catherine are very similar to those of the cloth of honor of the Madonna in the Uffizi and seem to confirm that

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the two works belong to the same period.

A detail that has hitherto escaped attention could offer a clue as to the triptych's original destination: it was perhaps commissioned for a church not in Siena but in Pisa, where apparently the motif of the Christ child eating cherries was popular in the fourteenth century. Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574), who erroneously attributed the fresco of the Lives of the Anchorites in the Camposanto to the painter he called "Pietro Laurati" (that is, Pietro Lorenzetti), reported that the artist spent a period in Pisa, and so the unusual iconography of the central panel of the triptych might have been adopted in deference to the wishes of a patron in that city.[24] In any case, the stylistic character seems to coincide with the evidence of the signature and the date preserved on the fragment of the original frame that has come down to us. As for the possible intervention of studio assistants, the state of preservation of the painting today prevents, in my view, speculations of this kind. Doubts perhaps can be raised about the inscription itself, because we do not know how it was recovered and inserted into the existing frame. But it is hardly probable that the signature of the artist and the date 1340 (or 1341 or 1342) would have been added to the painting by another hand, concordant with the features of this particular phase in Pietro's career.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## NOTES

- [1] On the iconography of the Virgin of *Hodegetria* type, see note 1 in the entry on *Enthroned Madonna and Child*. Cherries, symbols of the Annunciation and the Incarnation of Christ but also of the blood of the Redeemer, frequently accompany representations of the Madonna and Child in fifteenth-century paintings; far less frequently do they appear in paintings of the previous century. Cf. Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance: Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence, 1977), 89–93. Nevertheless, cf. some versions of the Madonna and Child painted by painters active in Pisa, such as Francesco Neri da Volterra in his panel at San Benedetto a Settimo, Spinello Aretino in a painting commissioned from him in Pisa (no. 3130, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart), and Cecco di Pietro in a panel in the Musée in Tours and in another similar panel in the church of San Torpè at Pisa: cf. Mariagiulia Burrese, ed., *Pisa e l'area pisana, I luoghi della fede* (Milan, 2000), 137–138; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Italies: Peintures des musées de la région Centre*, ed. Annie Gilet and Éric Moinet (Paris, 1996), 75–76. For a Siennese example of the child carrying cherries in his hand, cf. the panel by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the parish church of Roccalbenga, Siena; see Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 212–214. Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) interpreted the motif as “fruit of Heaven”; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 112.
- [2] In Tuscan panels of the early fourteenth century, the child at times appears naked, at times dressed in a tunic and mantle *all'antica*, or a garment that recalls the shirt or dalmatic used by celebrants on certain liturgical occasions. Sometimes, however, as in the *Maestà* by Simone Martini (Siennese, active from 1315; died 1344) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, or in the *Madonna and Child* by Pietro Lorenzetti himself in the pieve of Castiglione d'Orcia, the child wears a dress that bears no relation to the liturgical conventions of the day, such as a smock furnished with prominent buttons or laces, which probably reflects children's garments of the time. See Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 113–115. To this group belong, from the fourth and fifth decades of the fourteenth century onwards, images representing the child dressed in smocks with short but very wide sleeves, such as that illustrated in our painting or in some panels by Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) (Madonna no. 553 in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, or Madonna no. 1923.35 in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts). On the development of the fashion of the *manicottolo* and its reflections in painting of the early fourteenth century, see Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 41–54.
- [3] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 717–720.

- [4] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 2, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence, 1965), 255–266.
- [5] Apart from the scene of the Annunciation of the Death of Mary, in which Gabriel generally hands a palm branch to her, this attribute is alien to the iconography of the angels; cf. “Engel,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, Basel, and Vienna, 1968), 1:626–642. In the present context, the motif probably is meant as a symbol of triumph, as in various biblical narratives—for example, in that relating to the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:34, 40), or an important military victory of Simon Maccabeus (1 Mac 13:51), or the entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Mt 21:8; Jn 12:12).
- [6] It is not clear when or how the fragment containing the inscription of the lost original frame was removed. It already had been removed from the original frame, and was incorporated into the frame that was on the painting when the current frame was commissioned in 1941–1942. The literature long ignored the inscription, probably due to difficulties in reading it. Its transcription was published for the first time in the NGA catalog of 1965, with the date interpreted as MCCCXXI. This was repeated in NGA 1985, although Charles Parkhurst had already sent the transcription to the Frick Art Reference Library and Robert Langton Douglas in 1946 (letters of August 1 and 2, 1946, copies in NGA curatorial files). Parkhurst’s reading was published by Fern Rusk Shapley (1979). See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [7] The expertises in question were furnished by such leading art historians of the time as Wilhelm von Bode (“Pietro Lorenzetti...ein Hauptwerk”), Georg Gronau (“ein Hauptwerk nicht nur des Pietro Lorenzetti sondern der Sienesischen Malerei”), Detlev von Hadeln (“Pietro Lorenzetti. Since years I have not seen in the market a work of such a high rank by an earlier Italian master”), Roberto Longhi (“una delle creazioni più solenni della maturità di Pietro Lorenzetti”), August L. Mayer (“Pietro Lorenzetti...one of the most important works of the Italian School of the Trecento”), and Wilhelm Suida (“eine charakteristische Arbeit des Pietro Lorenzetti...Die Erhaltung aller Teile ist eine vorzuegliche”). Restorers Stephen Pichetto (“Pietro Lorenzetti... the general state of the painting is almost perfect”) and Hammond Smith (oral opinion, cited by Contini in a letter to Felix Warburg of January 3, 1927: “he [Smith] considered it as one of the most important works of the 1300 Italian period in the finest possible state of preservation”) were no less fulsome in their praise. Documents in NGA curatorial files.
- [8] Ernest T. DeWald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): 162 n. 1.

- [9] Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), 37.
- [10] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 293; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 252; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:221.
- [11] Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 361.
- [12] Giulia Sinibaldi, *I Lorenzetti* (Siena, 1933), 175.
- [13] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 135, 251; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 68.
- [14] “Reading of the date uncertain,” adds the catalog entry, evidently drawing on information made available by Berenson’s Indices. National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77.
- [15] Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 109, 312, 429, 646; Michel Laclotte, “Un ‘Saint Evêque’ de Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 18 n. 7; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, “Deletions from the Oeuvre of Pietro Lorenzetti and Related Works by the Master of the Beata Umiltà, Mino Parcis da Siena and Iacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976): 290.
- [16] There is no historical evidence of this painter other than the fact that he is mentioned in a document drawn up at Arezzo on September 21, 1321, in the role of witness, together with Pietro Lorenzetti. Cf. Andrea Mariotti, “Modulo di progettazione del Polittico di Arezzo di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Critica d’arte* 15 (1968): 36, no. 100. But, as far as one is able to judge from the partial publication of the document, this citation implies neither that Mino was Pietro’s assistant nor that he was the father of Jacopo di Mino.
- [17] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [18] Ernest De Wald to Charles Parkhurst, August 25, 1942, letter in NGA curatorial files.
- [19] Cf. Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 61, 97, 336, 483.
- [20] National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed.

Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 195–196; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:226, 228; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:884, 892; Alessio Monciatti, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” in *Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti*, ed. Chiara Frugoni (Florence, 2002), 80, 82; Keith Christiansen, “Paul Delaroché’s Crucifixion by Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Apollo* 157 (2003): 14 nn. 17, 19; Rudolf Hiller von Gærtringen, *Italienische Gemälde im Städel 1300–1550: Toskana und Umbrien*, Kataloge der Gemälde im Städelischen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main (Mainz, 2004), 152 n. 44; Michela Becchis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2005), 65:809; Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 42; Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

- [21] For the document of the commission, see Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1:194.
- [22] The date can now be read as M.CCC.X, but the nineteenth-century restoration integrated the inscription, with the result that various readings of it have been proposed (1315, 1316, 1340, 1341). In 1799, however, when the painting entered the Uffizi, Florence, the date 1343 reportedly was visible in the inscription. Cf. Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 166. The stylistic data confirm that the work must have been painted around 1340 or shortly after.
- [23] Often ascribed to the *bottega* or school of Pietro Lorenzetti, the work was claimed as an autograph of Pietro himself by Carlo Volpe (1951). In his monograph (1989), Volpe dated the painting to the years 1340–1345, but the close kinship in style with Ambrogio would, in my view, make a dating in the late 1330s more plausible. See Carlo Volpe, “Proposte per il problema di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 2, no. 23 (1951): 13; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 197–198.
- [24] Cf. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878–1885), 1:473. On the otherwise rare motif of the cherries in Trecento painting, cf. note 1 above. Recently, Laurence Kanter noted that five of the six punches used in the Washington painting “do not recur in any other painting by Lorenzetti, nor in any other Sieneese painting,” and he wondered if it could have been painted in Florence, based on the fact that at least one of the punches is found there as early as 1337 and that the shape of the panels in the Washington altarpiece is more commonly encountered in Florentine than in Sieneese carpentry. Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

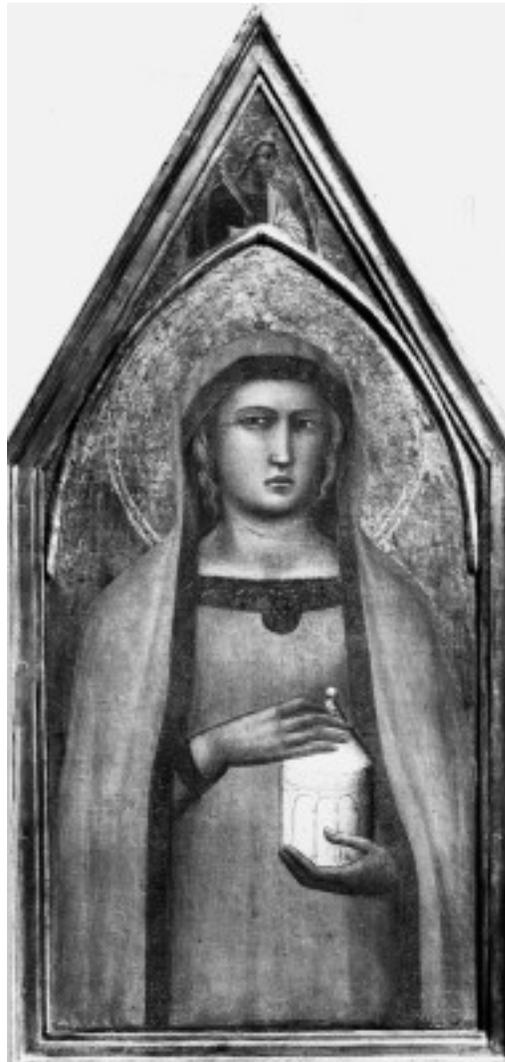
Stephen Pichetto transferred this image and its companions *Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel* [left panel] and *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ* [middle panel], forming part of a triptych, from the three original wooden panels to a canvas support in 1941–1942. The paintings may already have been transferred from the original wooden panels to newer panel supports in an earlier treatment as well.[1] The current frame was made on the occasion of the 1941–1942 treatment. It incorporates a strip of wood bearing the date and artist's signature from the original frame [fig. 1]. The ground is a white gesso layer, incised with a rough outline of the figures. The gold ground is applied on a red bole preparation, and the halos are decorated with punchwork. Gold leaf was used to create the decorative trim details on the drapery of the figures. The paint layers of the central panel are badly worn and have been heavily restored in the course of various treatments.[2] The inpainting is particularly extensive in the Madonna's robes, but the shadows in the saints' faces are also heavily reinforced and remodeled, making the painting difficult to assess. In addition, the gold-leafed details in all of the paintings have been strengthened.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Photographs in NGA curatorial files show the paintings during the transfer performed by Stephen Pichetto. The photographs show four layers of fabric between the gesso and the panel. A single layer of fabric typically would have been used to prepare panels in Trecento Italy.
- [2] The examination report of the NGA painting conservation department states, “There are at least two or three generations of retouching hidden below the discolored varnish layer” (see report dated September 9, 1988, in NGA conservation files). Unfortunately, no documentation exists of the various restorations of the triptych that took place prior to the 1941–1942 treatment, one of which may have occurred after its acquisition by Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi in 1926. Correspondence between Contini-Bonacossi and Stephen Pichetto discussed the possible treatment of the paintings at this time, but it is unclear if they were actually treated. See Ann Hoenigswald, “Stephen Pichetto, Conservator of the Kress Collection, 1927–1949,” in *Studying and Conserving Paintings: Occasional Papers on the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London, 2006), 30, 37. At some point, the paintings apparently were energetically cleaned and generously retouched, in order to render the much-abraded forms more easily readable. Emilio Cecchi’s monograph (1930) reproduced the triptych probably before this treatment (figs. 2, 3, and 4). The inpainting in this reproduction appeared to be more discreet than in the illustration published in the monograph by Ernest De Wald (1929); he apparently used a more recent set of photographs. In De Wald’s publication, the three panels still were separated, and the modeling appeared reinforced by further retouching. Cf. Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), pls. 104–106; Ernest T. De Wald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): pls. 99–101.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably the art market, Florence, by 1924;<sup>[1]</sup> (Alessandro Contini, Rome), by 1926;<sup>[2]</sup> sold 1927 to Felix M. Warburg [1871-1937], New York;<sup>[3]</sup> by inheritance to his wife, Frieda Schiff Warburg [1876-1958], New York; gift 1941 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> Raimond van Marle (*The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, The Hague, 1924: 2:363) reports, rather imprecisely, “A short time ago . . . half-length figures [similar, according to NGA systematic catalogue Miklós Boskovits, to Pietro’s panels nos. 79, 81 and 82 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena] were offered for sale in Florence.” Nonetheless, adds the author, “these may have been products of Pietro’s bottega only.” Miklós Boskovits did not know of other panels of half-length

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saints attributable to the elder Lorenzetti on the art market at that time and thought it very likely that van Marle was referring to the NGA paintings. [2] Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) gathered expertises (in NGA curatorial files) on the triptych in 1926, so it must have been in his possession by then. [3] Correspondence about the panels among Warburg, Contini, Paul Sachs (Warburg's advisor), and the restorers Hammond Smith and Stephen Pichetto began in 1926, but stops in 1927, the year Warburg probably bought the three panels (correspondence in NGA curatorial files). When Ernest Theodore De Wald published the triptych in 1929 (*Art Studies: Medieval Renaissance and Modern* [1929]: 34 n. 1, and figs. 99-101), it already belonged to the Warburg collection.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 221, pl. 5.

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Pietro Lorenzetti  
Sienese, active 1306 - 1345

## *Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel [left panel]*

probably 1340

tempera on panel transferred to canvas

painted surface: 89.2 × 41 cm (35 1/8 × 16 1/8 in.)

overall: 92.1 × 44.1 cm (36 1/4 × 17 3/8 in.)

Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg  
1941.5.1.a

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### ENTRY

The central *Madonna and Child* of this triptych, which also includes this panel of Saint Mary Magdalene and *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel [right panel]*, proposes a peculiar variant of the so-called *Hodegetria* type. The Christ child is supported on his mother's left arm and looks out of the painting directly at the observer, whereas Mary does not point to her son with her right hand, as is usual in similar images, but instead offers him cherries. The child helps himself to the proffered fruit with his left hand, and with his other is about to pop one of them into his mouth.[1] Another unusual feature of the painting is the smock worn by the infant Jesus: it is embellished with a decorative band around the chest; a long, fluttering, pennant-like sleeve (so-called *manicottolo*);[2] and metal studs around his shoulders. The group of the Madonna and Child is flanked by two female saints. The saint to the left can be recognized as Saint Mary Magdalene by the cylindrical pyx of ointment in her hand,[3] while Saint Catherine of Alexandria is identified by her crown and by the wheel of martyrdom she supports with her right hand, half concealing it below her mantle.[4] Both this saint and the two angels in the gable above Mary's head bear a palm in their hand.[5]

Though signed and dated by the artist [fig. 1],[6] the triptych in the National Gallery of Art is rarely cited in the art historical literature. An impressive series of letters from experts whom Felix M. Warburg or Alessandro Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) had consulted in 1926 about the three panels (then separately framed) confirmed their fine state, extraordinary historical importance, and attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti.[7] Nevertheless, the panels were illustrated but cited only fleetingly in the art historical literature. For example, Ernest De Wald (1929) denied their attribution to Pietro, explaining that “the panels are evidently of Lorenzettian derivation but...the heads are all softer and broader than Pietro’s style. Much of this [he added] may of course be due to the clever retouching.”[8] For his part, Emilio Cecchi (1930) included the three panels in his catalog of Pietro’s work and dedicated a brief comment to them, emphasizing that their “solemn plasticity” is typical of the painter’s last creative phase.[9] Bernard Berenson (1932, 1936, 1968) concurred with the attribution but cited the panels as dated 1321.[10] Raimond van Marle (1934) also accepted the attribution and Berenson’s reading of the fragmentary date.[11] In the previous year, Giulia Sinibaldi (1933) had limited herself to citing the paintings among those ascribed to Pietro, but she took no position on the question.[12] The triptych was ignored by most of the specialized literature in the following decades, with the exception of the successive catalogs of the Gallery itself (1942, 1965, 1968), though curiously they failed to point out the artist’s signature.[13] Only in the catalog of 1965 was this mentioned: “a worn inscription on bottom of old part of frame of middle panel,” and the date tentatively interpreted as 1321.[14] It was not until the 1970s that the triptych began to be regularly cited as the work of Pietro Lorenzetti (Fredericksen and Zeri 1972; Laclotte 1976) or, as in the case of Mojmir S. Frinta (1976), as the work of one of his assistants, on the basis of the punch marks that also appear in paintings by Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio.[15] Frinta conjectured that the triptych could be attributable to Mino Parcis, a minor master who was apparently documented in Pietro’s shop in 1321 and was perhaps the father of Jacopo di Mino.[16] The same scholar reassigned to Mino some works hitherto attributed to Pietro himself in his last phase and given by others to an anonymous artist called the “Dijon Master.” Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) entertained similar doubts: “Whether the attribution to Pietro Lorenzetti can be fully accepted remains somewhat uncertain.”[17] She wondered whether the Gallery triptych might not have been a work by the same assistant of Pietro who had painted a Madonna now in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence (donation by Charles Loeser) and some other stylistically akin panels. However, Shapley cited a letter written by De Wald to Charles Parkhurst at the Gallery in

1942, reporting that he had examined the infrared photographs made during restoration at the Gallery and, on that basis, could now confirm Pietro's hand.[18]

After the catalog entry written by Shapley (1979), with the exception of Frinta's volume (1998), in which the triptych continued to be classified as a product of Lorenzetti's shop, art historians seem to have agreed that the Washington paintings should be recognized as an autograph work by Pietro himself.[19] Those accepting this position include not only the catalog of the Gallery (NGA 1985) but also Carlo Volpe (1989), Erling S. Skaug (1994), Cristina De Benedictis (1996), Alessio Monciatti (2002), Keith Christiansen (2003), Rudolf Hiller von Gaertringen (2004), Michela Becchis (2005), Ada Labriola (2008), and Laurence B. Kanter (2010).[20]

Bearing in mind the triptych's state of preservation, made almost unrecognizable by inpainting aimed at concealing the damage suffered by the painted surface, it is difficult to express a balanced judgment of its authorship. Even old photographs of the panels, made prior to their latest restoration, do not assist much in that regard [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4]. Some of its general features—the extreme sobriety of the composition, dominated by massive figures presented in almost frontal pose and filling almost entirely the space at their disposal, and the form of the panels themselves, terminating above in a simple pointed arch—surely are those one would expect to find in the paintings by Pietro Lorenzetti in the period around 1340, when the artist was apparently fascinated by the sober grandeur of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in his final phase. Undoubtedly “Lorenzettian” is the figures' clothing, made of heavy stuff and with draperies falling perpendicularly in a few simplified or pointed folds, which barely discloses or suggests the form of the underlying body. Similar forms and compositional devices can be found in the *Birth of the Virgin* in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena, dated 1342 but commissioned and planned in 1335,[21] the Madonna now in the Uffizi, Florence, with a provenance from Pistoia, whose fragmentary date [22] has been variously read; and the polyptych no. 50 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, recognized by some (if not all) art historians as executed by Pietro with studio assistance and dating to the late years of the fourth decade.[23] Unfortunately, perhaps also because of the Washington triptych's compromised state, the analysis of the punched ornament provides no useful indications to confirm or deny the conclusions reached by an interpretation of the stylistic data, but it should be observed that the decorative motifs of the dress of Saint Catherine are very similar to those of the cloth of honor of the Madonna in the Uffizi and seem to confirm that

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the two works belong to the same period.

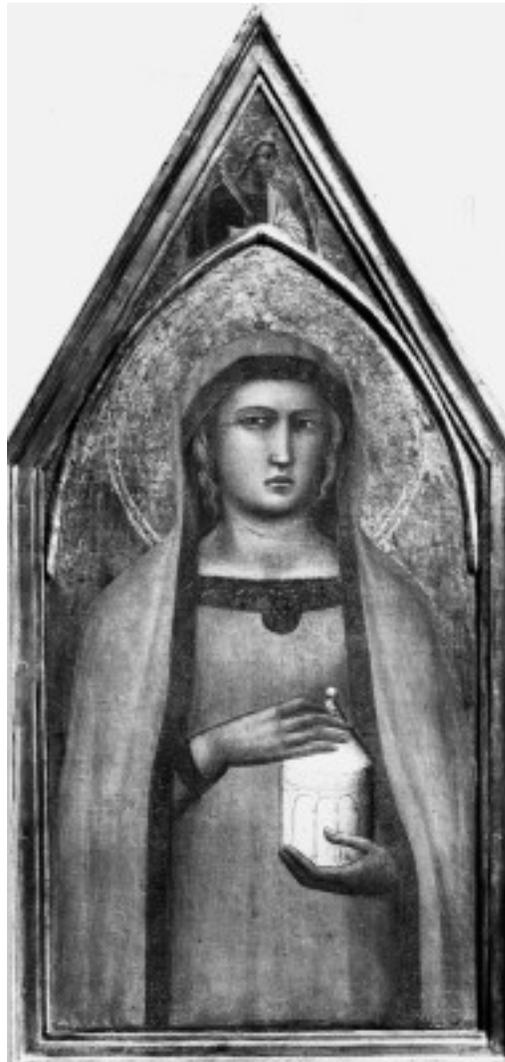
A detail that has hitherto escaped attention could offer a clue as to the triptych's original destination: it was perhaps commissioned for a church not in Siena but in Pisa, where apparently the motif of the Christ child eating cherries was popular in the fourteenth century. Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574), who erroneously attributed the fresco of the Lives of the Anchorites in the Camposanto to the painter he called "Pietro Laurati" (that is, Pietro Lorenzetti), reported that the artist spent a period in Pisa, and so the unusual iconography of the central panel of the triptych might have been adopted in deference to the wishes of a patron in that city.[24] In any case, the stylistic character seems to coincide with the evidence of the signature and the date preserved on the fragment of the original frame that has come down to us. As for the possible intervention of studio assistants, the state of preservation of the painting today prevents, in my view, speculations of this kind. Doubts perhaps can be raised about the inscription itself, because we do not know how it was recovered and inserted into the existing frame. But it is hardly probable that the signature of the artist and the date 1340 (or 1341 or 1342) would have been added to the painting by another hand, concordant with the features of this particular phase in Pietro's career.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## NOTES

- [1] On the iconography of the Virgin of *Hodegetria* type, see note 1 in the entry on *Enthroned Madonna and Child*. Cherries, symbols of the Annunciation and the Incarnation of Christ but also of the blood of the Redeemer, frequently accompany representations of the Madonna and Child in fifteenth-century paintings; far less frequently do they appear in paintings of the previous century. Cf. Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance: Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence, 1977), 89–93. Nevertheless, cf. some versions of the Madonna and Child painted by painters active in Pisa, such as Francesco Neri da Volterra in his panel at San Benedetto a Settimo, Spinello Aretino in a painting commissioned from him in Pisa (no. 3130, Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart), and Cecco di Pietro in a panel in the Musée in Tours and in another similar panel in the church of San Torpè at Pisa: cf. Mariagiulia Burrese, ed., *Pisa e l'area pisana, I luoghi della fede* (Milan, 2000), 137–138; and Andrea De Marchi, in *Italies: Peintures des musées de la région Centre*, ed. Annie Gilet and Éric Moinet (Paris, 1996), 75–76. For a Siennese example of the child carrying cherries in his hand, cf. the panel by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in the parish church of Roccalbenga, Siena; see Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 212–214. Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) interpreted the motif as “fruit of Heaven”; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 112.
- [2] In Tuscan panels of the early fourteenth century, the child at times appears naked, at times dressed in a tunic and mantle *all'antica*, or a garment that recalls the shirt or dalmatic used by celebrants on certain liturgical occasions. Sometimes, however, as in the *Maestà* by Simone Martini (Siennese, active from 1315; died 1344) in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena, or in the *Madonna and Child* by Pietro Lorenzetti himself in the pieve of Castiglione d'Orcia, the child wears a dress that bears no relation to the liturgical conventions of the day, such as a smock furnished with prominent buttons or laces, which probably reflects children's garments of the time. See Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 113–115. To this group belong, from the fourth and fifth decades of the fourteenth century onwards, images representing the child dressed in smocks with short but very wide sleeves, such as that illustrated in our painting or in some panels by Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) (Madonna no. 553 in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, or Madonna no. 1923.35 in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts). On the development of the fashion of the *manicottolo* and its reflections in painting of the early fourteenth century, see Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 41–54.
- [3] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 717–720.

- [4] Cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 2, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence, 1965), 255–266.
- [5] Apart from the scene of the Annunciation of the Death of Mary, in which Gabriel generally hands a palm branch to her, this attribute is alien to the iconography of the angels; cf. “Engel,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, eds. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, Basel, and Vienna, 1968), 1:626–642. In the present context, the motif probably is meant as a symbol of triumph, as in various biblical narratives—for example, in that relating to the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:34, 40), or an important military victory of Simon Maccabeus (1 Mac 13:51), or the entry of Christ into Jerusalem (Mt 21:8; Jn 12:12).
- [6] It is not clear when or how the fragment containing the inscription of the lost original frame was removed. It already had been removed from the original frame, and was incorporated into the frame that was on the painting when the current frame was commissioned in 1941–1942. The literature long ignored the inscription, probably due to difficulties in reading it. Its transcription was published for the first time in the NGA catalog of 1965, with the date interpreted as MCCCXXI. This was repeated in NGA 1985, although Charles Parkhurst had already sent the transcription to the Frick Art Reference Library and Robert Langton Douglas in 1946 (letters of August 1 and 2, 1946, copies in NGA curatorial files). Parkhurst’s reading was published by Fern Rusk Shapley (1979). See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [7] The expertises in question were furnished by such leading art historians of the time as Wilhelm von Bode (“Pietro Lorenzetti...ein Hauptwerk”), Georg Gronau (“ein Hauptwerk nicht nur des Pietro Lorenzetti sondern der Sienesischen Malerei”), Detlev von Hadeln (“Pietro Lorenzetti. Since years I have not seen in the market a work of such a high rank by an earlier Italian master”), Roberto Longhi (“una delle creazioni più solenni della maturità di Pietro Lorenzetti”), August L. Mayer (“Pietro Lorenzetti...one of the most important works of the Italian School of the Trecento”), and Wilhelm Suida (“eine charakteristische Arbeit des Pietro Lorenzetti...Die Erhaltung aller Teile ist eine vorzuegliche”). Restorers Stephen Pichetto (“Pietro Lorenzetti... the general state of the painting is almost perfect”) and Hammond Smith (oral opinion, cited by Contini in a letter to Felix Warburg of January 3, 1927: “he [Smith] considered it as one of the most important works of the 1300 Italian period in the finest possible state of preservation”) were no less fulsome in their praise. Documents in NGA curatorial files.
- [8] Ernest T. DeWald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): 162 n. 1.

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- [9] Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), 37.
- [10] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 293; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 252; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:221.
- [11] Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 361.
- [12] Giulia Sinibaldi, *I Lorenzetti* (Siena, 1933), 175.
- [13] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 135, 251; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 68.
- [14] “Reading of the date uncertain,” adds the catalog entry, evidently drawing on information made available by Berenson’s Indices. National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 77.
- [15] Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 109, 312, 429, 646; Michel Laclotte, “Un ‘Saint Evêque’ de Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 18 n. 7; Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, “Deletions from the Oeuvre of Pietro Lorenzetti and Related Works by the Master of the Beata Umilità, Mino Parcis da Siena and Iacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976): 290.
- [16] There is no historical evidence of this painter other than the fact that he is mentioned in a document drawn up at Arezzo on September 21, 1321, in the role of witness, together with Pietro Lorenzetti. Cf. Andrea Mariotti, “Modulo di progettazione del Polittico di Arezzo di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Critica d’arte* 15 (1968): 36, no. 100. But, as far as one is able to judge from the partial publication of the document, this citation implies neither that Mino was Pietro’s assistant nor that he was the father of Jacopo di Mino.
- [17] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:269–270.
- [18] Ernest De Wald to Charles Parkhurst, August 25, 1942, letter in NGA curatorial files.
- [19] Cf. Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 61, 97, 336, 483.
- [20] National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*

(Washington, DC, 1985), 232; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 195–196; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:226, 228; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:884, 892; Alessio Monciatti, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” in *Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti*, ed. Chiara Frugoni (Florence, 2002), 80, 82; Keith Christiansen, “Paul Delaroché’s Crucifixion by Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Apollo* 157 (2003): 14 nn. 17, 19; Rudolf Hiller von Gærtringen, *Italienische Gemälde im Städel 1300–1550: Toskana und Umbrien*, Kataloge der Gemälde im Städelischen Kunstinstitut Frankfurt am Main (Mainz, 2004), 152 n. 44; Michela Becchis, “Lorenzetti, Pietro,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2005), 65:809; Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 42; Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

- [21] For the document of the commission, see Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1:194.
- [22] The date can now be read as M.CCC.X, but the nineteenth-century restoration integrated the inscription, with the result that various readings of it have been proposed (1315, 1316, 1340, 1341). In 1799, however, when the painting entered the Uffizi, Florence, the date 1343 reportedly was visible in the inscription. Cf. Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 166. The stylistic data confirm that the work must have been painted around 1340 or shortly after.
- [23] Often ascribed to the *bottega* or school of Pietro Lorenzetti, the work was claimed as an autograph of Pietro himself by Carlo Volpe (1951). In his monograph (1989), Volpe dated the painting to the years 1340–1345, but the close kinship in style with Ambrogio would, in my view, make a dating in the late 1330s more plausible. See Carlo Volpe, “Proposte per il problema di Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Paragone* 2, no. 23 (1951): 13; Carlo Volpe, *Pietro Lorenzetti*, ed. Mauro Lucco (Milan, 1989), 197–198.
- [24] Cf. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878–1885), 1:473. On the otherwise rare motif of the cherries in Trecento painting, cf. note 1 above. Recently, Laurence Kanter noted that five of the six punches used in the Washington painting “do not recur in any other painting by Lorenzetti, nor in any other Sieneese painting,” and he wondered if it could have been painted in Florence, based on the fact that at least one of the punches is found there as early as 1337 and that the shape of the panels in the Washington altarpiece is more commonly encountered in Florentine than in Sieneese carpentry. Laurence B. Kanter and John Marciari, *Italian Paintings from the*

*Richard L. Feigen Collection* (New Haven, 2010), 20.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Stephen Pichetto transferred this image and its companions *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ* [middle panel] and *Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel* [right panel], forming part of a triptych, from the three original wooden panels to a canvas support in 1941–1942. The paintings may already have been transferred from the original wooden panels to newer panel supports in an earlier treatment as well.[1] The current frame was made on the occasion of the 1941–1942 treatment. It incorporates a strip of wood bearing the date and artist's signature from the original frame [fig. 1]. The ground is a white gesso layer, incised with a rough outline of the figures. The gold ground is applied on a red bole preparation, and the halos are decorated with punchwork. Gold leaf was used to create the decorative trim details on the drapery of the figures. The paint layers of the central panel are badly worn and have been heavily restored in the course of various treatments.[2] The inpainting is particularly extensive in the Madonna's robes, but the shadows in the saints' faces are also heavily reinforced and remodeled, making the painting difficult to assess. In addition, the gold-leafed details in all of the paintings have been strengthened.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sketch of inscription, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. (Joanna Dunn, National Gallery of Art, Washington)



**fig. 2** Archival photograph of Saint Mary Magdalene, c. 1920–1930, left panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 3** Archival photograph of the Madonna and Child, c. 1928–1930, central panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice



**fig. 4** Archival photograph of Saint Catherine, c. 1928–1930, right panel, Pietro Lorenzetti, *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*, probably 1340, tempera on panel transferred to canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Frieda Schiff Warburg in memory of her husband, Felix M. Warburg. Image: Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Photographs in NGA curatorial files show the paintings during the transfer performed by Stephen Pichetto. The photographs show four layers of fabric between the gesso and the panel. A single layer of fabric typically would have been used to prepare panels in Trecento Italy.
- [2] The examination report of the NGA painting conservation department states, “There are at least two or three generations of retouching hidden below the discolored varnish layer” (see report dated September 9, 1988, in NGA conservation files). Unfortunately, no documentation exists of the various restorations of the triptych that took place prior to the 1941–1942 treatment, one of which may have occurred after its acquisition by Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi in 1926. Correspondence between Contini-Bonacossi and Stephen Pichetto discussed the possible treatment of the paintings at this time, but it is unclear if they were actually treated. See Ann Hoenigswald, “Stephen Pichetto, Conservator of the Kress Collection, 1927–1949,” in *Studying and Conserving Paintings: Occasional Papers on the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (London, 2006), 30, 37. At some point, the paintings apparently were energetically cleaned and generously retouched, in order to render the much-abraded forms more easily readable. Emilio Cecchi’s monograph (1930) reproduced the triptych probably before this treatment (figs. 2, 3, and 4). The inpainting in this reproduction appeared to be more discreet than in the illustration published in the monograph by Ernest De Wald (1929); he apparently used a more recent set of photographs. In De Wald’s publication, the three panels still were separated, and the modeling appeared reinforced by further retouching. Cf. Emilio Cecchi, *Pietro Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1930), pls. 104–106; Ernest T. De Wald, “Pietro Lorenzetti,” *Art Studies* 7 (1929): pls. 99–101.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably the art market, Florence, by 1924;<sup>[1]</sup> (Alessandro Contini, Rome), by 1926;<sup>[2]</sup> sold 1927 to Felix M. Warburg [1871-1937], New York;<sup>[3]</sup> by inheritance to his wife, Frieda Schiff Warburg [1876-1958], New York; gift 1941 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> Raimond van Marle (*The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, The Hague, 1924: 2:363) reports, rather imprecisely, “A short time ago . . . half-length figures [similar, according to NGA systematic catalogue Miklós Boskovits, to Pietro’s panels nos. 79, 81 and 82 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena] were offered for sale in Florence.” Nonetheless, adds the author, “these may have been products of Pietro’s bottega only.” Miklós Boskovits did not know of other panels of half-length

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saints attributable to the elder Lorenzetti on the art market at that time and thought it very likely that van Marle was referring to the NGA paintings. [2] Contini (later Contini-Bonacossi) gathered expertises (in NGA curatorial files) on the triptych in 1926, so it must have been in his possession by then. [3] Correspondence about the panels among Warburg, Contini, Paul Sachs (Warburg's advisor), and the restorers Hammond Smith and Stephen Pichetto began in 1926, but stops in 1927, the year Warburg probably bought the three panels (correspondence in NGA curatorial files). When Ernest Theodore De Wald published the triptych in 1929 (*Art Studies: Medieval Renaissance and Modern* [1929]: 34 n. 1, and figs. 99-101), it already belonged to the Warburg collection.

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1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 221, pl. 5.

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# Lorenzo Monaco

Also known as

Piero di Giovanni

Florentine, c. 1370 - c. 1425

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When, in December 1391, at the end of a novitiate lasting a year, the painter Piero di Giovanni made his profession in the Camaldolese monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence, assuming the name of Don Lorenzo,[1] he must already have been a well-known and esteemed artist in the city and hence no longer very young. Presumed in the older literature to have been born in Siena,[2] he seems to have been trained as an artist in Florence, serving in the *bottega* of Agnolo Gaddi (Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396), with whom he later collaborated in the painting of the predella of the altarpiece in the Nobili Chapel in Santa Maria degli Angeli, formerly dated 1387.[3] Ordained a deacon in 1394, he dedicated himself in the following years to the painting of miniatures, particularly the illumination of the choir-books of his monastery and of other monastic communities (choir-books nos. 5, 8, and 1, dated respectively 1394, 1395, and 1396, now in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana; choir-book C 71 in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence). At the same time, he also painted a series of small devotional panels—for example, the versions of the Madonna and Child with saints in the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris, in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, and in the Haggin Museum in Stockton, California; or the processional cross in the Art Institute of Chicago. Between 1398 and 1400, Don Lorenzo is documented as engaged in painting a polyptych for the Ardinghelli Chapel in the church of the Carmine (generally identified with the panels now divided among the Toledo [Ohio] Museum of Art, the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, and other museums). The difficulties of working as a painter within the walls of a cloistered monastery induced him to move to his own workshop in the city, while at the same time maintaining the status and lifestyle of a monk.

Having overcome his first creative phase, essentially derived from the model of Agnolo Gaddi, Don Lorenzo reduced the role of incisive contours in the overall effect of his works; he simplified their compositions and accentuated the corporeal substance of the figures, characterized by carefully chiseled forms. The

monumental aspect and stylistic harmony of these works attest to the influence now exerted on him by the neo-Giottesque revival associated with Niccolò Gerini and the painters of his circle at the turn of the century. Paintings of this phase in his development include the *Madonna and Child* dated 1400 formerly in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum in Berlin and the other versions of the same subject in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna and in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. They prepare the path for the artist's most intensely gothicizing phase, initiated with two works dated 1404: the *Man of Sorrows* in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, and the triptych in the Pinacoteca of Empoli. This phase achieved its full development in such works as the large, dismantled polyptych formerly in San Benedetto fuori Porta Pinti of 1407–1409 (National Gallery, London, and other collections); the polyptych from Monteoliveto of 1410 now in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence; or the Santa Maria degli Angeli altarpiece in the Uffizi, Florence, of 1414.

Stimulated by innovative developments in Florentine art, and especially by those expressed by Ghiberti in the reliefs of his first bronze doors for the Florentine Baptistery and perhaps also by the linear complexities and brilliant colors that Gherardo Starnina introduced into Florence on his return from a long period of residence in Spain, Don Lorenzo experimented with the possibilities offered by exuberance of line, aristocratic refinement of gesture, and delicate and unusual color combinations culminating in the calligraphic brilliance and sweeping contours of paintings dating around the middle of the second decade. Thereafter the works of Don Lorenzo gradually recover greater formal simplicity and are distinguished by their more placid mood, softer and more fluid contours, and often a peculiar, fairy-tale atmosphere, as exemplified in such works as the second triptych in the Museo della Collegiata in Empoli, the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Uffizi in Florence, and the decoration (polyptych and frescoes) of the Bartolini Salimbeni Chapel in Santa Trinita. He was mentioned as still alive in 1422, and various considerations—such as the circumstance that, according to Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574), the artist died at the age of fifty-five—suggest placing his death a few years later, perhaps around 1425.[4]

[1] See the passage of the *registro vecchio* from the monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli testifying to Don Lorenzo's profession of vows, dated December 10, 1391, transcribed by Marvin Eisenberg in *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 209, and by Alberto Lenza in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 320. In the second edition

of his *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (Florence, 1568), Giorgio Vasari titled the biography dedicated to the artist as “Vita di Don Lorenzo Monaco degli Angeli di Firenze.” *Don* (abbreviation of *dominus*) was a title originally reserved for the Benedictine monks, *Monaco* is the Italian word for monk, and *Angeli* refers to the Florentine monastery of Santa Maria degli Angeli, to which he belonged. Since then, the painter usually has been termed Lorenzo Monaco.

[2] A 1415 annotation of controversial interpretation in the same *registro vecchio* of Santa Maria degli Angeli speaks of “don Lorenzo dipintore da siene del nostro ordine.” See Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 212–213; and Alberto Lenza, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 322. Both Eisenberg (1989, 4–5) and Lenza (in Tartuferi and Parenti 2006, 325 n. 15), in contrast to previous scholars, doubted that the words “da siene” implied that the painter was of Sieneese origin.

[3] On this predella, see Erling S. Skaug, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 106–109. Dillian Gordon noted that according to the seventeenth-century *Sepoluario* by Stefano Rosselli, the altarpiece bore the arms of the family and was inscribed “An.D.1387....”; Dillian Gordon, *The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings*, National Gallery Catalogues (London, 2003), 197 n. 3.

[4] Between January 1421 and August 1422, Don Lorenzo received payments for the panel (not clearly identifiable) to adorn the high altar of the church of Sant’Egidio in Florence. The Florentine house assigned to the painter by his monastery in 1415, with a clause specifying that after his death it would be restored to the ownership of the Camaldolese community, was available again in 1426 for renting; see Mirella Levi D’Ancona, *Miniatura e miniatori a Firenze dal xiv al xvi secolo: Documenti per la storia della miniatura* (Florence, 1962), 173. It seems logical to suppose that the monastic community did not intend to wait long to re-let the property and therefore that Don Lorenzo had died shortly beforehand. If Giorgio Vasari was right in asserting that the painter died at the age of fifty-five, and if his date of birth was really c. 1370, his date of death would be in or around 1425; cf. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de’ più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence, 1966–1987), 2(1967):305.

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Lorenzo Monaco  
Florentine, c. 1370 - c. 1425

## *Madonna and Child*

1413

tempera on panel

painted surface: 113.5 × 52.8 cm (44 11/16 × 20 13/16 in.)

overall: 116.3 × 55.6 cm (45 13/16 × 21 7/8 in.)

framed: 127 x 66.2 x 11.4 cm (50 x 26 1/16 x 4 1/2 in.)

Inscription: on the Child's scroll: EGO S[UM...];[1] across the bottom: AVE.G[RATIA?]  
... AN[N]O.D[OMINI]. M.CCCC.XIII

[1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979: 1:274, reads “EGO S[UM LU]X M[UNDI],” i.e., the words of John 8:12, but what actually remains of the inscription does not allow more than an informed conjecture about the original text. In Don Lorenzo’s Monteoliveto altarpiece of 1410, now in the Accademia in Florence, and in the more or less contemporary altarpiece in the Galleria Comunale at Prato, the scroll reads “EGO SUM VIA VERITAS ET VITA” (John 14:6).

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1943.4.13

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### ENTRY

The painting presents Mary with her son according to an original version of the iconography of the Madonna of Humility.[1] Here, instead of being suckled by the Virgin in a recumbent or seated position, the child stands on Mary’s knees, turning towards the spectator while supporting himself with one hand on her shoulder in an affectionate gesture and holding her veil with the other.[2] Clearly, the artist, though using an iconographic type very common by then in Florence, wished to place the emphasis not so much on the humility of Mary as on her grace, the elegance with which she presents her divine son to the faithful. It was probably her much elongated and slightly curving torso—the line of the curve continued in her bowed head—that suggested the idea of representing the Christ child standing, his body slightly inclined towards her; this permitted the painter to fuse mother and child together in a single harmonious group [fig. 1]. Lorenzo Monaco was perhaps the first to combine the motif of the standing Child, widespread in Florentine

painting of the period in representations of the Madonna and Child Enthroned, with the iconographic scheme of the Madonna of Humility. He did so in paintings dating for the most part to the phase of his full maturity.[3]

Ever since its first appearance in the art historical literature (Sirén 1905), the panel has been commonly recognized as an autograph work by Lorenzo, with the sole exceptions of Marvin Eisenberg (in Shapley 1966, citing Eisenberg verbal communication; and Eisenberg 1989) and Bruce Cole (1980).[4] The former scholar, initially (1954) inclined to accept the authorship of the Camaldolese artist, later judged the painting “scarcely worthy of Lorenzo” and finally concluded (1989) that “the painter of the National Gallery *Madonna* would seem to have been a distinctive assistant to Lorenzo Monaco who used the design of the master for the principal contours of the Virgin, but introduced an opposing rhythm and a less traditional technique.”[5] Cole (1980), while recognizing that the quality of the painting is very high, decided, for reasons not otherwise explained, to classify it as a product of Lorenzo’s *bottega*. [6] In actual fact, the execution of the panel shows all the customary accomplishment and finesse of Lorenzo’s technique, diminished only by the damage and overpainting it has undergone; Eisenberg’s opinion might have been influenced by the painting’s compromised condition.[7]

While the presence of a barbe, and thus of engaged frame moldings, around the entire perimeter of the image might suggest that the Washington Madonna was an independent devotional work, its size and its tall and narrow proportions differ considerably from those of other self-standing images of the Madonna and Child painted by Lorenzo. The painted surfaces of the latter generally measure just under one meter high, while their width, in contrast to that of the Washington Madonna, generally exceeds half the panel height. There are therefore good reasons for supposing that our panel originally formed part of a relatively small triptych, destined for the altar of a side chapel in a church. We may presume that the Madonna and Child would have been flanked by paired saints on either side, as in the triptych dated 1404 in the Pinacoteca of Empoli, whose central panel similarly presents an image of the Madonna of Humility. A possible candidate as the left lateral of the National Gallery of Art panel could be the panel of Saints Catherine and John [fig. 2] now in the Princes Czartoryski Foundation Collections in Krakow.[8]

Although the dark blue of the Virgin’s mantle has now altered, almost to the point of looking black, the delicate palette of the painting is still striking and testifies to Don Lorenzo’s total emancipation from tradition in his choice of colors: the

customary red dress of the Virgin is here abandoned in favor of a lilac damask, while the transparent white veil is transformed into azure. To this is added the delicate salmon red of the child's tunic, combined with the light blue of his long undergarment (matching that of the Madonna's veil), the deep golden yellow of the lining of her mantle, and the pale green of the marble pavement on which the Virgin's cushion is placed.[9] Precedents for the composition can be identified in such works as the central panels of polyptychs no. 468 in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, dated 1410, and that in the Galleria Comunale at Prato,[10] perhaps slightly later in date. In both panels we also encounter the tendency to prefer suffused colors that have been combined with great delicacy. Both are images of the Madonna and Child Enthroned accompanied by angels, in which one of the painter's preoccupations seems to have been to fill all the available space, either with the architectural structure of the throne or with the figures of angels and the cloth of honor they support. In the color scheme of both paintings a decisive role is assigned to Mary's blue mantle, always complemented and enlivened—as in our painting—by the sudden flash of the brilliant yellow silk lining exposed by its undulating hems.

About 1413, at the time he painted the Washington Madonna, the artist not only accentuated the slenderness of his figures and the aristocratic elegance of their movements but also simplified the design and added spaciousness to his compositions. Angularities and brusque changes in direction of the contours are now eliminated, and a smoother, more placid rhythm is given to the outlines, here and there enlivened by the small curlicues or serpentine undulations of the hems. The figures, moreover, at least in part, are now delineated directly against the gold ground and invested with a more monumental character. In this phase, the artist seems to have preferred colder hues; he thus matched the blues of varying intensity with delicate green. We find this combination also in the Madonna of Humility dated 1415 in the church of Sant'Ermete at Putignano (Pisa)[11] and in the versions of the Madonna Enthroned in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid,[12] the Bonnenfantenmuseum in Maastricht,[13] and the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh,[14] to cite some of the more significant examples of paintings produced in or around the middle of the second decade.[15]

The stylistic data that characterize the panel in the Gallery and the Madonna painted two years later in the Pisan church thus represent valuable points of reference for a correct historical evaluation of the abovementioned works, which, in contrast to what is sometimes affirmed, ought not to be far removed in date from

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the middle of the second decade. They are the results of a phase in which the charged tension of design and harshness of modeling are gradually abandoned. At the same time, the distinctive features of Lorenzo's late style are slow in appearing: an emphasis on smooth sweeping lines, crescent- or sickle-shaped drapery folds, and extreme lightness of modeling that dematerializes the physical substance of flesh. Nor do we yet find in the paintings of this phase the unusual combinations of pale pastel shades privileged by the artist in the latter years of his life.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail, Lorenzo Monaco, *Madonna and Child*, 1413, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 2** Lorenzo Monaco, *The Saints Catherine and John the Baptist*, 1410–1415, tempera on panel, Czartoryski Museum, The Princes Czartoryski Foundation Collections, Krakow

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**NOTES**

- [1] On the iconography of the Madonna of Humility, see cat. 22, n. 7.
- [2] Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 28, observed that “the frontal posture of the Child standing on his mother’s knee is not seen before 1315, when it is represented by Simone Martini,” alluding to the *Maestà* in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena dating to that year. However, albeit in a not entirely frontal pose and not blessing but supporting himself on his mother’s shoulder in a

way very similar to what we see in Lorenzo Monaco's painting, the Christ child is represented standing in the left lateral of a triptych by Duccio in the Royal Collection of England, Hampton Court, Surrey, painted within the first decade of the fourteenth century; see Luciano Bellosi, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 188–195.

- [3] The motif of the standing child appears in the Madonna of Humility of the Perkins bequest in the treasury of the basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, probably still dating within the first decade of the fifteenth century, and hence in works more chronologically advanced—such as the panel no. 1123 formerly in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum in Berlin; that of the abbey of Cava de' Tirreni (Salerno); or that formerly in the Schaeffer Galleries in New York, in which the Madonna of Humility is transformed into a celestial vision set against the gold ground and appearing to a group of saints.
- [4] Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco* (Strasbourg, 1905), 88–89, 169, 186; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 89; Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 172–173; Bruce Cole, *Sienese Painting from Its Origins to the Fifteenth Century* (New York, 1980), 69–70.
- [5] Marvin Eisenberg, *The Origins and Development of the Early Style of Lorenzo Monaco* (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1954), 313 n. 31; Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 173.
- [6] Bruce Cole, *Sienese Painting from Its Origins to the Fifteenth Century* (New York, 1980), 69–70.
- [7] In particular, Marvin Eisenberg's observation that "a technique visible in the Kress panel that is foreign to Lorenzo Monaco is the modeling in light and shade of the Virgin's face and the entire head of the Child" raises the suspicion that he was deceived by the skillful inpainting that has altered the painting's original effect in these areas. Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 173.
- [8] On the Krakow panel, see Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 92, fig. 153.
- [9] It is difficult to know what color the Virgin's dress and the Christ child's tunic would have been originally, because the pigments, especially the red lake pigments, have faded considerably. The green of the pavement was heavily restored by Mario Modestini but seems to follow surviving traces of the original color.
- [10] See Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 163–165, where the polyptych was considered a product of Lorenzo's *bottega* and dated c. 1412–1414. In my view, it is a substantially autograph painting that should be dated only slightly later than the polyptych in the Accademia.

- [11] Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 160–161; Daniela Parenti, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 202–203.
- [12] Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 146–147, with a dating to c. 1422–1423; Miklós Boskovits and Serena Padovani, *The Thyssen–Bornemisza Collection: Early Italian Painting 1290–1470* (London, 1990), 114–119, with a dating to 1415–1420. Angelo Tartuferi rejected the latter proposal, but his argument puzzles me, in particular when he compared the painting now in Madrid with what can be regarded as the paradigm of Don Lorenzo’s final period, namely the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Uffizi, Florence. Cf. Angelo Tartuferi, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 224–226.
- [13] See Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 136, (as workshop of Lorenzo Monaco, c. 1418–1420), whose opinion was also confirmed by C. E. de Jong-Janssen and D.H. van Wegen, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings in the Bonnefantenmuseum* (Maastricht, 1995), 66–67. The Maastricht painting, which has in the past suffered various maltreatments, is no longer easy to assess, but in my view there are no cogent reasons to attribute it to a hand other than Don Lorenzo himself or to detach it from the group of paintings being discussed here.
- [14] See Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 93, with a dating to c. 1418. Tartuferi recognized that the Edinburgh panel was earlier than the Thyssen-Bornemisza Madonna in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 226.
- [15] Among the various paintings belonging to the same phase as the Washington Madonna of Humility, I would like to cite at least the magnificent group of four patriarchs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. They are also typical products of the phase of transition between Don Lorenzo’s initiation in the late Gothic style and that more simplified in design but more probing in expression that began towards the end of the second decade. Art historical assessment of these panels has varied: Marvin Eisenberg suggested a date of c. 1408–1410, and Laurence Kanter also substantially accepted that suggestion, adding to the group the Saint Peter formerly in the Feigen collection in New York (recently the painting has passed into the Moretti collection in Florence). This latter hypothesis, though well argued, does not entirely convince; the Saint Peter, which is also iconographically inconsistent with the figures of patriarchs, could be a slightly later work than the four panels in New York, which seem to me datable to c. 1410 or shortly after. See Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 151–153; and Laurence B. Kanter, in *Lorenzo Monaco: Dalla tradizione giottesca al Rinascimento*, eds. Angelo Tartuferi and

Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2006), 186–190.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a single-member panel with vertical grain; the wood was lined with fabric below the white gesso ground. Red bole preparation was applied to the areas to be gilded. The original frame is lost, and the panel has been trimmed along all the edges, though the presence of a barbe around its entire profile indicates that the image remains intact. Stephen Pichetto treated the painting between 1940 and 1941, at which time the panel was thinned and cradled.[1] The flesh is painted over a green underpainting. Initially the artist painted the blue veil to cover Mary's forehead, but later he changed his design to allow her red-gold hair to reappear beneath her cloak. The pale blue of the veil is still visible where her hair is parted. The halos, panel border, and cushion were decorated with incised and punched designs. Mordant gilding was used to create the gold designs on the clothing and the inscription.

The painting has suffered from neglect and also from deliberate vandalism: deep vertical gouges are present in the figure of Christ and in the face of the Virgin. In addition, many of the pigments have faded.[2] In 1905, it was reported to be much darkened by dust and opacified varnishes. This state is probably shown by a Giraudon photograph revealing the paint film worn and much darkened, with small, scattered paint losses and scratches both in the figures and in the gold ground. A reproduction published in 1909 likely illustrates an undocumented treatment that took place in the meantime.[3] After Pichetto's 1940–1941 treatment, the painting was treated again in 1956 by Mario Modestini.[4] Inpainting is especially heavy in the faces of the Madonna and child, as well as in the green pavement.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:274. Stephen Pichetto also might have trimmed the edges at this time.
- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting using FORS spectral analysis, x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), reflectance spectroscopy, luminescence spectroscopy, and infrared reflectography at

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0.4 to 2.5 microns. Infrared reflectography was performed using a Santa Barbara Focalplane SBF187 InSb camera with H, J, and K astronomy filters and a Sony XC77 Si-CCD camera (see report dated October 27, 2010, in NGA conservation files).

- [3] In describing the painting, Osvald Sirén noted that “die Farbenstimmung dürfte dadurch gelitten haben, dass das Bild bis zum Herbst 1904 mit einer verhärteten Schicht von Schmutz und Firnis bedeckt gewesen ist” (the appearance of the color suffered because until the autumn of 1904 it was covered with a hardened layer of dirt and varnish). Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco* (Strasbourg, 1905), 89. This is the situation apparently shown by the Giraudon photo no. 6491.
- [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:274, reported that Mario Modestini cleaned, restored, and varnished it.
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## PROVENANCE

Masson collection, Amiens, by 1904.[1] (Édouard Larcade, Paris), by 1927. (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence), by 1938;[2] sold September 1939 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[3] gift 1943 to NGA. [1] Osvald Sirén, *Don Lorenzo Monaco*, Strasbourg, 1905: 88-89. [2] Raimond van Marle (*The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols., The Hague, 1923-1938: 9[1927]: 162) notes that at that time the painting was no longer in the Masson collection. A manuscript annotation on a photo of the painting in the archives of the Biblioteca Berenson at I Tatti, Florence, dated 30 November 1927, states it then belonged to E. Larcade, Paris. Expertises by Giuseppe Fiocco and Wilhelm Suida written in English (apparently for Contini-Bonacossi in expectation of the sale to Samuel H. Kress; copies in NGA curatorial files) are dated May 1938. George Pudelko (“The stylistic development of Lorenzo Monaco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 73 [1938]: 237-248 and 74 [1939]: 76-81) describes the painting as belonging to Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi. [3] The painting was included on a bill of sale between the Kress Foundation and Contini-Bonacossi dated 1 September 1939, where it is described as “formerly in the Musée Masson, Amiens and in the Larcade Collection, Saint Germain” (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1900 Possibly Musée du Louvre, Paris, early 1900s.[1]

2006 Lorenzo Monaco (1370-1425), Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, 2006, unnumbered catalogue.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY NOTES

[1] Adolphe Giraudon's photograph (Giraudon number 6491) is annotated with the information that the painting was in the Musée du Louvre, Paris; perhaps it was temporarily exhibited there.

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# Margaritone d'Arezzo

Also known as

Margaritone di Magnano

Margarito di Magnano

Italian, active second and third quarter 13th century

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The earliest painter from Arezzo to be known by name and whose works have survived was celebrated by Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574), who came from the same city and who dedicated a biography to him. He called the artist by the augmentative “Margaritone” and, underlining his fame among the other artists of his time, stated that he was not only a painter but also a sculptor and architect.[1] Evidence to substantiate Margaritone’s activity in these latter fields is, however, lacking. The only contemporary document known to us that mentions him was dated 1262 and called him “Margarito” and specified his profession as painter.[2] This profession is confirmed by several panel paintings bearing his signature. Only one of these, *Madonna and Child Enthroned and Four Stories of the Virgin* in the church of Santa Maria delle Vertighe at Monte San Savino, contains a date, now fragmentary and variously read as 1269, 1274, and 1283. Vasari himself asserted, in the first edition of his *Vite*, that the artist died in 1316 (an undoubtedly erroneous date). For these reasons, Margaritone has often been characterized as a provincial and *retardataire* painter.

As for the chronology of his works, many uncertainties still remain. His paintings are mostly dated to years close to 1262, even though some art historians, following the intuition of Roberto Longhi (1974),[3] are of the view that the stylistic features of various works included in Margaritone’s oeuvre suggest dates of execution preceding the mid-thirteenth century. According to an apparently trustworthy tradition, one of the paintings signed by the painter, the *Madonna* from the church of Santa Maria at Montelungo (Terranova Bracciolini, Arezzo), now in the Museo Statale at Arezzo, was painted in 1250.[4] Indeed, Margaritone’s paintings especially reveal stylistic affinities with the works of such painters as the Florentine Bigallo Master, the Lucchese Bonaventura Berlinghieri, or the Umbrian Petrus, all of them active just before or just after the mid-thirteenth century.[5] They were exponents of a figural style that defined the robust forms of the figures with a

pronounced contour line and in general showed little interest in effects of volumetric relief. Only in the concluding phase of his career did Margaritone respond to the more complex figurative language of the workshop of Simeone and Machilone of Spoleto, in the search for expressive liveliness and more pronounced dynamism of narrative. During this period, the artist would establish a partnership with the painter, miniaturist, and sculptor Ristoro, with whom he signed, probably in the early 1260s, the altarpiece of Monte San Savino, generally considered the latest of his surviving works.[6]

[1] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence, 1966–1987), 2(1967):305. Apart from various pieces of information that have been shown to be erroneous, the Aretine historian maintained that the artist died at the age of seventy-seven. Therefore, if, as Vasari maintained, he died in 1316, his date of birth would have fallen in 1239.

[2] Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878–1885), 1(1878):359 n. 1.

[3] See Anna Maria Maetzke, in *Arte nell'Aretino: Recupero e restauri dal 1968 al 1974*, ed. Lionello G. Boccia et al. (Florence, 1974), 15.

[4] Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento (1948),” in *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi*, 14 vols. (Florence, 1961–1984), 7(1974):34, considered Margaritone the “evocatore di un'antichissima corrente copto-siriaca” (evocator of an ancient Coptic-Syriac current), a hypothesis that seems scarcely credible today. On the other hand, he rightly pointed out “suo evidente rapporto con una corrente di arte fiorentina cui appartengono taluni maestri della metà del secolo, in primis il Maestro del Bigallo” (his evident relationship with a current of Florentine art to which certain midcentury masters belonged, primarily the Maestro del Bigallo). On the chronology of the painter, see also Ada Labriola, “Ricerche su Margarito e Ristoro d'Arezzo,” *Arte cristiana* 75 (1987): 145–160.

[5] On the Bigallo Master, see Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 89–95. On Bonaventura Berlinghieri, see Boskovits, *Origins*, 73–74; Paolo Roberto Novello, “Berlinghieri, Bonaventura,” in *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, ed. Günter Meißner, 87 vols. (Munich, 1992–2015), 9(1994):467–468. On Petrus, see Filippo

Todini, *La pittura umbra dal Duecento al primo Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1989), 1:282; Boskovits, *Origins*, 72.

[6] See Anna Maria Maetzke, "Nuove ricerche su Margarito d'Arezzo," *Bollettino d'arte* 58 (1973): 102–105. The miniatures of the manuscript entitled *La composizione del mondo colle sue cascioni*, ed. Alberto Morino, (Florence, 1976), probably should also be attributed to the same painter; cf. also Antonio Caleca, "Restoro d'Arezzo: Le idee di un artista, 1282," *Critica d'arte* 50, no. 5 (1985): 42–44.

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Margaritone d'Arezzo

Italian, active second and third quarter 13th century

## *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints*

c. 1240/1245

tempera on panel

overall: 97.3 × 49.9 × 1.3 cm (38 5/16 × 19 5/8 × 1/2 in.)

height (main panel, without extension for head and halo): 73.6 cm (29 in.)

top section (extension for head and halo): 26.5 × 23.5 cm (10 7/16 × 9 1/4 in.)

framed: 102.2 × 55.9 × 5.7 cm (40 1/4 × 22 × 2 1/4 in.)

Inscription: across the bottom: MARGARIT[VS DE AREZZO] ME FECIT (Margaritus of Arezzo made me) [1]

[1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the signature using cross-sections and found a layer containing lead white between the gesso and the paint. This layer was not present in cross-sections taken from the main body of the painting. In addition, there were numerous layers of paint in each signature cross-section. This indicates that the signature has been repainted several times. It is unclear whether there was originally a signature in this area, as is found in almost all of Margarito's paintings that have come down to us. If there was, the current inscription may not bear any resemblance to it (see report dated April 24, 2007, in NGA conservation files). Alessio Monciatti's comparative paleographical analysis (2010), however, showed the inscription very similar to those existing on the artist's other paintings. See Alessio Monciatti, "Margarito, l'artista e il mito," in *Arte in terra d'Arezzo: Il Medioevo*, edited by Marco Collareta and Paola Refice, Florence, 2010: 213-224.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.12

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### ENTRY

The Madonna is portrayed in a rigidly frontal position, seated on a throne without any backrest and of a shape similar to those that mainly appear in paintings of the first half of the thirteenth century.[1] She holds the child in front of her, in a similarly

frontal position. The Christ child lifts his right hand in the gesture of blessing and holds a scroll in his left, alluding to the Christian revelation. The iconography, of Byzantine origin, is known as the Virgin *Nikopoios* (Victory Maker). It frequently appears in the apsidal decoration of churches of the middle Byzantine period and was widespread also in panels in central Italy between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[2] In such paintings it was typical to present Mary, as in the image here, with the haloed head projecting upwards from the upper margin of the rectangular panel.[3] It was also usual practice to paint golden stars on the *maphorion* or mantle covering her two shoulders, and often on the veil covering her head, alluding to the popular etymology of her name.[4] The crown, on the other hand, alludes to the Marian attribute of *regina coeli*; it is of a particular form and decoration that often appears in the paintings by Margaritone.[5]

In representations of similar type, the figures of saints, if present at all, always appear, as they do here, on a scale considerably smaller than that of the Virgin and child; they hover against the gold ground to the sides of the central image.[6] They have been variously identified, but it is probable that the elderly monk in the black habit and with a book in his hand represents Saint Benedict, and that the two female saints holding lamps in their hands represent the martyrs Flora and Lucilla, whose mortal remains are venerated in the abbey dedicated to them in Arezzo. As for the youthful beardless saint facing Saint Benedict, we can do no more than conjecture: he could be the disciple preferred by Jesus, Saint John the Evangelist, as is usually suggested, but he could also be Eugenius, companion in martyrdom of the two female saints below.[7]

It is a measure of the change in taste over the last two centuries that the panel, to which Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle and James Archer Crowe in 1886 conceded only that it is “one of the least ugly paintings left by this painter,” was hailed by Robert Lehman forty years later (1928) as “a supreme achievement of the art of the pre-giottesque period.”[8] It was, remarked Lehman, a work in which the painter “has contributed overwhelming force and grandeur to the quiet dignity and symmetry of the Byzantine tradition,” while Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951) in the relevant entry of their *Enciclopedia*, placed it among Margaritone’s “opere più belle” (most beautiful works).[9] As for the authorship of the work, without doubting the authenticity of the signature, some art historians have suggested that it could be a workshop variant, hence not a fully autograph painting.[10] The date of execution is mainly placed between 1250 and 1270, though occasionally pushed back to c. 1235/1245.[11] Such considerable variations

in date are uncommon even in the study of thirteenth-century painting. To throw light on the question, let us first try to establish the relative chronology of the various versions of the Madonna painted by Margaritone and attempt on this basis to arrive at the dating of the individual works.

The stylistic affinities among the Madonna Enthroned from Montelungo (now in the Museum in Arezzo), that of the National Gallery in London, and the panel discussed here have often been emphasized. These versions are sharply differentiated from a fourth representation of the theme [fig. 1], the one painted for the church of Santa Maria delle Vertighe outside Monte San Savino (near Arezzo). There, not only is the child shown in three-quarter profile, but the chrysography of his garment also is used in a different way: it serves not just to embellish the figure but also to emphasize the volumetric substance of the forms. The chiaroscuro modeling of the faces also suggests that, at the time of the execution of the Santa Maria delle Vertighe panel, Margaritone was familiar with and tried to emulate certain innovative features of Byzantine neo-Hellenism disseminated in Tuscany by Giunta Pisano and other masters closely related to him around the mid-thirteenth century.[12] The same Madonna is also differentiated from Margaritone's other versions of the theme by the less elongated forms of the bodies and faces and the treatment of the drapery, which, instead of appearing as a kind of decorative pattern applied over the flattened forms, envelops the bodies, allowing us to glimpse the brilliant red of the lining of the Virgin's mantle and even the shape of her throne. Moreover, in the Madonna of Monte San Savino, Margaritone abandons the archaic device of the seat as a compact block and presents us instead with a throne of more slender and more fanciful form, with the seat supported by figures of lions.[13]

There can be little doubt, therefore, that the Madonna from Monte San Savino should be several years later in date than the others, and that they in turn are close to one another, not only in pictorial idiom but probably also in date of execution. Nonetheless, some differences can be observed among the three similar versions of the Virgin *Nikopoios* painted by Margaritone. The Madonna in London presents the protagonist with more robust forms than the others, and here too Mary is seated on a throne supported by lions. She is wearing a vermilion red dress, in contrast to the deep violet, perhaps intended to imitate imperial purple,[14] in the panels in Arezzo and Washington. The diversity of the figures of the angels that flank Mary in the panels in London and Arezzo should also be noted: in the latter, the angel in the upper left, despite his similar pose, seems more static, and his

forms are rendered in more summary form than in the other. I believe, in conclusion, there are grounds for deducing that the London altarpiece is more advanced in style though chronologically closer to the other two than to the panel from Monte San Savino.

Though they resemble each other closely, some differences can be observed between the paintings in Arezzo and Washington. The oval face of the Madonna [fig. 2] is more elongated in the version in the National Gallery of Art, and the tiny figures of the lateral saints seem more rigid and the drawing of their forms more summary. In the Madonna now in Washington, moreover, there are as yet no signs of the attempts detectable in the panel in Arezzo to represent spatial depth by emphasizing the forward projection of the Virgin's knees; he does this by the expediency of flanking areas in full light with those in shadow. In the panel discussed here the artist makes no such attempt: he essentially limits himself to the use of linear means to indicate the drapery folds. This suggests that it belongs to an earlier phase in Margarito's career.

How can these observations be reconciled with our current knowledge of the development of Tuscan painting in the thirteenth century and with the very few dates known to us on the activity of the Aretine master? The fragmentary date of the Monte San Savino panel, which in its present state can only be read as "M.C.C.L[...],III,"[15] has been conjecturally integrated as 1269, 1274, and 1283. The reminiscences of the manner of Giunta Pisano detectable in the painting, and the circumstance that the Pisan master, already famed in 1236, is documented only down to 1254,[16] suggest, however, that preference be given to the date 1269. This preference becomes even more compelling if we think of the activity in Arezzo, during the seventh decade, of artists of far more advanced style than that evinced by Margaritone and Ristoro d'Arezzo.[17] As for the dating transmitted by a seventeenth-century inscription (1250) for the Madonna from Montelungo, even if it cannot be considered as certain it seems plausible, since it would place the execution of the panel at a sufficiently wide interval from the image of Monte San Savino. Whatever the case, the analysis of the style suggests that the Washington Madonna dates to a phase preceding the panel from Montelungo. The type of the image itself as well as the stylistic data underline its kinship with works by the Sienese Master of Tressa, datable to the third decade of the century,[18] and the Florentine Bigallo Master, whose comparable panels probably date to the years around 1230–1240.[19] Both in his parsimonious use of shadow zones in the modeling and in his choice of the type of throne for the scene of Christ Sitting in

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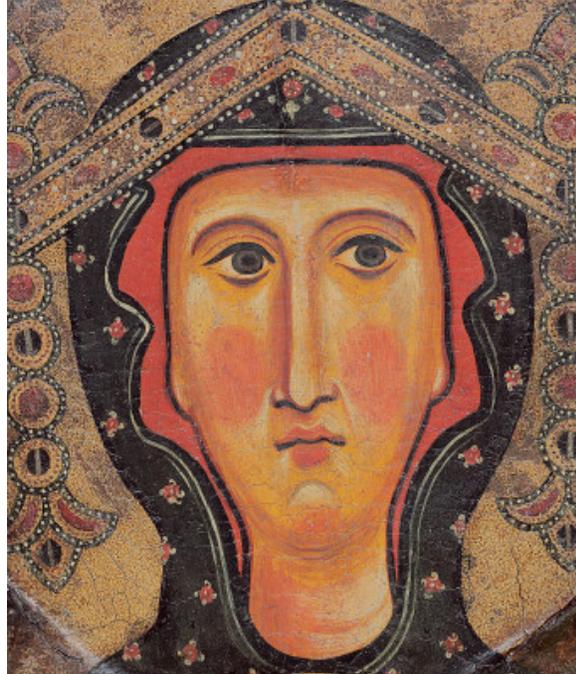
Judgment, the painter of archaizing tendency who frescoed the cycle of the chapel of San Silvestro in the monastery of the Santi Quattro Coronati in Rome in 1246 [20] would seem to indicate a slightly more advanced stage in stylistic development. Therefore, based on the evidence both of historical context and of a plausible reconstruction of the internal development of Margaritone's style, it would seem that the Madonna in the Gallery probably was executed at a date close to or not long after 1240.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Margaritone and Ristoro d'Arezzo, *Madonna and Child Enthroned and Four Stories of the Virgin*, 1260s, tempera on panel, Santa Maria delle Vertighe, Monte San Savino (Arezzo). Image courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici e Paesaggistici e per il Patrimonio Storico, Artistico ed Etnoantropologico per la provincia di Arezzo



**fig. 2** Detail of Madonna, Margaritone d'Arezzo, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints*, c. 1240/1245, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] In his study on the typology of thrones, James H. Stubblebine classified the one represented in Margaritone's panel in his first group, that of thrones without backrest, essentially flat and consisting "of a series of alternately projecting and receding bands decorated with abstract designs." This form generally appears in paintings datable within or not much later than the mid-thirteenth century, yet Stubblebine believed that the painting (in his view executed in the third quarter of the century) could also be placed in it, because of the archaizing tendencies of its master, in his view "sufficiently removed from a vital, creative center, to miss most of the progressive trends" of the art of his time. See James H. Stubblebine, "The Development of the Throne in Dugento Tuscan Painting," *Marsyas* 7 (1954–1957): 26. But, apart from the consideration that Arezzo in the thirteenth century could

justly be considered a very lively cultural center (cf. Wieruszowski 1953; repro. in Wieruszowski 1971), the thrones of the versions of the Madonna now respectively in Arezzo and Washington are very similar to those reproduced in such works as the so-called *Madonna dagli occhi grossi* in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena, datable to the second decade (cf. Butzek 2001), or the *Pala di San Zanobi* in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence, executed within the 1220s (cf. Boskovits 1993). See Helene Wieruszowski, "Arezzo as a Center of Learning and Letters in the Thirteenth Century," *Traditio* 9 (1953): 321–391; Helene Wieruszowski, *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy*, Storia e letteratura (Rome, 1971), 387–474; Monica Butzek, "Per la storia delle due Madonne delle Grazie nel Duomo di Siena," *Prospettiva* 103–104 (2001): 97–109; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 89–95. The difference between the thrones of these earlier images and that painted by Margaritone consists merely in the slight bending upwards of the upper section of the throne, a device that should probably be understood as an attempt at foreshortening and hence a vague allusion to the three-dimensionality of the throne's seat. By contrast, works securely dated after the midcentury, such as Coppo di Marcovaldo's Madonna of 1261 in the church of the Servi in Siena, or that attributed both to Dietisalvi di Speme and to Guido da Siena in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, executed one year later, present thrones supported by massive legs formed of the superimposition of elements of geometric form and others imitating plant motifs. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 510–523; and Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 22–23. The same features are also found in other images datable to the same years, such as the mosaic Madonna in the *scarsella* (chancel) of the Baptistery of Florence or Meliore's Pala at Panzano. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 2, *The Mosaics of the Baptistery of Florence* (Florence, 2007), 224–240; and Boskovits, *Corpus*, sec. 1, vol. 1, 631–641. Whatever value one wants to attribute to this evidence, the form of a throne similar to the one described in the panel now in the National Gallery of Art strongly suggests a date not much later than the mid-thirteenth century.

- [2] Cf. Olenka Z. Pevny, in *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843–1261*, ed. Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom (New York, 1997), 140–141.
- [3] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 89–95, listed no fewer than thirty examples of this type of image, a number certainly lower than that of the paintings of this kind now

known. Significantly, the panels now cited in this category are all, with the exception of seven, Tuscan in origin. Garrison's datings now seem too late. There are good grounds for assuming that the great majority of the panels in question date roughly to the years between the second half of the twelfth and approximately the mid-thirteenth century.

- [4] Cf. Carlo Cecchelli, *Mater Christi*, 4 vols., Oriente e Occidente (Rome, 1946), 1:158–159. The popularity of this attribute probably derives at least in part from the well-known Marian hymn “Ave maris stella”; see Hermann Adalbert Daniel, *Thesaurus hymnologicus sive Hymnorum, canticorum, sequentiarum circa annum MD usitatarum collectio amplissima* (Halis, 1841), 204–206.
- [5] The image of Mary as queen was familiar and widespread in Roman art since the sixth century. The iconography of the *regina coeli* was used ever more frequently in the early medieval period; cf. Gerard A. Wellen, “Das Marienbild der frühchr. Kunst,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1971), 3:158. In this case, too, hymns like the “Salve Regina” undoubtedly contributed to the dissemination of representations of Mary with the crown on her head. See Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, “Salve regina,” in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris, 1950), 15-1:714–724; on the images, see Marion Lawrence, “Maria Regina,” *The Art Bulletin* 7 (1925): 150–161. In an article on the subject, Sonia Chiodo observed that the peculiar type of crown present in Margaritone's versions of the Madonna corresponds to the imperial type that also appears in some seals of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. She attributed a possible political significance to the use of the motif and linked its appearance with the period of Guglielmino degli Ubertini (1248–1289) as bishop of Arezzo. Guglielmino was an ardent supporter of the pro-papal Guelph party in the investiture controversy. See Sonia Chiodo, “Maria regina nelle opere di Margarito d'Arezzo,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 598–603.
- [6] As in some panels of the Bigallo Master in the Villa la Quiete near Florence and in the Museum at Certaldo. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence 1993), 312–315, 350–352; Rosanna Caterina Proto Pisani, ed., *Il Museo di Arte Sacra a Certaldo* (Bagno a Ripoli 2001), 28. The same arrangement of disembodied saints hovering to the sides of the central image is also found, however, in a few other paintings dating as late as the second half of the century.
- [7] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *Geschichte der italienischen Malerei*, ed. *Deutsche Original-Ausgabe*, 6 vols. (Leipzig, 1869–1876), 1:156, and later editions, thought that the saints in question were Bruno and Benedict above and two Cistercian monks below. Lionello

Venturi, *Pittura italiana in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 7 and later edition, accepted the identity of Saint Benedict in the black-habited figure in the upper right but identified the figure facing him on the left side as Saint John the Evangelist and the two female saints in the lower order as Mary Magdalene and Martha. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 49, conjecturally proposed John the Evangelist for the saint in the upper left and referred to the two female saints in the lower row as two martyr saints. Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 3–13, *passim*, identified the upper saints as John and Benedict and conjectured that the female figures in the lower row were two of the wise Virgins (cf. 25 Mt:1–13). The pointed cowl of the saint in the upper right might make one think of Saint Francis. On the other hand, the wide sleeves of the saint’s habit and the fact that he is not wearing the cord around his habit that Franciscans used as a belt suggests that he is a Benedictine monk, probably the founder of the Benedictine order. As for the saint facing him on the opposite side, there are no attributes or other features that might help to identify him, other than his youth. Given that the panel is by a painter from Arezzo, the two women with the lamps in their hands and wearing the crown of martyrdom can be identified as Saints Flora and Lucilla, much venerated in that city and its area. They are also represented with the same attributes and with the crown on their head in the panel by Margaritone and Ristoro at Monte San Savino and in a Quattrocento dossal still preserved—though now in fragmentary state—in the church in Arezzo dedicated to the two female saints; cf. Anna Maria Maetzke, in *Arte nell’Aretino: Recupero e restauri dal 1968 al 1974*, ed. Lionello G. Boccia et al. (Florence, 1974), 25; and George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 641–642. Their presence would perhaps permit the hypothesis that the young saint not clearly identifiable could be Eugenius, on whom see Giuseppe Palazzini, “Lucilla, Flora, Eugenio e compagni,” in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1967), 8:275–276.

- [8] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *Storia della pittura in Italia dal secolo II al secolo XVI*, 11 vols. (Florence, 1886–1908), 1:291; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 1.
- [9] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 1; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 2:1661.
- [10] According to Anna Maria Maetzke, the panel in the National Gallery of Art “potrebbe essere solo una derivazione di bottega,” i.e., a workshop product derived from the prototype represented by the Madonna of Montelungo now in the Museo Statale d’Arte Medievale e Moderna, Arezzo. See Maetzke, in *Arte nell’Aretino: Recupero e restauri dal 1968 al 1974*, ed.

Lionello G. Boccia et al. (Florence, 1974), 16. Subsequently, Hanna Kiel called the Madonna in Washington a weak variant of that of Montelungo, while Stefania Ricci classified it, albeit conjecturally, as a product of Margarito's shop. Cf. Hanna Kiel, "Review of Arte nell'Aretino, recuperi e restauri dal 1968 al 1974," *Pantheon* 33 (1975): 174–175; Stefania Ricci, "Margarito d'Arezzo," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:634.

[11] Edward Garrison (1949), the first to tackle the problem of dating, proposed a date of c. 1270, followed by NGA (1965), Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), and NGA (1985); Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti (1955, 1969) suggested 1260, and Anna Maria Maetzke (1974), c. 1250. In a later moment, Shapley too (1979) preferred an earlier dating, 1250–1270, while Ada Labriola (1987) indicated c. 1240 as the most probable date. Miklós Boskovits (1993) pushed back the date even further and proposed the years between the fourth and fifth decade of the century. John Richardson (1996), for his part, restated the later dating, between 1265 and 1275. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 94; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 83; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 3; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 250; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, *Pittura del Duecento a Firenze* (Florence, 1955), 35; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, ed., *L'Arte in Italia*, vol. 3, *Dal secolo XII al secolo XIII* (Rome, 1969), 942; Anna Maria Maetzke, in *Arte nell'Aretino: Recuperi e restauri dal 1968 al 1974*, ed. Lionello G. Boccia et al. (Florence, 1974), 16; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:301; Ada Labriola, "Ricerche su Margarito e Ristoro d'Arezzo," *Arte cristiana* 75 (1987): 148; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 73 n. 145; John Richardson, "Margarito d'Arezzo," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 20:407.

[12] I refer to Giunta's style in his phase of full maturity, when the painter strongly felt the classicizing tendencies of Byzantine painting. Another Tuscan painting realized shortly after the mid-thirteenth century, in which the influence of Byzantine neo-Hellenism is strongly felt and which is often considered an isolated expression of the byzantinizing tendency in Siennese art, is the *Pala del Battista*, no. 14 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena. Cf. Angelo Tartuferi, *Giunta Pisano* (Soncino, 1991), 23–24; Miklós Boskovits, "Sulle tracce di un grande pittore toscano di metà Duecento," *Arte cristiana* 98 (2010): 241–252.

[13] The lion supports allude, of course, to the throne of King Solomon, with "stays [arm rests] on each side of the sitting place, and two lions standing by

the stays” (2 Chron 9:18). From the point of view of the typological development of the throne, this type is a more fanciful variant of the kind that appeared around the midcentury, which is no longer a compact form but supported by legs (cf. note 1 above).

- [14] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint in the Madonna’s robe of the Gallery painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). The analysis indicated that dye-based pigments such as red lake and indigo probably were used in this area (see report dated July 27, 2006, in NGA conservation files).
- [15] The date has recently been interpreted as “M.CCL[...]III” by Grazia Maria Fachechi, “Margarito (Margaritone) d’Arezzo,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 82 vols. (Rome, 2008), 70:108.
- [16] In 1236, Giunta signed the now lost painted crucifix in the church of San Francesco at Assisi, and in August 1254 was among those who swore an oath of fidelity to the archbishop of Pisa; cf. Angelo Tartuferi, Giunta Pisano (Soncino, 1991), 9–10. A recently discovered document of 1265 speaks of a piece of land belonging to the artist; this might imply, but cannot prove, that he was still alive at the time. Cf. Miria Fanucci Lovitch, *Artisti attivi a Pisa fra XIII e XVIII secolo* (Pisa, 1991), 161.
- [17] The painted crucifix attributable to the Master of Santa Chiara (or Master of Donna Benedetta) in the church of San Francesco at Arezzo, and that of Cimabue in the church of San Domenico in the same city, probably date to the 1260s or shortly thereafter. Cf. Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:382; Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 39–44.
- [18] Luciano Bellosi and more recent studies placed the now known oeuvre of the anonymous master between the second and fifth decades of the thirteenth century. See Luciano Bellosi, in *Collezione Chigi–Saracini: Sassetta e i pittori toscani tra XIII e XV secolo*, ed. Luciano Bellosi and Alessandro Angelini (Siena, 1986), 11–15; and Silvia Colucci, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 35–43.
- [19] See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 312–316.
- [20] For these frescoes, see Antonio Iacobini, “La pittura e le arti sontuarie: Da Innocenzo III a Innocenzo IV (1198–1254),” in *Roma nel Duecento: L’arte nella città dei papi da Innocenzo III a Bonifacio VIII*, ed. Angiola Maria Romanini (Turin, 1991), 237–403. As far as can be deduced from comparison with his paintings of a previous decade in Anagni Cathedral, the master who frescoed the chapel of San Silvestro in 1246 could not have been young at

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that time. His identification with the so-called Maestro ornatista of Anagni still remains a topic of discussion, but the stylistic relationship of those mural cycles is generally recognized. See Enrico Parlato and Serena Romano, *Roma e Lazio: Il Romanico* (Milan, 2001), 131.

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### **TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

The wooden support is formed of two panels: a larger rectangular one, made from at least two planks of vertical grain, and a smaller, roughly circular panel for the Virgin's halo. The halo extension has a point where it attaches to the main panel. The reverse of the main panel is reinforced with a cradle. A vertical crack runs through the center of the halo extension, which was excavated to a concave shape. Another long crack passes vertically through the entire main panel. Woodworm tunneling can be seen at its edges and on its reverse. The reverse of the panel is coated with a heavy layer of wax.

Before the execution of the painting, the panel was covered with a fabric interleaf and a thick layer of gesso. The Virgin's halo and the areas around the figure were covered by silver leaf, patinated to look like gold. It is unclear if the gilded areas were prepared with a bole. The child's halo was also probably silver gilt, but now no leaf remains.[1] The paint was applied rather thickly and smoothly.[2]

The silver leaf is heavily worn, and much of it appears to have been scraped away, revealing the ground. The leaf that remains has tarnished. The paint has suffered losses at the bottom and top edges, especially in the areas around the corners of the main panel. Paint losses also occur in the Virgin's face, mostly along the crack, but also in her left cheek and above her left eye. The crown of the Virgin and the contours of the part of the mantle covering her head have been reinforced. There also is inpainting (especially in the feet and heads) in the small figures of saints at the sides of the central group. An old, undated photo shows the panel inserted in a heavy, probably nineteenth-century frame whose shape followed the contours of the panel; a reproduction published in 1928 illustrates an apparently different frame. The only recorded restoration treatment ("slight cleaning and restoration") is the one that Stephen Pichetto performed in 1944.[3]

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting with x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and silver was identified in the background, the Madonna's halo, and the edges of Christ's halo (see report dated September 28, 2004, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the paint with x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Analysis did not show the presence of any red or blue pigments in the Madonna's purple robe, indicating that dye-based pigments probably were used. These pigments likely have faded, leading one to believe that the Madonna's robe was originally purple (see report dated July 27, 2006, in NGA conservation files).
- [3] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302. The photograph published by Robert Lehman shows the panel in a condition similar to its current state; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 1. Sometime earlier it must have already been treated. In fact, an old photograph shows the Madonna inserted in a heavy frame and with some small differences in the appearance of the painted surface. The most remarkable of these is that the cowl covering the head of Saint Benedict does not have the pointed top now visible.

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## PROVENANCE

Executed for the church of a Benedictine monastery in the area of Arezzo, possibly for the Badia delle Sante Flora e Lucilla near the city walls;<sup>[1]</sup> probably (art market, Rome); acquired by William Blundell Spence [1814–1900], Florence and London, by 1859;<sup>[2]</sup> Ralph Nicholson Wornum [1812–1877], London, by 1865.<sup>[3]</sup> Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers [1827–1900], Rushmore House and King John's House, Tollard Royal, Wiltshire, by 1894;<sup>[4]</sup> by descent to his grandson, George Henry Lane Fox Pitt-Rivers [1890–1966], Hinton St. Mary, Dorset, by 1926.<sup>[5]</sup> (Robert Langton Douglas [1864–1951], London); (Arthur Ruck, London);<sup>[6]</sup> sold to Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[7]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] This is suggested by the presence in the background of the painting of three saints identifiable as Benedict, Flora, and Lucilla. On the two latter saints and their cult, see Giuseppe Palazzini, "Lucilla, Flora, Eugenio e compagni," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 15 vols., Rome, 1961-2000: 8(1967):275-276. [2] On Spence, a painter, collector and dealer, see Donata Levi, "William Blundell Spence a Firenze," in *Studi e ricerche di collezionismo e*

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*museografia. Firenze 1820 – 1920*, Pisa, 1985: 85-149. On 27 July 1859, Spence offered for sale to Lord Lindsay three pictures he had received from Rome shortly before, stating that one of them was signed by Margarito. John Fleming ("Art Dealing in the Risorgimento II - III," *The Burlington Magazine* 121 (1979): 503 n. 62) plausibly identifies this otherwise undescribed painting with NGA 1952.5.12; see also Hugh Brigstocke, "Lord Lindsay as a collector," *Bullettin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 64, n° 2 (1982): 321 n. 4. Lord Lindsay did not buy the panel, which evidently remained for some time with Spence. [3] Wornum was Keeper of the National Gallery, London, from 1854 until his death. He lent the painting to an exhibition at the British Institution in 1865. [4] The names of Wornum and Pitt-Rivers are given by Oskar Wulff ("Zwei Tafelbilder des Duecento in Kaiser – Friederich – Museum," *Jahrbuch der Königlich preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 37 (1916): 92 n. 6) and by Robert Lehman (*The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York and Paris, 1928: no. 1). Lehman lists first the Pitt-Rivers collection and then that of Wornum. However, Wornum died in 1877, and, as Daniela Parenti kindly pointed out to Miklós Boskovits, it was only in 1880 that Augustus Henry Lane Fox assumed the surname Pitt-Rivers and took up residence at Rushmore. The painting is described in 1894 by Roach Le Schonix as the earliest European picture displayed by Pitt-Rivers in King John's House at Tollard Royal as part of "a valuable series of small original pictures illustrating the history of painting from the earliest times. . . ." ("Notes on Archaeology in Provincial Museums. No. XXXVII—The Museums at Farnham, Dorset, and at King John's House, Tollard Royal," *The Antiquary* 30 [July–December 1894]: 166–171). [5] The painting is described as among those seen on 19 June 1926, by staff members of Duveen Brothers, Inc. (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: Scouts Books--England, Things Seen, 1922-1935, reel 71, box 201, folder 1; kindly brought to the attention of NGA by an e-mail, 7 July 2004, from Maria Gilbert of the Project for the Study of Collecting and Provenance, Getty Research Institute, in NGA curatorial files). [6] Denys Sutton, "Robert Langton Douglas. Part III," *Apollo* CIX, no. 208 (June 1979): 459 (fig. 22), 468, provides the information that Douglas sold the painting to Ruck, but implies the sale took place before the 1920s, which is not correct (see note 5). [7] The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.12, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892–1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at The Metropolitan Museum of Art,

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New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's email of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1865 Pictures by Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, French, and English Masters, British Institution, London, 1865, no. 75, as *The Madonna and Child, enthroned with Saints Bruno and Benedict, and Two Cistercian Nuns as Wise Virgins*.

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 807.

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# Martino di Bartolomeo

Also known as

Martino di Bartolomeo di Biagio

Sieneese, active 1393/1434

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Sieneese painter and miniaturist, Martino probably was born around 1365 and must have been trained in his hometown, perhaps in the *bottega* of Jacopo di Mino del Pellicciaio. It is likely, too, that at the beginning of his career he was also in contact with a painter from Lucca, Angelo Puccinelli, who is known to have been working in Siena around 1380.[1] According to a document of 1393, Martino resided in Pisa in that year,[2] and he continued to dwell there until the early years of the new century. At the same time he was also working in Lucca, where he illuminated the choir-books of the cathedral in the mid-1390s.[3] The frescoes signed by the artist with stories of the Old Testament in the church of San Giovanni at Cascina (Pisa) date to 1398. In 1402, Martino produced a polyptych, commissioned from him together with Giovanni di Pietro, a painter from Naples, for the Pisan church of Santa Chiara. In the following year, another polyptych was signed by Martino alone, for the Spedale dei Trovatelli, the Pisan foundlings' hospital (both works are now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa). With their figures of ponderous physique who pose with solemn but rather wooden composure in clearly defined spaces, Martino's works during this period reveal that he was influenced by some artists then active in Lucca and Pisa, such as Spinello Aretino, Antonio Veneziano, and the Orvietan painter Piero di Puccio.

In 1405, Martino was once again back in his hometown, where he painted the now lost frescoes in the chapel of San Crescenzo in Siena Cathedral. He was also entrusted with other commissions of great prestige, such as the decoration of the ceilings of some rooms in the Palazzo Pubblico and perhaps also the laterals of a polyptych that still remain in the seat of Sieneese government. Another polyptych, now dismantled and dispersed, comes from Asciano; its central panel, a Madonna and Child bearing the date 1408, is now in a private collection, while the lateral saints are in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 120). Dating to a slightly later phase are the panels with stories of Saint Stephen in the Städelches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt, perhaps with a provenance from the Sieneese church of

Sant'Agostino,[4] and two additional dispersed polyptychs: the main panels of one are now in the Pinacoteca in Siena (no. 160), and those of the other are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.[5] Dating to 1425 is the great polyptych that originally adorned the altar of the butchers' guild in the church of Sant'Antonio Abate a Fontebranda, again in Siena; it too is dispersed among various museums and private collections.[6]

Working side by side with Taddeo di Bartolo after his return to Siena, at the time they were both decorating rooms in the Palazzo Pubblico, Martino developed a more graceful style and his compositions became more animated; they were enriched with observations taken from everyday life and lightened by a more fluid linear style. Yet in principle Martino preferred an imposing classicizing manner to the more ornamental complexities of the late-Gothic style that enchanted his colleagues of the younger generation. It would be this characteristic that would distinguish in an ever more decisive way his rather repetitive works in the final decades of his life. Still active in 1432, two years later the artist made his last will and testament. By April 1435, he was dead.

[1] On Angelo Puccinelli, cf. Andrea De Marchi, in *Sumptuosa tabula picta: Pittori a Lucca tra gotico e rinascimento*, ed. Maria Teresa Filieri (Livorno, 1998), 148–159; Stefan Weppelmann, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 226–229.

[2] See Miria Fanucci Lovitch, *Artisti attivi a Pisa fra xiii e xviii secolo* (Pisa, 1991), 205.

[3] See Ada Labriola, in *Sumptuosa tabula picta: Pittori a Lucca tra gotico e rinascimento*, ed. Maria Teresa Filieri (Livorno, 1998), 208–214.

[4] Rudolf Hiller von Gaertringen, "Seven Scenes of the Life of Saint Stephen by Martino di Bartolomeo in Frankfurt," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt (Washington, DC, 2002), 314–339.

[5] The Sienese polyptych, generally dated c. 1410, has been recognized as part of the same altarpiece to which belongs the predella now divided between the El Paso Museum of Art and the Johnson Collection in the Philadelphia Museum of Art; cf. Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 242–247. The four lateral panels of a polyptych, apparently with a provenance from Orvieto and now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, are presumably of similar date; see

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Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 33–35.

[6] See Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *Die Kirchen von Siena*, ed. Peter Anselm Riedl and Max Seidel, 3 vols. (Munich, 1985–2006), 1, pt. 1: 282–283; Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 95–101.

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Martino di Bartolomeo  
Sienese, active 1393/1434

## *Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot [right panel]*

c. 1415/1420

tempera on panel

painted surface: 93.4 × 44.13 cm (36 3/4 × 17 3/8 in.)

original panel: 102.87 × 44.13 × 4.13 cm (40 1/2 × 17 3/8 × 1 5/8 in.)

overall (with added wood strips): 107 × 53.98 × 4.13 cm (42 1/8 × 21 1/4 × 1 5/8 in.)

depth (indicates warp of the panel): 7.62 cm (3 in.)

Gift of Samuel L. Fuller 1950.11.1.c

### ENTRY

This panel was originally part of a triptych that also included *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major [left panel]* and *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*. The image of the Madonna and Child recalls the type of the *Glykophilousa* Virgin, the “affectionate Madonna.” She rests her cheek against that of the child, who embraces her. The motif of the child’s hand grasping the hem of the neckline of the Virgin’s dress seems, on the other hand, to allude to the theme of suckling.[1] The saints portrayed are easily identifiable by their attributes: Peter by the keys, as well as by his particular facial type; James Major, by his pilgrim’s staff; Anthony Abbot, by his hospitaller habit and T-shaped staff.[2] But the identity of the deacon martyr saint remains uncertain; he is usually identified as Saint Stephen, though without good reason, as he lacks that saint’s usual attributes. Perhaps the artist did not characterize him with a specific attribute because the triptych was destined for a church dedicated to him.[3]

F. Mason Perkins saw the three panels in a private collection in London in 1924 and then published them under the name of Martino di Bartolomeo, thus confirming the attribution formulated by the panels’ owner.[4] The proposal seemed convincing to various scholars but not to the authors of the catalogs of the National Gallery of

Art, who, for reasons difficult to explain, registered the attribution to Martino with a margin of doubt; Carol Montfort Molten (1996) also maintained that reservation.[5] Thus, after the publications of Perkins and Raimond van Marle (1924, 1934), only Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri (1972), Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), and Silvia Colucci (2005) have cited the triptych as a work by Martino.[6]

As for its date of execution, most of the opinions expressed on the matter have accepted van Marle's (1924) hypothesis.[7] He asserted that the triptych should date to c. 1400–1410, probably following the artist's period of activity in Pisa, which ended in 1405. Fern Rusk Shapley (1979), however, was of the view that if the triptych were indeed an autograph work by Martino, it ought to date earlier than 1403.[8] For her part, Monfort Molten (1996) placed the Gallery panels among the works of Martino di Bartolomeo postdating 1410.[9] She argued, however, that in the Gallery triptych "there is less affinity with the elegant and graceful qualities of the Saint Barnabas altarpiece,[10] or with the Palazzo Pubblico Triptych." [11] Therefore, this work represented, according to Molten, "something of an anomaly in Martino's work," and the circumstance would make probable, in her view, the intervention of a studio assistant.[12]

The doubts about Martino's authorship of the triptych have never been clearly explained, nor does the judgment of the ostensibly limited qualitative level of the Washington panels seem well founded. It may be admitted that Martino was not one of the leading masters active in Lucca, Pisa, and Siena between the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century. In particular, his frescoes in the oratory of San Giovanni Battista at Cascina, undoubtedly executed with the help of assistants but proudly signed as an autograph work and dated 1398,[13] propose very schematic compositions and evince signs of some haste in execution, testifying to a quality that cannot be said to be outstanding. The polyptych now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa, also signed by Martino and dated five years later,[14] is finer, but the forms of its robust figures, metallic in sheen and modeled with sharp chiaroscuro contrasts, seem rather far removed from the stylistic features of the triptych being discussed here. So the attempt to insert the Washington panels in Martino's Pisan phase cannot be found convincing. In those years, Martino seems especially to have based his severe forms on models derived from such masters as Antonio Veneziano and Piero di Puccio. His paintings are filled with figures whose draperies seem starched and whose human grandeur is mainly expressed by physical bulk.

The artist's style changed after his return to Siena and after his frescoes in the Sala di Balla at the Palazzo Pubblico (1404–1407) in that city.[15] In the polyptych dated 1408 now divided between the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and a private collection,[16] the painter shows he has resumed contact with the Sienese figurative tradition and especially with Taddeo di Bartolo (who also was involved in the pictorial decoration of the Palazzo Pubblico). Martino's style now becomes more graceful and more animated. He seeks greater verisimilitude in softer complexions and in the silky fluency of hair and beards, and tries to imbue his figures with greater vitality through more complex and articulated movements. Martino also must have been struck by the imaginative pictorial narratives of Bartolo di Fredi, by now fully attuned to the late Gothic style, and possibly he attempted to keep abreast of the figurative language of some painters in the younger generation.

This must, however, have been a relatively brief phase. In paintings that can be dated to his last decades of life, Martino, without forgetting the experiences of the years between roughly 1405 and 1415, and without wholly rejecting the models proposed by Taddeo di Bartolo (with whom he fell out; indeed, Martino was fined in 1412 for slandering him),[17] seems to return to the ideals he had pursued in his earliest works, abandoning complex poses and simplifying the more animated profiles of his characters. His paintings are once again populated by solemn personages of massive physique, even though he now uses a soft and *sfumato* chiaroscuro to model their forms and makes some attempt to express the emotions that animate them. These developments are particularly evident in the four busts of the Evangelists [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4], recently (and rightly) proposed as components of the dispersed polyptych from the Sienese church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fontebranda, formerly signed by the artist and dated 1425,[18] but similar aspects seem to be detectable in the Gallery panels [fig. 5]. The delicate modeling of the flesh parts, the vivacity and tension of the facial expressions, the vigor with which the powerful hands clasp the objects they hold, and the clear-cut definition of the contours of the bodies suggest for these panels a date of execution perhaps slightly earlier than the polyptych of 1425, approximately in the years 1415–1420. They are the products, I believe, of the same phase in which Benedetto di Bindo and Gregorio di Cecco, exponents of the younger generation, were the culturally most advanced painters on the Sienese artistic scene,[19] and in which the very youthful Stefano di Giovanni (known as Sassetta (Sienese, probably 1392 - 1450)) was about to express a full-fledged Renaissance figurative style.



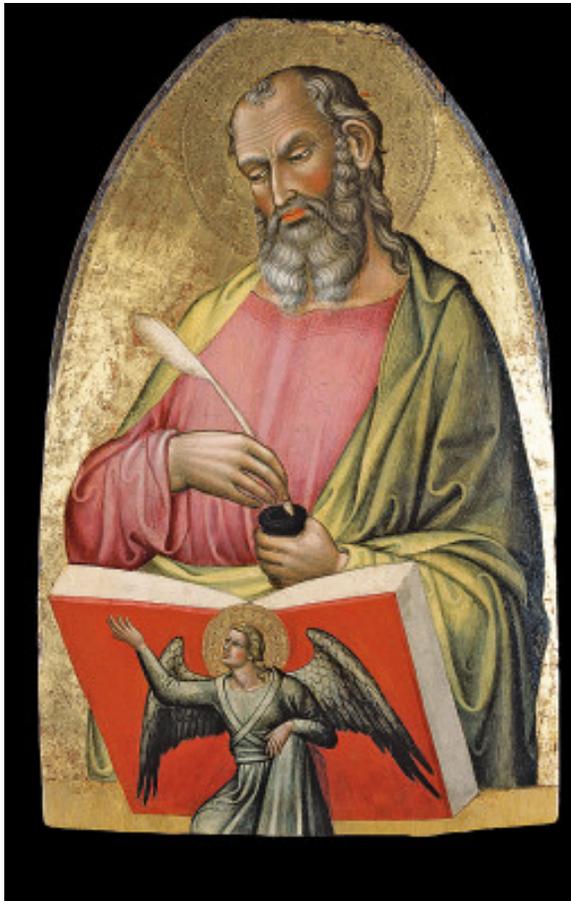
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Mark*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 2** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint John the Evangelist*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 3** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Matthew*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 4** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Luke*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major*, c. 1415/1420, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Samuel L. Fuller

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**NOTES**

- [1] The post-Byzantine term of *Glykophilousa* Virgin is used in the art historical literature to indicate a subtype of a wider iconographic group known under the name of *Eleousa* (compassionate) Virgin, in which the theme of affection

between mother and son is predominant. Cf. Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel,” 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:17–114; also Nancy Ševenko Patterson, “Virgin eleousa,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Aleksandr Petrovich Kazhdan (New York, 1991), 3:2171. For the gesture of the child as allusion to suckling, cf. Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 146–148.

- [2] See George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 800, 508, 61–64, respectively.
- [3] The dalmatic worn by the youthful saint indicates merely that he was a deacon, while the palm branch in his hand is the symbol of martyrdom; he therefore represents a martyr deacon saint, not necessarily Stephen or Vincent, with whom F. Mason Perkins attempted to identify him. F. Mason Perkins, “Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 18 (1924): 12.
- [4] See Provenance note 1.
- [5] See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 83; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 74, 158; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1975), 216–217; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303. All cited the painting as “attributed to Martino di Bartolomeo.” Fern Rusk Shapley added, “If by him, the date is probably earlier than his polyptych in the Museo Civico, Pisa, signed and dated 1403,” since, she explained, “the latter is somewhat more lively in expression.” See also Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89–90.
- [6] F. Mason Perkins, “Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 18 (1924): 12; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 646, 648 n; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998) 326, 408; Silvia Colucci, “L’iconografia del crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà: Una questione aperta,” in *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon (Siena, 2005), 48.
- [7] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*,

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vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590.

- [8] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303.
- [9] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89.
- [10] The altarpiece in question consists of the *Madonna and Child with Saints Lawrence, Barnabas, Augustine, and Ansano*, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 160); a Crucifixion, now in the El Paso Museum of Art (no. 61.1.7, Samuel H. Kress Collection); and four stories of Saint Barnabas in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (no. 1945–25–120). See Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 242–247.
- [11] The three panels in question (Saints Stephen, Mary Magdalene, and Anthony Abbot) come from a dispersed polyptych reframed to form an ensemble and hence cited as a triptych. Cf. Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2: fig. 433; Fabio Bisogni, Marco Ciampolini, and Elisabetta Avanzati, *Guide to the Civic Museum of Siena* (Siena, 1986), 119. The date 1408 attributed to these paintings seems devoid of foundation; see Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 254–255.
- [12] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 90.
- [13] See Maria Laura Cristiani Testi, *Affreschi biblici di Martino di Bartolomeo in San Giovanni Battista di Cascina* (Pisa, 1978).
- [14] See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 63–64.
- [15] Gabriele Borghini, “La decorazione,” in *Palazzo pubblico di Siena: Vicende costruttive e decorazione*, ed. Cesare Brandi (Siena, 1983), 226, figs. 270–273.
- [16] The four panels of no. 120 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, respectively representing Saints James, Catherine of Alexandria, Mary Magdalene, and Ansano, have been convincingly linked with a Madonna and Child formerly in the Bonichi collection at Asciano and later in the Fossati Bellani collection in Milan, which bears the date 1408. For these paintings see, respectively, Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 217; and Luciano Berti, “Note brevi su inediti toscani,” *Bollettino d’arte* 37 (1952): 256–258.
- [17] In August 1412, Martino was forced to pay a fine for “cierte parole che il detto maestro Martino disse injuriose a maestro Taddeo di Bartolo” (certain derogatory words that the said master Martino addressed to master

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Taddeo di Bartolo). See Scipione Borghesi Bichi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 112; Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sienese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 290.

[18] See Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 98–100.

The paintings in question, formerly belonging to the Society of the Cincinnati, Anderson House, Washington DC, were sold at auction at Christie's, London, July 11, 2001, lot 72.

[19] For Benedetto and his frescoes painted in San Domenico in Perugia between 1415 and 1417, cf. Giordana Benazzi, "Le opere d'arte del Medioevo," in *La Basilica di San Domenico di Perugia*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans De Yoldi and Giulio Ser-Giacomi (Perugia, 2006), 333–334; for Gregorio, the perceptive essay by Luciano Bellosi ("Gregorio di Cecco di Luca") in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 346–348.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel and its companions *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major [left panel]* and *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*, now separated, originally formed a triptych, each element of which was painted on a single wooden plank with vertical grain. Though severely warped, the panels still maintain their original thicknesses of 3.2–3.4 cm. Margins of bare wood beyond the painted surface indicate that each panel once had an engaged frame. The three panels retain wide margins along the bottom and pointed top. On the two saints the vertical margins were completely removed, while on the Madonna the vertical margins are very narrow. At some point after the panels were cropped, modern pieces of wood were added along the pointed top and the sides of the three panels.

Fabric patches were applied to the knotholes of the wood before the application of the gesso ground. The pointed arched top of the painted area is decorated on the inside with gilt *pastiglia* cusps. Half-length figures, framed below by *pastiglia* arcs, are painted in the spandrels at the top of each panel. The ground and halos were originally silver gilt,<sup>[1]</sup> though hardly any of the original silver leaf remains, and much of it has been replaced with gold.<sup>[2]</sup> The gilded areas were prepared with red bole; the gables of the panels, halos, and borders of the garments have

*Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot [right panel]*

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punched decoration. The punch marks of the gables are now largely modern restoration. The paint was applied smoothly and thinly. Green underpainting is visible underneath the flesh.[3]

The painted surface is in a fair state of preservation, whereas the wooden support has suffered extensive worm tunneling in the past. The three panels were treated between 1984 and 1989. The treatment revealed a diagonal scratch in the face of the deacon saint and numerous scattered small losses in the painted surface of all panels.[4] Particularly disturbing are the small, now inpainted lacunae around the lips of the Madonna and of the child. The bust of Saint James in the upper part of panel A is very much abraded. In 1993 the frames were replaced. The new frames cover the outer, unpainted edges of the panels and enlarge their dimensions on all sides.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the remnants of the original gilding using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and they were found to be silver (see report dated July 24, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] It is unclear at what point the silver leaf was replaced with gold. However, the significant craquelure pattern in the gold leaf indicates that it is rather old.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the pigments using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) (see report dated July 26, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Photographs in the curatorial files of the NGA Italian Renaissance painting department, dated May and July 1984, respectively, show the panels after having the varnish and inpaint removed and before the losses were inpainted again.
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### PROVENANCE

Private collection, London, by 1924.[1] Samuel L. Fuller [c. 1876-1963], New York;[2] gift 1950 to NGA. [1] See F. Mason Perkins, "Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo," *Rassegna d'Arte Senese* 18 (1924): 5-12. The author does not divulge the name of the collector, but since he mentions that it was the collector himself

*Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot [right panel]*

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who had suggested the attribution to Martino di Bartolomeo, the owner was undoubtedly a connoisseur and probably an amateur dealer such as Robert Langton Douglas or Edward Hutton, both active in London. A note from Ellis Waterhouse, written 22 July 1980, and recorded in NGA curatorial files, says, "I have old Langton Douglas photographs of these." [2] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:303.

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Martino di Bartolomeo  
Sienese, active 1393/1434

# *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Peter, James Major, Anthony Abbott, and a Deacon Saint [entire triptych]*

c. 1415/1420

tempera on panel

Inscription: middle panel, on Christ's book: Ego S / um lu / x m / undi / [et] via / veritas / et vita / quise / gui ... (I am the light of the world and the way, the truth and the life; a conflation of John 8:12 and 14:6) [1]

[1] See John 8:12: "Ego sum lux mundi: qui sequitur me non ambulat in tenebris," and 14:6: "Ego sum via, et veritas, et vita: nemo venit ad patrem, nisi per me." The grammatical errors of the inscription very likely are the result of retouching in that area, which has been heavily abraded in the past.

Gift of Samuel L. Fuller 1950.11.1.a-c

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## ENTRY

This triptych's image of the *Madonna and Child* recalls the type of the *Glykophilousa* Virgin, the "affectionate Madonna." She rests her cheek against that of the child, who embraces her. The motif of the child's hand grasping the hem of the neckline of the Virgin's dress seems, on the other hand, to allude to the theme of suckling.[1] The saints portrayed are easily identifiable by their attributes: Peter by the keys, as well as by his particular facial type; James Major, by his pilgrim's

staff; Anthony Abbot, by his hospitaller habit and T-shaped staff.[2] But the identity of the deacon martyr saint remains uncertain; he is usually identified as Saint Stephen, though without good reason, as he lacks that saint's usual attributes. Perhaps the artist did not characterize him with a specific attribute because the triptych was destined for a church dedicated to him.[3]

F. Mason Perkins saw the three panels in a private collection in London in 1924 and then published them under the name of Martino di Bartolomeo, thus confirming the attribution formulated by the panels' owner.[4] The proposal seemed convincing to various scholars but not to the authors of the catalogs of the National Gallery of Art, who, for reasons difficult to explain, registered the attribution to Martino with a margin of doubt; Carol Montfort Molten (1996) also maintained that reservation.[5] Thus, after the publications of Perkins and Raimond van Marle (1924, 1934), only Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri (1972), Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), and Silvia Colucci (2005) have cited the triptych as a work by Martino.[6]

As for its date of execution, most of the opinions expressed on the matter have accepted van Marle's (1924) hypothesis.[7] He asserted that the triptych should date to c. 1400–1410, probably following the artist's period of activity in Pisa, which ended in 1405. Fern Rusk Shapley (1979), however, was of the view that if the triptych were indeed an autograph work by Martino, it ought to date earlier than 1403.[8] For her part, Monfort Molten (1996) placed the Gallery panels among the works of Martino di Bartolomeo postdating 1410.[9] She argued, however, that in the Gallery triptych "there is less affinity with the elegant and graceful qualities of the Saint Barnabas altarpiece,[10] or with the Palazzo Pubblico Triptych."[11] Therefore, this work represented, according to Molten, "something of an anomaly in Martino's work," and the circumstance would make probable, in her view, the intervention of a studio assistant.[12]

The doubts about Martino's authorship of the triptych have never been clearly explained, nor does the judgment of the ostensibly limited qualitative level of the Washington panels seem well founded. It may be admitted that Martino was not one of the leading masters active in Lucca, Pisa, and Siena between the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century. In particular, his frescoes in the oratory of San Giovanni Battista at Cascina, undoubtedly executed with the help of assistants but proudly signed as an autograph work and dated 1398,[13] propose very schematic compositions and evince signs of some haste in execution, testifying to a quality that cannot be said to be outstanding. The polyptych now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa, also signed by Martino and dated

five years later,[14] is finer, but the forms of its robust figures, metallic in sheen and modeled with sharp chiaroscuro contrasts, seem rather far removed from the stylistic features of the triptych being discussed here. So the attempt to insert the Washington panels in Martino's Pisan phase cannot be found convincing. In those years, Martino seems especially to have based his severe forms on models derived from such masters as Antonio Veneziano and Piero di Puccio. His paintings are filled with figures whose draperies seem starched and whose human grandeur is mainly expressed by physical bulk.

The artist's style changed after his return to Siena and after his frescoes in the Sala di Ballia at the Palazzo Pubblico (1404–1407) in that city.[15] In the polyptych dated 1408 now divided between the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and a private collection,[16] the painter shows he has resumed contact with the Sienese figurative tradition and especially with Taddeo di Bartolo (who also was involved in the pictorial decoration of the Palazzo Pubblico). Martino's style now becomes more graceful and more animated. He seeks greater verisimilitude in softer complexions and in the silky fluency of hair and beards, and tries to imbue his figures with greater vitality through more complex and articulated movements. Martino also must have been struck by the imaginative pictorial narratives of Bartolo di Fredi, by now fully attuned to the late-Gothic style, and possibly he attempted to keep abreast of the figurative language of some painters in the younger generation.

This must, however, have been a relatively brief phase. In paintings that can be dated to his last decades of life, Martino, without forgetting the experiences of the years between roughly 1405 and 1415, and without wholly rejecting the models proposed by Taddeo di Bartolo (with whom he fell out; indeed, Martino was fined in 1412 for slandering him),[17] seems to return to the ideals he had pursued in his earliest works, abandoning complex poses and simplifying the more animated profiles of his characters. His paintings are once again populated by solemn personages of massive physique, even though he now uses a soft and *sfumato* chiaroscuro to model their forms and makes some attempt to express the emotions that animate them. These developments are particularly evident in the four busts of the Evangelists [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4], recently (and rightly) proposed as components of the dispersed polyptych from the Sienese church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fontebranda, formerly signed by the artist and dated 1425,[18] but similar aspects seem to be detectable in the Gallery panels [fig. 5]. The delicate modeling of the flesh parts, the vivacity and tension of the facial

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expressions, the vigor with which the powerful hands clasp the objects they hold, and the clear-cut definition of the contours of the bodies suggest for these panels a date of execution perhaps slightly earlier than the polyptych of 1425, approximately in the years 1415–1420. They are the products, I believe, of the same phase in which Benedetto di Bindo and Gregorio di Cecco, exponents of the younger generation, were the culturally most advanced painters on the Sienese artistic scene,[19] and in which the very youthful Stefano di Giovanni (known as Sassetta (Sienese, probably 1392 - 1450)) was about to express a full-fledged Renaissance figurative style.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



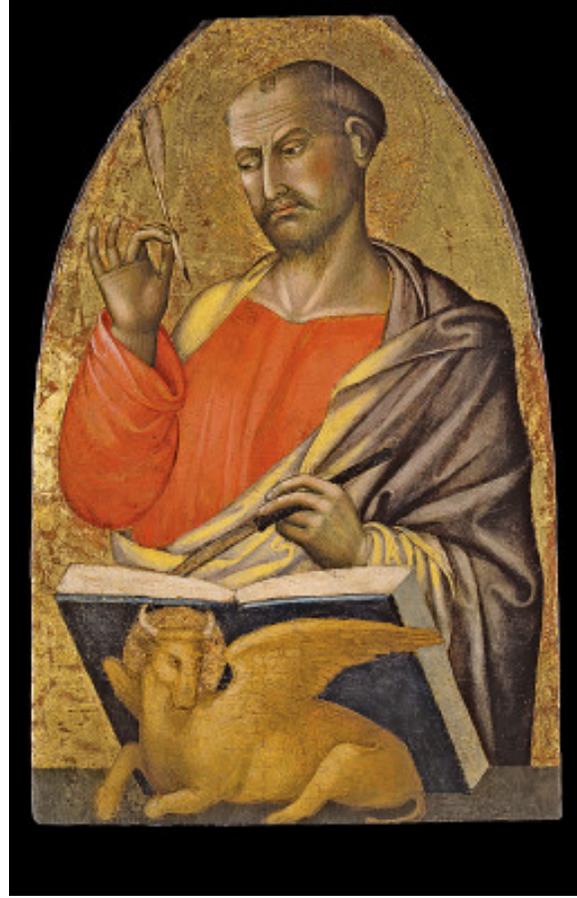
**fig. 1** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Mark*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 2** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint John the Evangelist*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 3** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Matthew*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 4** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Luke*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major*, c. 1415/1420, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Samuel L. Fuller

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#### NOTES

- [1] The post-Byzantine term of *Glykophilousa* Virgin is used in the art historical literature to indicate a subtype of a wider iconographic group known under the name of *Eleousa* (compassionate) Virgin, in which the theme of affection

between mother and son is predominant. Cf. Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel,” 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:17–114; also Nancy Ševenko Patterson, “Virgin eleousa,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Aleksandr Petrovich Kazhdan (New York, 1991), 3:2171. For the gesture of the child as allusion to suckling, cf. Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 146–148.

- [2] See George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 800, 508, 61–64, respectively.
- [3] The dalmatic worn by the youthful saint indicates merely that he was a deacon, while the palm branch in his hand is the symbol of martyrdom; he therefore represents a martyr deacon saint, not necessarily Stephen or Vincent, with whom F. Mason Perkins attempted to identify him. F. Mason Perkins, “Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 18 (1924): 12.
- [4] See Provenance note 1.
- [5] See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 83; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 74, 158; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1975), 216–217; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303. All cited the painting as “attributed to Martino di Bartolomeo.” Fern Rusk Shapley added, “If by him, the date is probably earlier than his polyptych in the Museo Civico, Pisa, signed and dated 1403,” since, she explained, “the latter is somewhat more lively in expression.” See also Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89–90.
- [6] F. Mason Perkins, “Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 18 (1924): 12; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 646, 648 n; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998) 326, 408; Silvia Colucci, “L’iconografia del crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà: Una questione aperta,” in *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon (Siena, 2005), 48.
- [7] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*,

vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590.

- [8] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303.
- [9] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89.
- [10] The altarpiece in question consists of the *Madonna and Child with Saints Lawrence, Barnabas, Augustine, and Ansano*, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 160); a Crucifixion, now in the El Paso Museum of Art (no. 61.1.7, Samuel H. Kress Collection); and four stories of Saint Barnabas in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (no. 1945–25–120). See Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 242–247.
- [11] The three panels in question (Saints Stephen, Mary Magdalene, and Anthony Abbot) come from a dispersed polyptych reframed to form an ensemble and hence cited as a triptych. Cf. Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2: fig. 433; Fabio Bisogni, Marco Ciampolini, and Elisabetta Avanzati, *Guide to the Civic Museum of Siena* (Siena, 1986), 119. The date 1408 attributed to these paintings seems devoid of foundation; see Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 254–255.
- [12] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 90.
- [13] See Maria Laura Cristiani Testi, *Affreschi biblici di Martino di Bartolomeo in San Giovanni Battista di Cascina* (Pisa, 1978).
- [14] See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 63–64.
- [15] Gabriele Borghini, “La decorazione,” in *Palazzo pubblico di Siena: Vicende costruttive e decorazione*, ed. Cesare Brandi (Siena, 1983), 226, figs. 270–273.
- [16] The four panels of no. 120 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, respectively representing Saints James, Catherine of Alexandria, Mary Magdalene, and Ansano, have been convincingly linked with a Madonna and Child formerly in the Bonichi collection at Asciano and later in the Fossati Bellani collection in Milan, which bears the date 1408. For these paintings see, respectively, Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 217; and Luciano Berti, “Note brevi su inediti toscani,” *Bollettino d’arte* 37 (1952): 256–258.
- [17] In August 1412, Martino was forced to pay a fine for “cierte parole che il detto maestro Martino disse injuriose a maestro Taddeo di Bartolo” (certain derogatory words that the said master Martino addressed to master

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Taddeo di Bartolo). See Scipione Borghesi Bichi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 112; Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sienese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 290.

[18] See Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 98–100.

The paintings in question, formerly belonging to the Society of the Cincinnati, Anderson House, Washington DC, were sold at auction at Christie's, London, July 11, 2001, lot 72.

[19] For Benedetto and his frescoes painted in San Domenico in Perugia between 1415 and 1417, cf. Giordana Benazzi, "Le opere d'arte del Medioevo," in *La Basilica di San Domenico di Perugia*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans De Yoldi and Giulio Ser-Giacomi (Perugia, 2006), 333–334; for Gregorio, the perceptive essay by Luciano Bellosi ("Gregorio di Cecco di Luca") in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 346–348.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The three panels *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major* [left panel], *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ* [middle panel], and *Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot* [right panel], now separated, originally formed a triptych, each element of which was painted on a single wooden plank with vertical grain. Though severely warped, the panels still maintain their original thicknesses of 3.2–3.4 cm. Margins of bare wood beyond the painted surface indicate that each panel once had an engaged frame. The three panels retain wide margins along the bottom and pointed top. On the two saints the vertical margins were completely removed, while on the Madonna the vertical margins are very narrow. At some point after the panels were cropped, modern pieces of wood were added along the pointed top and the sides of the three panels.

Fabric patches were applied to the knotholes of the wood before the application of the gesso ground. The pointed arched top of the painted area is decorated on the inside with gilt *pastiglia* cusps. Half-length figures, framed below by *pastiglia* arcs, are painted in the spandrels at the top of each panel. The ground and halos were originally silver gilt,[1] though hardly any of the original silver leaf remains, and much of it has been replaced with gold.[2] The gilded areas were prepared with red bole; the gables of the panels, halos, and borders of the garments have

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punched decoration. The punch marks of the gables are now largely modern restoration. The paint was applied smoothly and thinly. Green underpainting is visible underneath the flesh.[3]

The painted surface is in a fair state of preservation, whereas the wooden support has suffered extensive worm tunneling in the past. The three panels were treated between 1984 and 1989. The treatment revealed a diagonal scratch in the face of the deacon saint and numerous scattered small losses in the painted surface of all panels.[4] Particularly disturbing are the small, now inpainted lacunae around the lips of the Madonna and of the child. The bust of Saint James in the upper part of panel A is very much abraded. In 1993 the frames were replaced. The new frames cover the outer, unpainted edges of the panels and enlarge their dimensions on all sides.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the remnants of the original gilding using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and they were found to be silver (see report dated July 24, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] It is unclear at what point the silver leaf was replaced with gold. However, the significant craquelure pattern in the gold leaf indicates that it is rather old.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the pigments using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) (see report dated July 26, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Photographs in the curatorial files of the NGA Italian Renaissance painting department, dated May and July 1984, respectively, show the panels after having the varnish and inpaint removed and before the losses were inpainted again.
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### PROVENANCE

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Martino di Bartolomeo  
Sienese, active 1393/1434

## *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*

c. 1415/1420

tempera on panel

painted surface: 106.05 × 50.8 cm (41 3/4 × 20 in.)

original panel: 117.48 × 52.39 × 4.13 cm (46 1/4 × 20 5/8 × 1 5/8 in.)

overall (with added wood strips): 120.65 × 60.96 × 4.13 cm (47 1/2 × 24 × 1 5/8 in.)

depth (indicates warp of the panel): 8.57 cm (3 3/8 in.)

Inscription: on Christ's book: Ego S / um lu / x m / undi / [et] via / veritas / et vita / quise / gui ... (I am the light of the world and the way, the truth and the life; a conflation of John 8:12 and 14:6) [1]

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Gift of Samuel L. Fuller 1950.11.1.b

### ENTRY

This panel was originally part of a triptych that also included *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major* [left panel] and *Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot* [right panel].

The image of the Madonna and Child recalls the type of the *Glykophilousa* Virgin, the "affectionate Madonna." She rests her cheek against that of the child, who embraces her. The motif of the child's hand grasping the hem of the neckline of the Virgin's dress seems, on the other hand, to allude to the theme of suckling.[1] The saints portrayed are easily identifiable by their attributes: Peter by the keys, as well as by his particular facial type; James Major, by his pilgrim's staff; Anthony Abbot, by his hospitaller habit and T-shaped staff.[2] But the identity of the deacon martyr saint remains uncertain; he is usually identified as Saint Stephen,

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This must, however, have been a relatively brief phase. In paintings that can be dated to his last decades of life, Martino, without forgetting the experiences of the years between roughly 1405 and 1415, and without wholly rejecting the models proposed by Taddeo di Bartolo (with whom he fell out; indeed, Martino was fined in 1412 for slandering him),[17] seems to return to the ideals he had pursued in his earliest works, abandoning complex poses and simplifying the more animated profiles of his characters. His paintings are once again populated by solemn personages of massive physique, even though he now uses a soft and *sfumato* chiaroscuro to model their forms and makes some attempt to express the emotions that animate them. These developments are particularly evident in the four busts of the Evangelists [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4], recently (and rightly) proposed as components of the dispersed polyptych from the Sienese church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fontebranda, formerly signed by the artist and dated 1425,[18] but similar aspects seem to be detectable in the Gallery panels [fig. 5]. The delicate modeling of the flesh parts, the vivacity and tension of the facial expressions, the vigor with which the powerful hands clasp the objects they hold, and the clear-cut definition of the contours of the bodies suggest for these panels a date of execution perhaps

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Mark*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 2** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint John the Evangelist*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



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**fig. 4** Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Luke*, 1425–1426, tempera on panel, private collection. Image: Robilant + Voena, London, Milan & St. Moritz



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Martino di Bartolomeo, *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major*, c. 1415/1420, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Samuel L. Fuller

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**NOTES**

- [1] The post-Byzantine term of *Glykophilousa* Virgin is used in the art historical literature to indicate a subtype of a wider iconographic group known under the name of *Eleousa* (compassionate) Virgin, in which the theme of affection

between mother and son is predominant. Cf. Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel,” 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:17–114; also Nancy Ševenko Patterson, “Virgin eleousa,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Aleksandr Petrovich Kazhdan (New York, 1991), 3:2171. For the gesture of the child as allusion to suckling, cf. Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 146–148.

- [2] See George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 800, 508, 61–64, respectively.
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- [4] See Provenance note 1.
- [5] See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 83; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 74, 158; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1975), 216–217; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303. All cited the painting as “attributed to Martino di Bartolomeo.” Fern Rusk Shapley added, “If by him, the date is probably earlier than his polyptych in the Museo Civico, Pisa, signed and dated 1403,” since, she explained, “the latter is somewhat more lively in expression.” See also Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89–90.
- [6] F. Mason Perkins, “Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 18 (1924): 12; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 646, 648 n; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998) 326, 408; Silvia Colucci, “L’iconografia del crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà: Una questione aperta,” in *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon (Siena, 2005), 48.
- [7] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*,

vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590.

- [8] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303.
- [9] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89.
- [10] The altarpiece in question consists of the *Madonna and Child with Saints Lawrence, Barnabas, Augustine, and Ansano*, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 160); a Crucifixion, now in the El Paso Museum of Art (no. 61.1.7, Samuel H. Kress Collection); and four stories of Saint Barnabas in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (no. 1945–25–120). See Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 242–247.
- [11] The three panels in question (Saints Stephen, Mary Magdalene, and Anthony Abbot) come from a dispersed polyptych reframed to form an ensemble and hence cited as a triptych. Cf. Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2: fig. 433; Fabio Bisogni, Marco Ciampolini, and Elisabetta Avanzati, *Guide to the Civic Museum of Siena* (Siena, 1986), 119. The date 1408 attributed to these paintings seems devoid of foundation; see Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 254–255.
- [12] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 90.
- [13] See Maria Laura Cristiani Testi, *Affreschi biblici di Martino di Bartolomeo in San Giovanni Battista di Cascina* (Pisa, 1978).
- [14] See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 63–64.
- [15] Gabriele Borghini, “La decorazione,” in *Palazzo pubblico di Siena: Vicende costruttive e decorazione*, ed. Cesare Brandi (Siena, 1983), 226, figs. 270–273.
- [16] The four panels of no. 120 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, respectively representing Saints James, Catherine of Alexandria, Mary Magdalene, and Ansano, have been convincingly linked with a Madonna and Child formerly in the Bonichi collection at Asciano and later in the Fossati Bellani collection in Milan, which bears the date 1408. For these paintings see, respectively, Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 217; and Luciano Berti, “Note brevi su inediti toscani,” *Bollettino d’arte* 37 (1952): 256–258.
- [17] In August 1412, Martino was forced to pay a fine for “cierte parole che il detto maestro Martino disse injuriose a maestro Taddeo di Bartolo” (certain derogatory words that the said master Martino addressed to master

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Taddeo di Bartolo). See Scipione Borghesi Bichi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 112; Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sienese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 290.

[18] See Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 98–100.

The paintings in question, formerly belonging to the Society of the Cincinnati, Anderson House, Washington DC, were sold at auction at Christie's, London, July 11, 2001, lot 72.

[19] For Benedetto and his frescoes painted in San Domenico in Perugia between 1415 and 1417, cf. Giordana Benazzi, "Le opere d'arte del Medioevo," in *La Basilica di San Domenico di Perugia*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans De Yoldi and Giulio Ser-Giacomi (Perugia, 2006), 333–334; for Gregorio, the perceptive essay by Luciano Bellosi ("Gregorio di Cecco di Luca") in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 346–348.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel and its companions *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major [left panel]* and *Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot [right panel]*, now separated, originally formed a triptych, each element of which was painted on a single wooden plank with vertical grain. Though severely warped, the panels still maintain their original thicknesses of 3.2–3.4 cm. Margins of bare wood beyond the painted surface indicate that each panel once had an engaged frame. The three panels retain wide margins along the bottom and pointed top. On the two saints the vertical margins were completely removed, while on the Madonna the vertical margins are very narrow. At some point after the panels were cropped, modern pieces of wood were added along the pointed top and the sides of the three panels.

Fabric patches were applied to the knotholes of the wood before the application of the gesso ground. The pointed arched top of the painted area is decorated on the inside with gilt *pastiglia* cusps. Half-length figures, framed below by *pastiglia* arcs, are painted in the spandrels at the top of each panel. The ground and halos were originally silver gilt,[1] though hardly any of the original silver leaf remains, and much of it has been replaced with gold.[2] The gilded areas were prepared with red bole; the gables of the panels, halos, and borders of the garments have punched decoration. The punch marks of the gables are now largely modern

*Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*

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restoration. The paint was applied smoothly and thinly. Green underpainting is visible underneath the flesh.[3]

The painted surface is in a fair state of preservation, whereas the wooden support has suffered extensive worm tunneling in the past. The three panels were treated between 1984 and 1989. The treatment revealed a diagonal scratch in the face of the deacon saint and numerous scattered small losses in the painted surface of all panels.[4] Particularly disturbing are the small, now inpainted lacunae around the lips of the Madonna and of the child. The bust of Saint James in the upper part of panel A is very much abraded. In 1993 the frames were replaced. The new frames cover the outer, unpainted edges of the panels and enlarge their dimensions on all sides.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the remnants of the original gilding using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and they were found to be silver (see report dated July 24, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] It is unclear at what point the silver leaf was replaced with gold. However, the significant craquelure pattern in the gold leaf indicates that it is rather old.
- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the pigments using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) (see report dated July 26, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Photographs in the curatorial files of the NGA Italian Renaissance painting department, dated May and July 1984, respectively, show the panels after having the varnish and inpaint removed and before the losses were inpainted again.
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### PROVENANCE

Private collection, London, by 1924.[1] Samuel L. Fuller [c. 1876-1963], New York;[2] gift 1950 to NGA. [1] See F. Mason Perkins, "Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo," *Rassegna d'Arte Senese* 18 (1924): 5-12. The author does not divulge the name of the collector, but since he mentions that it was the collector himself who had suggested the attribution to Martino di Bartolomeo, the owner was

*Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]*

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undoubtedly a connoisseur and probably an amateur dealer such as Robert Langton Douglas or Edward Hutton, both active in London. A note from Ellis Waterhouse, written 22 July 1980, and recorded in NGA curatorial files, says, "I have old Langton Douglas photographs of these." [2] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:303.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1968 Loan to display with permanent collection, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida, 1968-1976 (middle panel of the triptych only).

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- 1985 *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue*. National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1985: 251, repro. 230 (incorrectly identified as repro. of 1937.1.11, Lippo Memmi, *Madonna and Child*).
- 1992 Molten, Carol Montfort. *The Sienese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo*. PhD diss. Indiana University, 1992. Ann Arbor, MI, 1996: 89-90, 260.
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Martino di Bartolomeo  
Sienese, active 1393/1434

## *Saint Peter, with Saint James Major [left panel]*

c. 1415/1420

tempera on panel

painted surface: 92.71 × 44.77 cm (36 1/2 × 17 5/8 in.)

original panel: 102.24 × 45.24 × 4.13 cm (40 1/4 × 17 13/16 × 1 5/8 in.)

overall (with added wood strips): 106.05 × 54.61 × 4.13 cm (41 3/4 × 21 1/2 × 1 5/8 in.)

depth (indicates warp of the panel): 6.67 cm (2 5/8 in.)

Gift of Samuel L. Fuller 1950.11.1.a

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### ENTRY

This panel was originally part of a triptych that also included *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ [middle panel]* and *Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot [right panel]*. The image of the Madonna and Child recalls the type of the *Glykophilousa* Virgin, the “affectionate Madonna.” She rests her cheek against that of the child, who embraces her. The motif of the child’s hand grasping the hem of the neckline of the Virgin’s dress seems, on the other hand, to allude to the theme of suckling.[1] The saints portrayed are easily identifiable by their attributes: Peter by the keys, as well as by his particular facial type; James Major, by his pilgrim’s staff; Anthony Abbot, by his hospitaller habit and T-shaped staff.[2] But the identity of the deacon martyr saint remains uncertain; he is usually identified as Saint Stephen, though without good reason, as he lacks that saint’s usual attributes. Perhaps the artist did not characterize him with a specific attribute because the triptych was destined for a church dedicated to him.[3]

F. Mason Perkins saw the three panels in a private collection in London in 1924 and then published them under the name of Martino di Bartolomeo, thus confirming the attribution formulated by the panels’ owner.[4] The proposal seemed convincing to various scholars but not to the authors of the catalogs of the National Gallery of

Art, who, for reasons difficult to explain, registered the attribution to Martino with a margin of doubt; Carol Montfort Molten (1996) also maintained that reservation.[5] Thus, after the publications of Perkins and Raimond van Marle (1924, 1934), only Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri (1972), Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), and Silvia Colucci (2005) have cited the triptych as a work by Martino.[6]

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- [4] See Provenance note 1.
- [5] See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 83; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 74, 158; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1975), 216–217; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303. All cited the painting as “attributed to Martino di Bartolomeo.” Fern Rusk Shapley added, “If by him, the date is probably earlier than his polyptych in the Museo Civico, Pisa, signed and dated 1403,” since, she explained, “the latter is somewhat more lively in expression.” See also Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sienese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89–90.
- [6] F. Mason Perkins, “Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 18 (1924): 12; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590; Raimond van Marle, *Le scuole della pittura italiana*, vol. 2, *La scuola senese del XIV secolo* (The Hague, 1934), 646, 648 n; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998) 326, 408; Silvia Colucci, “L’iconografia del crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà: Una questione aperta,” in *Il Crocifisso con i dolenti in umiltà di Paolo di Giovanni Fei: Un capolavoro riscoperto*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli, Silvia Colucci, and Veronica Randon (Siena, 2005), 48.
- [7] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*,

vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 590.

- [8] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:302–303.
- [9] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 89.
- [10] The altarpiece in question consists of the *Madonna and Child with Saints Lawrence, Barnabas, Augustine, and Ansano*, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 160); a Crucifixion, now in the El Paso Museum of Art (no. 61.1.7, Samuel H. Kress Collection); and four stories of Saint Barnabas in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (no. 1945–25–120). See Carl Brandon Strehlke, *Italian Paintings, 1250–1450, in the John G. Johnson Collection and the Philadelphia Museum of Art* (Philadelphia, 2004), 242–247.
- [11] The three panels in question (Saints Stephen, Mary Magdalene, and Anthony Abbot) come from a dispersed polyptych reframed to form an ensemble and hence cited as a triptych. Cf. Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2: fig. 433; Fabio Bisogni, Marco Ciampolini, and Elisabetta Avanzati, *Guide to the Civic Museum of Siena* (Siena, 1986), 119. The date 1408 attributed to these paintings seems devoid of foundation; see Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 254–255.
- [12] Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sieneese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 90.
- [13] See Maria Laura Cristiani Testi, *Affreschi biblici di Martino di Bartolomeo in San Giovanni Battista di Cascina* (Pisa, 1978).
- [14] See Enzo Carli, *Il Museo di Pisa* (Pisa, 1974), 63–64.
- [15] Gabriele Borghini, “La decorazione,” in *Palazzo pubblico di Siena: Vicende costruttive e decorazione*, ed. Cesare Brandi (Siena, 1983), 226, figs. 270–273.
- [16] The four panels of no. 120 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena, respectively representing Saints James, Catherine of Alexandria, Mary Magdalene, and Ansano, have been convincingly linked with a Madonna and Child formerly in the Bonichi collection at Asciano and later in the Fossati Bellani collection in Milan, which bears the date 1408. For these paintings see, respectively, Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena*, vol. 1, *I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa, 1977), 217; and Luciano Berti, “Note brevi su inediti toscani,” *Bollettino d’arte* 37 (1952): 256–258.
- [17] In August 1412, Martino was forced to pay a fine for “cierte parole che il detto maestro Martino disse injuriose a maestro Taddeo di Bartolo” (certain derogatory words that the said master Martino addressed to master

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Taddeo di Bartolo). See Scipione Borghesi Bichi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 112; Carol Montfort Molten, *The Sienese Painter Martino di Bartolomeo* (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1992), 290.

[18] See Ada Labriola, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 98–100.

The paintings in question, formerly belonging to the Society of the Cincinnati, Anderson House, Washington DC, were sold at auction at Christie's, London, July 11, 2001, lot 72.

[19] For Benedetto and his frescoes painted in San Domenico in Perugia between 1415 and 1417, cf. Giordana Benazzi, "Le opere d'arte del Medioevo," in *La Basilica di San Domenico di Perugia*, ed. Giuseppe Rocchi Coopmans De Yoldi and Giulio Ser-Giacomi (Perugia, 2006), 333–334; for Gregorio, the perceptive essay by Luciano Bellosi ("Gregorio di Cecco di Luca") in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture,oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 346–348.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel and its companions *Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ* [middle panel] and *Deacon Saint, with Saint Anthony Abbot* [right panel], now separated, originally formed a triptych, each element of which was painted on a single wooden plank with vertical grain. Though severely warped, the panels still maintain their original thicknesses of 3.2–3.4 cm. Margins of bare wood beyond the painted surface indicate that each panel once had an engaged frame. The three panels retain wide margins along the bottom and pointed top. On the two saints the vertical margins were completely removed, while on the Madonna the vertical margins are very narrow. At some point after the panels were cropped, modern pieces of wood were added along the pointed top and the sides of the three panels.

Fabric patches were applied to the knotholes of the wood before the application of the gesso ground. The pointed arched top of the painted area is decorated on the inside with gilt *pastiglia* cusps. Half-length figures, framed below by *pastiglia* arcs, are painted in the spandrels at the top of each panel. The ground and halos were originally silver gilt,[1] though hardly any of the original silver leaf remains, and much of it has been replaced with gold.[2] The gilded areas were prepared with red bole; the gables of the panels, halos, and borders of the garments have

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punched decoration. The punch marks of the gables are now largely modern restoration. The paint was applied smoothly and thinly. Green underpainting is visible underneath the flesh.[3]

The painted surface is in a fair state of preservation, whereas the wooden support has suffered extensive worm tunneling in the past. The three panels were treated between 1984 and 1989. The treatment revealed a diagonal scratch in the face of the deacon saint and numerous scattered small losses in the painted surface of all panels.[4] Particularly disturbing are the small, now inpainted lacunae around the lips of the Madonna and of the child. The bust of Saint James in the upper part of panel A is very much abraded. In 1993 the frames were replaced. The new frames cover the outer, unpainted edges of the panels and enlarge their dimensions on all sides.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the remnants of the original gilding using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), and they were found to be silver (see report dated July 24, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
  - [2] It is unclear at what point the silver leaf was replaced with gold. However, the significant craquelure pattern in the gold leaf indicates that it is rather old.
  - [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the pigments using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) (see report dated July 26, 1984, in NGA conservation files).
  - [4] Photographs in the curatorial files of the NGA Italian Renaissance painting department, dated May and July 1984, respectively, show the panels after having the varnish and inpaint removed and before the losses were inpainted again.
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### PROVENANCE

Private collection, London, by 1924.[1] Samuel L. Fuller [c. 1876-1963], New York;[2] gift 1950 to NGA. [1] See F. Mason Perkins, "Su alcune pitture di Martino di Bartolomeo," *Rassegna d'Arte Senese* 18 (1924): 5-12. The author does not divulge the name of the collector, but since he mentions that it was the collector himself

*Saint Peter, with Saint James Major [left panel]*

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who had suggested the attribution to Martino di Bartolomeo, the owner was undoubtedly a connoisseur and probably an amateur dealer such as Robert Langton Douglas or Edward Hutton, both active in London. A note from Ellis Waterhouse, written 22 July 1980, and recorded in NGA curatorial files, says, "I have old Langton Douglas photographs of these." [2] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:303.

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# *Master of Città di Castello*

Italian, active c. 1290 - 1320

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It was F. Mason Perkins, the great American connoisseur, friend of Bernard Berenson, and benefactor of the Sacro Convento Franciscano in Assisi, who recognized, a century ago, a first nucleus of the catalog of this anonymous master, generally considered a follower of Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319). Perkins thus reunited, by attributing to the same hand, the *Maestà* in the church of San Domenico in Città di Castello (now in the Pinacoteca Comunale) with polyptych no. 33 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and a fragmentary Madonna and Child formerly at Crevole near Siena and now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Siena.[1] In the following decades this brief catalog was enlarged and modified, but no evidence emerged to identify the anonymous painter or better define the chronology of his oeuvre. None of the paintings attributed to him are dated. But the hypothesis of earlier studies—that the artist's activity extended to the first three decades of the fourteenth century—no longer seems correct today.[2] Art historians now tend to push his career back in time: they detect his hand in paintings dating to the last decade of the thirteenth century. Furthermore, a group of paintings gathered under the conventional name of the Casole Fresco (or Aringhieri or Albertini) Master and classified, tellingly, by some scholars under the label “akin to the Master of Città di Castello,” has now been reassigned to him.[3]

The art historical debate on the problems of defining and dating the master's work is still open. What can be asserted with some confidence is that the master of the *Maestà* of Città di Castello must have been a well-established painter, with a long career behind him, by c. 1305, the date almost unanimously accepted for the painting after which he is named. His stylistic peculiarities, in particular his figures distinguished by marked volumetric effect, executed with pronounced chiaroscuro modeling and soft brushwork, are clearly recognizable in the *Maestà* and suggest that the artist not only was trained in the circle of Duccio but must also have been in contact with other great masters: according to some, with Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) himself; according to others, more plausibly, with Roman painters of the late thirteenth century.[4] Particularly significant works in the group of paintings

generally assigned to the Master of Città di Castello include the Madonna in a private collection, only recently published;<sup>[5]</sup> another Madonna and Child in the Detroit Institute of Arts; the great painted crucifix at Montecerboli; and the Crucifixion in the Manchester City Art Gallery, which probably represents the end point of his career, perhaps no later than 1315–1320. Apart from the Manchester Crucifixion, the only narrative compositions hitherto attributed to the artist are the frescoes in the chapel of the former Palazzo Vescovile in Pistoia.<sup>[6]</sup>

The inclusion in the oeuvre of the Master of Città di Castello of the group of paintings assigned to the Casole Fresco Master is admissible only if the paintings in question—the fresco *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Angels and Donors* in the museum at Casole d’Elsa, the *Maestà* no. 565 of the National Gallery in London, and the panels nos. 18 and 592 of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena—are considered the results of an early phase in the artist’s career, datable to the last decade of the thirteenth century or a little later. Combining archaizing features with a new classicizing approach, the group might have been preceded, in turn, by the *Maestà (Madonna and Child with Four Angels)*, which is, in my opinion, the Master of Città di Castello’s earliest surviving work.

[1] Frederick Mason Perkins, “Alcuni appunti sulla Galleria delle Belle Arti di Siena,” *Rassegna d’arte senese* 4 (1908): 51–52.

[2] For example, Cesare Brandi, *La Regia Pinacoteca di Siena* (Rome, 1933), 169–172; Cesare Brandi, *Duccio* (Florence, 1951), 148–150; James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:85.

[3] Edward Garrison (1949) considered the portable triptych no. 70 in Christ Church Picture Gallery, Oxford, the earliest known work of the Master of Città di Castello, with a dating of 1300–1310. Alessandro Bagnoli (2003) accepted the attribution but pushed the dating back to the last decade of the thirteenth century. A closely related group of paintings (“affine al Maestro di Città di Castello”: see Brandi 1951) was called “Casole Fresco Master” by James Stubblebine (1979), who augmented it with some paintings that others excluded. Miklós Boskovits (1982) proposed the fusion of the catalog of the Casole Master with that of the Master of Città di Castello. Gaudenz Freuler (2001) accepted the hypothesis but reconstructed the artist’s career in a different way. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 138; Alessandro Bagnoli, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 314–315; Cesare Brandi, *Duccio* (Florence,

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1951), 141, 149; James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:110–116; Miklós Boskovits, “Review of *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School* by J.H. Stubblebine; and *Duccio di Buoninsegna* by J. White,” *The Art Bulletin* 64 (1982): 497; Gaudenz Freuler, “Duccio et ses contemporains: Le maître de Città di Castello,” *Revue de l’art* 134 (2001): 27–50. On the problem of the frescoes of the chapel of Saint Nicholas in the Collegiata of Casole d’Elsa, see Alessandro Bagnoli, “La cappella funebre del Porrina e del vescovo Ranieri e le sue figurazioni murali,” in *Marco Romano e il contesto artistico senese fra la fine del Duecento e gli inizi del Trecento*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2010), 92–111.

[4] Cesare Brandi, *Duccio* (Florence, 1951), 150, assumed the Master of Città di Castello’s “conoscenza attiva del Cavallini.” The present writer thinks rather of an influence like that of the so-called Master of the Cattura, one of the frescoers of the upper church of San Francesco in Assisi, or the artist of the transept of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. According to Alessandro Bagnoli (2003), however, the Master must also have succumbed to the influence of contemporary Florentine painting, since he had a “conoscenza . . . approfondita e diretta del primo Giotto;” Alessandro Bagnoli, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 315.

[5] Cf. Gaudenz Freuler, “Duccio et ses contemporains: Le maître de Città di Castello,” *Revue de l’art* 134 (2001): 37, fig. 10.

[6] Cf. Ada Labriola, “Gli affreschi della cappella di San Niccolò nell’antico Palazzo dei Vescovi a Pistoia,” *Arte cristiana* 76 (1988): 247–266.

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Master of Città di Castello  
Italian, active c. 1290 - 1320

## *Maesta (Madonna and Child with Four Angels)*

c. 1290

tempera on panel

painted surface: 230 × 141.5 cm (90 9/16 × 55 11/16 in.)

overall: 240 × 150 × 2.4 cm (94 1/2 × 59 1/16 × 15/16 in.)

framed: 252.4 × 159.4 × 13.3 cm (99 3/8 × 62 3/4 × 5 1/4 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1961.9.77

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### ENTRY

This panel, of large dimensions, bears the image of the *Maestà* represented according to the iconographic tradition of the *Hodegetria*.<sup>[1]</sup> This type of Madonna and Child was very popular among lay confraternities in central Italy; perhaps it was one of them that commissioned the painting.<sup>[2]</sup> The image is distinguished among the paintings of its time by the very peculiar construction of the marble throne, which seems to be formed of a semicircular external structure into which a circular seat is inserted. Similar thrones are sometimes found in Sieneese paintings between the last decades of the thirteenth and the first two of the fourteenth century.<sup>[3]</sup> Much the same dating is suggested by the delicate chrysography of the mantles of the Madonna and Child.<sup>[4]</sup>

Recorded for the first time by the Soprintendenza in Siena c. 1930 as “tavola preduccesca,”<sup>[5]</sup> the work was examined by Richard Offner in 1937. In his expertise, he classified it as “school of Duccio” and compared it with some roughly contemporary panels of the same stylistic circle. Offner concludes that it belonged to “a slightly more primitive period than the *Maestà* of Duccio, namely the first decade of the fourteenth century.”<sup>[6]</sup> In the early 1950s, when the painting began to reemerge from its long oblivion, various scholars, perhaps at Bernard Berenson’s suggestion, pointed out its kinship with the *Badia a Isola Maestà*.<sup>[7]</sup> a classification that also convinced Gertrude Coor Achenbach (1960) and Enzo Carli (1965).<sup>[8]</sup> In the National Gallery of Art, however, the panel was cataloged simply as “Follower of Duccio,” and this classification was in general accepted in the art

historical literature. Berenson (1968) noted that the anonymous artist was “close to the Master of Città di Castello,” while James Stubblebine (1979) considered him a “provincial follower” of the same Master. Stubblebine, who attempted to reconstruct the oeuvre of this artist, invented for him the name “San Quirico d’Orcia Master.”[9] The painting’s kinship with the so-called Master of 1310 was also proposed (Conti 1981) but almost immediately rejected (Bacchi 1987).[10] In the more recent literature, the painting generally has been cited under the conventional name of Master of San Quirico d’Orcia (Martini 1997, Bagnoli 2003, Schmidt 2005) or attributed to the Master of Città di Castello (Boskovits 1982, Freuler 2001, Freuler 2004).[11]

Before discussing the attribution, an effort should be made to define the chronological frame within which the Washington panel was painted. This can best be done by examining what is no doubt its most peculiar feature, the throne on which the Virgin is seated. Elaborate in construction, it is undoubtedly built of marble. This was a novel feature in late thirteenth-century Tuscan paintings. Marble thrones, hitherto used in Roman painting, appear for the first time in Siena in the great rose window designed by Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319) for the cathedral (c. 1287–1288) and in the frescoes of the upper church of San Francesco in Assisi painted by Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) and his companions in the years around 1290.[12] The massive thrones that appear in various paintings of the period were then developed further: they became more elaborate, more lavish in ornament, more richly articulated, and also more rational and optically convincing. During the first decade of the fourteenth century, painted thrones assume ever more pronounced Gothic features. In this development, the *Maestà* painted by Duccio for Siena Cathedral (c. 1308–1311) may be considered a sure point of chronological reference. Though the marble throne on which that Madonna sits still lacks gothicizing features, its elaborate intarsia paneling, moldings, and foliated friezes suggest that it should date to a phase subsequent to that of the Washington painting.

None of the panels with which the Gallery painting has been compared [13] is securely datable, but the list of the analogies so far pointed out can be extended with the addition of one or two other works that can be dated approximately and usefully compared with the Washington Madonna. Historical considerations suggest, for example, that the fresco in the chapel of Saint Nicholas adjacent to the Collegiata at Casole d’Elsa, attributed by recent studies either to a so-called Casole Master (also known as Master of the Albertini) or to the Master of Città di Castello,

postdates 1296 and probably predates 1312.[14] In that work [fig. 1], Mary's throne may be considered a further variant of the massive marble structures derived from Duccio's rose window in Siena Cathedral; despite its heavy structure, its richly articulated forms, illuminated by a light flowing into the painting from the left, and its backrest surmounted by a kind of gabled baldachin reveal that this is a work executed probably not later than the years around 1300 and hence close to the other version of the Madonna and Child now in the National Gallery in London, usually given to the same artist. To better define the chronology of the Washington panel it will be useful also to take into consideration some Sienese frescoes of the school of Duccio that can be dated c. 1305. The thrones that appear in these frescoes, though still classicizing in style, are more rational in design, more elaborate in structure, than that of the painting being discussed here.[15]

Returning to the problem of the hand that painted the panel in Washington, it should be premised that the attribution to the Badia a Isola Master, which the art historical literature has since abandoned, did have the merit of suggesting an early date for our painting. Recent studies recognize the Badia a Isola *Maestà* as the work of an exponent of the first generation of followers of Duccio. A late dating, to the second decade of the fourteenth century or after, does not seem justified for the painting discussed here, whose "halo style" recalls the Badia a Isola *Maestà* .[16] Various other clues suggest an earlier date: for example, the fact that the light here (as in the Badia a Isola *Maestà*) does not come from a single source, as it does in paintings realized by Duccio and his close followers in the years around 1310. The markedly elongated proportions of Mary in turn recall such examples as Duccio's Madonna in the Kunstmuseum in Bern or the protagonists of the *Maestà* of the Casole Master. The blessing gesture of the child, with his arm stretched out to the left, is characteristic of paintings dating to the final years of the thirteenth century, without the foreshortening that the frontal blessing of the Madonna of the National Gallery in London implies.[17]

On the other hand, the Washington *Maestà* should not be retained in the stylistically incoherent group collected under the name of San Quirico d'Orcia Master.[18] Indeed, with the possible exception of one painting, the Madonna of the Detroit Institute of Arts, the shared authorship of the works hitherto linked with the Washington *Maestà* seems very much open to doubt. So, may the *Maestà* in the Gallery be assigned outright to the Master of Città di Castello, who most scholars have recognized as the artist of the Detroit panel? The hypothesis is plausible, on two conditions: first, that the chronology of this painter be revised;[19] and second,

that the works formerly assigned to the Casole (or Aringhieri or Albertini) Master be included in his catalog. If, as I suggest above, the *Maestà* in the National Gallery in London belongs to the figurative culture of the last decade of the thirteenth century, *Maestà* no. 18 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena [fig. 2] and the Casole d'Elsa fresco should date slightly later, around 1300, in view of their tendency towards a more pronounced classical style. The artist's career could then have continued, without any improbable changes of direction, with paintings generally given to the Master of Città di Castello, the earliest of which seems to be the *Madonna and Child* in a private collection recently published by Gaudenz Freuler (2001),<sup>[20]</sup> followed by the *Maestà* of Città di Castello itself. Such a sequence would seem to be corroborated by Mojmir Frinta's (1998) examination of the punch marks used in them: he has identified the use of this punch both in the panels attributed to the Casole Master and in the works of the Master of Città di Castello.<sup>[21]</sup>

If, as I am inclined to believe, the Washington panel was a product of the same workshop, it should be assigned the earliest possible date in the master's career: it is the result, presumably, of an initial phase in the artist's development in which not all the characteristic features of his fully fledged style have yet appeared. This, as well as the much compromised condition of the panel, may explain some stylistically anomalous features, such as the angels that flank the Virgin's throne: with their long necks, melancholy expressions, and thin yet incisive contours, they lack the corporeal, almost sculptural modeling and the typically soft chiaroscuro we associate with the Master of Città di Castello. On the other hand, better preserved passages, in particular the face of the angel in the upper left and the bust of the child, are comparable to corresponding details in panels in the Casole Master group, for example the *Maestà* in London and the *Madonna* no. 592 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena. The placid undulation of the contours of the figure of the enthroned Mary also recalls paintings usually included in the same oeuvre. Some compositional devices found in the oeuvre of the Casole Master that recur in the Washington panel also seem significant. I allude to the distinctive undulating curves of the exposed pale silk lining that enlivens the large, uniform expanse of the Madonna's dark blue mantle. The Virgin's conduct is also worth noting: she is draping a precious embroidered cloth around the body of her son, and pressing a hem of the fabric between her right forefinger and thumb in both the London and Washington versions of the *Maestà* [fig. 3].<sup>[22]</sup> Therefore we can propose, albeit with due caution, that the *Maestà* in the Gallery and those from Casole d'Elsa in London and Siena, as well as the namepiece in Città di Castello and the other

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works that art historians have gathered around it, constitute three successive phases in the career of the same distinctive and accomplished exponent of Sieneese painting at the turn of the century.

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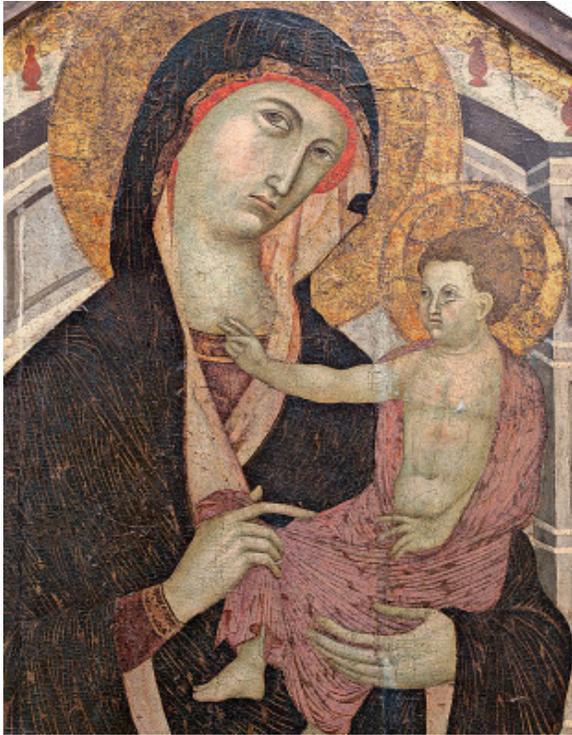
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Sienese, *Maestà*, c. 1300, fresco, Chapel of Saint Nicholas, Collegiata, Casole d'Elsa



**fig. 2** Master of Città di Castello, *Maestà*, c. 1300, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena. Image courtesy of the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali



**fig. 3** Detail of Madonna, Master of Città di Castello, *Maestà (Madonna and Child with Four Angels)*, c. 1290, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 4** Sienese, *Maestà*, c. 1300, fresco, Church of San Lorenzo al Colle Ciupi at Monteriggioni. Image courtesy of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, Superintendence of Fine Arts and Landscape for the provinces of Siena, Grosseto, and Arezzo

## NOTES

- [1] See Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:58–71. The *Maestà* is a type of image emphasizing the regal dignity of the Christ child, shown in the arms of his mother, who is enthroned and flanked by angels.
- [2] This is also suggested by the historical vicissitudes of the painting, which seems not to have had any fixed ecclesiastical ownership but to have passed from churches in San Quirico d’Orcia to private owners and back again, without leaving any trace in the inventories relating to the churches in question. But almost all large-size panels of the *Maestà* painted in central

Italy between the thirteenth and early years of the fourteenth century, in general taller than they are wide, were commissioned by lay confraternities. See Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 433–446; Miklós Boskovits, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 274–275.

[3] See below note 15.

[4] The term *chrysography* (from the Greek *chrysographia*, meaning writing with gold letters) comes from studies on the decoration of manuscript. Cf. Ronald Baxter, “Chrysography,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 7:245–247. In the art historical literature it is used as an alternative to gold grisaille to denote the gilded highlights of garments in paintings. Cf. Otto Demus, *Byzantine Art and the West* (New York, 1970), 103, 235; Kurt Weitzmann, *The Icon: Holy Images, Sixth to Fourteenth Century* (London, 1978), 92. This use of gold, especially the golden calligraphy used to highlight the folds of drapery, was borrowed from Byzantine art and spread in Tuscan painting around the mid-thirteenth century but gradually disappeared in the course of the second decade of the following century or shortly thereafter.

[5] Cf. Provenance note 2.

[6] Matteo Panzeri (1996) published the expertise dated August 30, 1937, in which Offner proposed that the panel belonged to “un’epoca un po’ più primitiva della Maestà di Duccio, vale a dire il primo decennio del Trecento” (a slightly more primitive period than Duccio’s *Maestà*, that is to say the first decade of the fourteenth century). Offner compared the panel, which he likely knew only from a photograph, with a series of paintings, thus circumscribing in a convincing way the artistic ambience in which it was painted. He noted its kinship with paintings by artists of the first generation of the followers of Duccio di Buoninsegna (Sienese, c. 1250/1255 - 1318/1319), such as the so-called Casole Master, of whom he cited works in the National Gallery in London (no. 565) and in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 592); a *Maestà* by the Master of Badia a Isola (now in the Museo di Colle Val d’Elsa); a similar panel of the same subject in the Museo Civico at Città di Castello; and another panel of the Madonna attributable to Segna di Bonaventura, formerly in the Platt collection in Englewood, New Jersey, and now in the Yale University Art Gallery in New Haven (no. 1959.15.17). See Matteo Panzeri, “La tradizione del restauro a Bergamo tra XIX e XX secolo: Mauro Pelliccioli, un caso paradigmatico,” in *Giovanni Secco Suardo: La cultura del restauro tra tutela e conservazione dell’opera d’arte; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Bergamo, March 9–11, 1995*, supplemental volume 98 of *Bollettino d’Arte* (Rome, 1996), 111–112.

[7] In the posthumous edition of Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the*

*Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:120, the painting was classified as the anonymous work of an artist close to the Master of Città di Castello. Nonetheless, prior to its acquisition by the Kress Foundation, Berenson apparently held a different view. In a letter of January 28, 1953, to his agent Gualtiero Volterra, Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi included photographs of the works of art he intended to sell to the Kress Foundation and informed him “delle impressioni di B.B” (of B. B.’s opinions) about them. The works in question include one attributed to the “Maestro di Badia a Isola quadro importantissimo che diventerebbe uno dei pezzi centrali di qualunque museo,” see Elsa de’ Giorgi, *L’eredità Contini Bonacossi: L’ambiguo rigore del vero* (Milan, 1988), 197. That this was the Gallery’s painting is proven by its description in other letters as “Madonna col Bambino e quattro angeli.” Subsequently (letter of Rush Kress to Contini-Bonacossi, May 14, 1953) the painting was also indicated as “Duccio, Pala d’altare della Madonna of Spoleto,” but clearly this was a mistake on the writer’s part. In fact, the *Madonna of Spoleto* is the panel generally attributed to the Badia a Isola Master that belonged to the collection of Claudio Argentieri in Spoleto in the 1930s, then circulated on the art market, and finally ended up in the collection of Vittorio Cini in Venice. See Federico Zeri, Mauro Natale, and Alessandra Mottola Molfino, *Dipinti toscani e oggetti d’arte dalla Collezione Vittorio Cini* (Vicenza, 1984), 10–11. As evinced by the documentation in NGA curatorial files, William Suida also had classified the panel as a work of the Badia a Isola Master at the time of its acquisition by the Kress Foundation, and Sandberg-Vavalà seems to have accepted this attribution as well.

- [8] Gertrude Coor, “The Early Nineteenth-Century Aspect of a Dispersed Polyptych by the Badia a Isola Master,” *The Art Bulletin* 42 (1960): 143 n. 6; Enzo Carli, “Ricuperi e restauri senesi: I, Nella cerchia di Duccio,” *Bollettino d’arte* 50 (1965): 97, 99 n. 2.
- [9] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:120. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:89–91, gathered under the name “San Quirico d’Orcia Master” the Gallery *Maestà*; the *Madonna and Child* in the Detroit Institute of Arts (no. 24.96) usually given to the Master of Città di Castello; and a fragmentary panel of the same subject, formerly in the storerooms of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and now in the museum at Buonconvento. Cf. also note 18 below.
- [10] Alessandro Conti, *La miniatura bolognese: Scuole e botteghe, 1270–1340* (Bologna, 1981), 53 n. 39. Pierpaolo Donati reconstructed the catalog of this anonymous Pistoian master around an altarpiece dated 1310 in the Museum in Avignon; cf. Pier Paolo Donati, “Per la pittura pistoiese del Trecento, 1,” *Paragone* 25, no. 295 (1974): 4–26; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 127–128.

Andrea Bacchi (1986), on the other hand, thought the panel in Washington more likely to be the work of a Pisan master of the early fourteenth century. Andrea Bacchi, "Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento nel Pistoiese," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:317–318.

- [11] See Laura Martini, "Le vicende costruttive della chiesa di San Francesco," in *San Quirico d'Orcia: La Madonna di Vitaleta; Arte e devozione*, ed. Laura Martini (San Quirico d'Orcia, 1997), 13–14, 19 n. 5; Alessandro Bagnoli, "I pittori ducchesi," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 297, 302 n. 23; Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 181, 202 n. 44, 348; and Miklós Boskovits, "Review of *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School* by J.H. Stubblebine; and *Duccio di Buoninsegna* by J. White," *The Art Bulletin* 64 (1982): 497. Though he did not specifically discuss the Washington panel, Gaudenz Freuler too included it implicitly in the catalog of the Master of Città di Castello. Cf. Gaudenz Freuler, "Duccio et ses contemporains: Le maître de Città di Castello," *Revue de l'art* 134 (2001): 28; Gaudenz Freuler, "Duccio alle origini della pittura senese," *Kunstchronik* 57 (2004): 589–590. He argued, in fact, that the works gathered by Stubblebine under the name of the San Quirico Master should be reassigned to the Città di Castello Master.
- [12] Documents of 1287 and 1288 speak of the great rose window about to be realized for Siena Cathedral, the glass for which was then being bought. Cf. Luciano Bellosi and Alessandro Bagnoli, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 162–179. The throne of the Coronation of the Virgin represented in the center of the window's upper tier recalls the type of throne in the *Madonna Rucellai* in the Uffizi, Florence, commissioned in 1285, but in contrast it is no longer of wood but of marble. The new type of throne, which would inspire Siennese painters of the following decades, is characterized by its high concave back placed between two robust quadrangular pillars, and by a seat flanked by projecting elements and adorned with panels of Cosmatesque ornament. It is heralded by the thrones of the four Evangelists in the rose window's spandrels. It seems to me improbable that this type of throne could have been borrowed from some work of the youthful Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337), as conjectured in the above-cited catalog; the model should rather be sought in contemporary Roman painting. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, "Da Duccio a Simone Martini," in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 573.
- [13] Apart from the panels that Offner cited as comparanda (cf. note 6 above)

and the small *Maestà* now in the Cini collection in Venice (cf. note 7), we should also cite those that Stubblebine attributed to a so-called San Quirico d'Orcia Master (cf. note 9), as did Alessandro Bagnoli, "I pittori duccheschi," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 297, 302 n. 23. The latter accepted, it seems, the proposition that the master who painted the Washington panel was also responsible for the one now at Buonconvento. To these two paintings he added a fresco (fig. 4) in the church of San Lorenzo al Colle Ciupi at Monteriggioni, a painting of fine quality and great interest that undoubtedly belongs to the milieu of the master of the Washington panel, but I am unable to recognize in it a work by the same hand. I wonder whether it belongs to the earliest phase of the Goodhart Duccesque Master (alias Master of the Gondi *Maestà*).

[14] Cf. Giovanna Damiani, in *Mostra di opere d'arte restaurate nelle province di Siena e Grosseto* (Genoa, 1981), 2:20–24; Alessandro Bagnoli, "Museo della Collegiata," in *Museo archeologico e della Collegiata di Casole d'Elsa*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Giuseppina Carlotta Cianferoni (Florence, 1996), 61–62; Julian Gardner, "Duccio, 'Cimabue' and the Maestro di Casole: Early Sienese Paintings for Florentine Confraternities," in *Iconographica: Mélanges offerts à Piotr Skubiszewski*, ed. Robert Favreau and Marie-Hélène Debiès (Poitiers, 1999), 110–111; Alessandro Bagnoli, "La cappella funebre del Porrina e del vescovo Ranieri e le sue figurazioni murali," in *Marco Romano e il contesto artistico senese fra la fine del Duecento e gli inizi del Trecento*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2010), 92–111. Of the two kneeling donors depicted in the fresco, the one to the left is Bernardino called Porrina, a famous lawyer of the time, who had died by 1309; the one to the right, his brother Ranieri, who was bishop of Cremona and died in 1312. It cannot be excluded that, as Bagnoli believed, the fresco postdates 1312, with a commemorative intention; but far more probable seems the hypothesis of Damiani and Gardner that the chapel, site of the fresco, was erected, as was often the case, to enhance the importance of the donors while still alive, probably shortly after Ranieri's preferment to the see of Cremona in 1296.

[15] The peculiar motif of the pronouncedly forward-projecting sides of the throne, forming a semicircle around the seat on which the Madonna is enthroned and supporting a high concave backrest, must have characterized the Madonna no. 565 in the National Gallery in London before the lower part of the panel was sawn off. Julian Gardner (1999) argued for a relatively late date for this painting, c. 1315, because he believed that the figure of the blessing Christ child standing on his mother's knees derived from *Simone Martini's* famous *Maestà* in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. But the child in the London panel (as shown in particular by his crossed legs) assumes a pose more similar to that of the Christ child in the Badia a Isola

*Maestà* (cf. note 8 above), a work probably dating to c. 1290 and therefore appreciably earlier in date than Simone's fresco. See Julian Gardner, "Duccio, 'Cimabue' and the Maestro di Casole: Early Sienese Paintings for Florentine Confraternities," in *Iconographica: Mélanges offerts à Piotr Skubiszewski*, ed. Robert Favreau and Marie-Hélène Debiès (Poitiers, 1999), 111. The London Madonna is, I think, later than the Badia a Isola panel, but should not be placed beyond c. 1300. An archaic feature of the marble throne in the Badia a Isola *Maestà*, shown frontally and with an arched opening on its front side (like the thrones of the Evangelists in the rose window in Siena Cathedral), is that its foot-rest is seen laterally, as in the Coronation in the same window. So the type of throne may be compared with that we see in some of Duccio's earlier paintings, still falling within the thirteenth century (cf. the Madonna no. 873 in the Kunstmuseum of Bern). Around 1300, a new type of throne was being used: firmer in structure and classicizing in style. This is exemplified by the Madonna frescoed on the arch of the Due Porte at Stalloreghi (Siena), which James Stubblebine (1979) unconvincingly attributed to the Casole Fresco Master and Bellosi to "bottega di Giotto." In fact, the fresco is Sienese, close to Memmo di Filipuccio. Cf. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:114; Luciano Bellosi, "Il percorso di Duccio," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 116.

The chronology of these paintings seems to be confirmed by some works with thrones of archaizing type dating to the early years of the fourteenth century, such as that depicted in the *Martyrdom of Saint James* in the mural cycle of the former Palazzo Vescovile in Pistoia attributed to the Città di Castello Master. Cf. Ada Labriola, "Gli affreschi della cappella di San Niccolò nell'antico Palazzo dei Vescovi a Pistoia," *Arte cristiana* 76 (1988): 247–266 and fig. 4. Another example of similar ornament is that of the *Madonna and Child Enthroned* painted by Memmo di Filipuccio in the church of San Jacopo at San Gimignano, for which see Enzo Carli, "Ancora dei Memmi a San Gimignano," *Paragone* 14, no. 159 (1963): 31–32. Both thrones are morphologically close to the architectural details of the frescoes on the internal façade of the Collegiata in the same town, for which Memmo was paid in 1305. See Gianna Coppini, *San Gimignano: Sogno del Medioevo* (San Gimignano, 2000), 50.

The close kinship between the type of throne represented in the Washington panel and some paintings of the Goodhart Duccesque Master also should be underlined. Cf. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: figs. 257–259. Alessandro Bagnoli, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 366–368, compared the throne in one of the works of this anonymous master, that now in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello in Florence, with the

structure painted in the Washington *Maestà* and proposed for the former a date close to Duccio's *Maestà* in Siena. The proposal is plausible. However, the works of the Goodhart Duccesque Master renovate the form of the throne in the Washington Madonna, replacing the semicircular seat with a rectangular one and making the structure as a whole more rational. These changes, together with some new elements of gothicizing taste, imply for the panel in the Bargello a date decidedly later than the *Maestà* in the National Gallery of Art.

- [16] Enzo Carli, "Ricuperi e restauri senesi. I. Nella cerchia di Duccio," *Bollettino d'arte* 50 (1965): 97, considered the Washington panel "a sequel" to the former Argentieri *Maestà* (now in the Cini collection in Venice) and seemed to imply for it—since he believed that the Cini *Maestà* had been executed "forse ancora entro il Duecento" (perhaps still within the thirteenth century)—a dating no later than the first decade of the fourteenth century. Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979), too, followed by subsequent catalogs of the National Gallery of Art, proposed "early 14th century," while James Stubblebine (1979) detected in the panel some familiarity with the works of Pietro Lorenzetti (Sienese, active 1306 - 1345) and therefore proposed a date for it of c. 1320. Andrea Bacchi (1986) reverted to the years around the turn of the century ("a cavallo fra Duecento e Trecento"), while Julian Gardner (1999), without explicitly suggesting a date, compared the painting with the "old-fashioned composition" of the Madonna no. 565 in the London National Gallery, in his view datable to c. 1315. Recently, Alessandro Bagnoli (2003) also placed the Washington panel among the "casi tardivi e provinciali di coloro che furono sostanzialmente insensibili alle novità dei maestri più moderni e dipinsero ben avanti nel Trecento tenendo fede a modelli ormai superati" (retardataire and provincial cases of those who were substantially insensible to the innovations of more modern masters and who, painting well into the fourteenth century, remained faithful to outdated models). See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 14–15; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:172–174; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings and Sculpture: Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1968), 37; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 137; James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:89–91; Andrea Bacchi, "Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento nel Pistoiese," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:317–318; Julian Gardner, "Duccio, 'Cimabue' and the Maestro di Casole: Early Sienese Paintings for Florentine Confraternities," in *Iconographica: Mélanges offerts à Piotr Skubiszewski*, ed. Robert Favreau and Marie-Hélène Debès (Poitiers, 1999), 112; Alessandro Bagnoli, "I pittori duccheschi," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo,

Milan, 2003), 297.

- [17] A similar position of the child is frequently found in Italian paintings of the thirteenth century. In Siena, we find it as early as 1262 (cf. the *Madonna and Child* no. 16 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena). The motif was abandoned in the phase of Duccio's full maturity and that of his followers at the turn of the century. It was replaced by a more modern motif of the Christ child who expresses affection for his mother or pulls toward himself a hem of her veil, or raises his hand in the gesture of blessing frontally, with his arm shown in foreshortening.
- [18] James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 1:89–91, noted the Washington *Madonna's* affinity with the half-length *Madonna* in the Detroit Institute of Arts (no. 233), which most art historians have attributed to the Città di Castello Master. He also gave a panel now in the Museum at Buonconvento to his San Quirico Master. Not easily classifiable in stylistic terms, the latter, decidedly Duccesque in composition (to which Victor Schmidt compared the small *Madonna* no. 873 in the Kunstmuseum of Bern), is distinguished by aristocratically elongated forms and by some peculiar harshness in the definition of the faces. Cf. Victor Schmidt, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 180. These are characteristics it shares with a vaguely Duccesque *Madonna* now in the Salini collection in Siena—a work undeniably of far earlier date—published by Gaudenz Freuler (2001) as marking the exordium of the Città di Castello Master. See Gaudenz Freuler, "Duccio et ses contemporains: Le maître de Città di Castello," *Revue de l'art* 134 (2001): figs. 1, 30. As for the *Maestà* in Monteriggioni cited in note 13 above, Bagnoli rightly compared the richly articulated mantle and dress of the *Madonna* with Duccio's gravely damaged *Maestà* in Massa Marittima, a painting probably produced by the middle of the second decade. But despite its massive forms, the timidly gothicizing architecture of the throne in the Monteriggioni fresco suggests a significantly later date for the fresco than for the Washington panel. See Alessandro Bagnoli, "I pittori duccheschi," in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 297.
- [19] Though they reconstructed the career and oeuvre of the artist in different ways, the recent studies by Freuler and Bagnoli concurred in assigning some key works of the Master of Città di Castello to the first decade of the fourteenth century. These include the namepiece itself, the *Maestà* in the Pinacoteca Comunale in Città di Castello; the dismantled polyptych presumably comprising the figures of saints nos. 29–32 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena; the *Madonna and Child* in the Museo dell'Opera, Siena; and polyptych no. 33, also in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena. These prestigious commissions indicate, of course, that the anonymous master

was already at this precocious date a well-established artist. See Gaudenz Freuler, “Duccio et ses contemporains: Le maître de Città di Castello,” *Revue de l’art* 134 (2001): 27–50; Gaudenz Freuler, “Duccio alle origini della pittura senese,” *Kunstchronik* 57 (2004): 576–594; Alessandro Bagnoli, “La cappella funebre del Porrina e del vescovo Ranieri e le sue figurazioni murali,” in *Marco Romano e il contesto artistico senese fra la fine del Duecento e gli inizi del Trecento*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2010), 92–111.

- [20] Gaudenz Freuler, “Duccio et ses contemporains: Le maître de Città di Castello,” *Revue de l’art* 134 (2001): 35–37 and fig. 10. Perhaps rightly, he dated the painting to c. 1300; Alessandro Bagnoli preferred an immediately preceding phase. See Alessandro Bagnoli, in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 315.
- [21] Mojmir S. Frinta identified the same penta-lobe rosette punchmark in the *Maestà* no. 565 in the National Gallery in London and in the *Maestà* no. 18 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena, both paintings usually attributed to the Casole Master, and in the *Maestà* in the picture gallery at Città di Castello and numerous other paintings attributed to the Master of Città di Castello. Cf. Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 442. Alessandro Bagnoli (2003) admitted the presence of the same punch mark in the two stylistic groups but did not think that this necessarily implied they were the work of a single master: it would prove, he argued, “semmai, l’uso comune dello stesso strumento o l’appartenenza ai due pittori di un utensile identico” (if anything, the common use of the same instrument or the possession by the two painters of an identical tool). However, the circumstance that this punch appears only in these works and not in the paintings of other contemporary masters seems to support the identification between the Casole Master and the Città di Castello Master. See Alessandro Bagnoli, “I pittori ducceschi,” in *Duccio: Siena fra tradizione bizantina e mondo gotico*, ed. Alessandro Bagnoli et al. (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2003), 294. Again according to Frinta (1998, 489), the hexa-rosette motif used in the Washington panel recurs in the *Madonna* no. 583 of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena and in a *Madonna della Misericordia* from the parish church of Vertine in Chianti, now on loan to the same Pinacoteca. Recent studies have underlined the affinity of these two works and have related them to Simone Martini’s formative period; indeed, many scholars now consider the former to be a work of the young Simone himself. The other is a more problematic painting: though some attribute it to Simone, it was probably produced in the shop of Memmo di Filippuccio. Cf. Bagnoli 2003, 422–424; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 344. It is not easy to evaluate with any precision the significance of this data, still less to explain the fact,

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ascertained by Frinta, that the same hexa-rosette punch also appears in the Pietro Cavallini-attributed *Epitaph of Bishop Umbert d'Ormont* now in the collection of the Arcivescovado of Naples.

[22] The Virgin's gesture of draping the body of the infant Jesus, who wears a transparent chemise, in a precious red cloth, is repeated in the fresco in Casole.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a panel composed of four boards with vertical grain, on which strips of woven fabric were laid. The panel, which has a gable of obtuse angle shape, is enclosed in an engaged frame whose left-hand vertical section seems to be original. The panel maintains what seems to be its original thickness (2.4 cm). The reverse of the panel is covered with remains of a gesso coating and a sparse layer of red paint. A wooden batten, which is part of the original structure, runs across the reverse of the panel approximately 60 cm from the top. The trace of a second horizontal batten (approximately 90 cm from the bottom) is also visible; the batten itself is lost, but the area formerly covered by it is uncovered by paint or gesso and retains the clipped iron nails with which it was formerly attached. The panel was prepared with a layer of gesso over the fabric.[1] Infrared reflectography at 950–680 nm [2] revealed underdrawing in the figures' hands and feet and a verdaccio under the flesh tones.[3] The paint layers of the obverse, applied over a gesso preparation, appear to be tempera; the gold ground is laid over a red bole preparation.

In the earliest known photograph of the painting [fig. 1], from c. 1930, the panel appeared worm eaten and irregularly broken at the edges, especially on the right side (looking from the obverse).[4] In a subsequent treatment, sawdust was used to plug holes in the wooden support and its various vertical checks. Numerous wooden "butterflies" also were inserted in the boards to bridge the joins and checks. The panel now appears in stable condition, but each of the four boards has a vertical convex warp, and the panel overall has a horizontal convex warp. The panel is badly damaged along the bottom 10 cm: the paint and gesso are almost completely lost from this area. The painted surface has suffered from neglect and ill treatment and has been subjected to restorations on various occasions. There is a large amount of inpaint and overpaint on the painting.[5] The areas that are not heavily overpainted are the Madonna's face, the Christ child's face and torso, and

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the upper left angel's face and hands. The Madonna's robe is reinforced, as are the trim on the angels' robes and the throne cushions. The Christ child's hair and swaddling cloth are heavily restored. The face of the lower right angel is almost entirely restoration, as is the bottom 30 cm of the panel. The angels' wings are completely overpainted. In addition, a thick, yellowed varnish covers the surface.

A very clumsy and apparently early restorer, possibly as early as the fourteenth century, reinforced the design of the faces and the child's drapery; added a flower to his left hand; overpainted the Virgin's coif, transforming it into a veil; and modified the structure of the throne, covering the convex shape of its central part behind the Madonna's legs with a plain checkered surface.[6] The execution of a second series of halos, smaller than the original ones, probably can be traced back to this same intervention. The smaller halos cover only a part of the older ones and have no incised decoration. At some point, perhaps in the early nineteenth century,[7] an arched top was given to the panel with the addition of modern wood; this may have been to fit it in a nichelike recess in the wall of a church. This enlargement is still visible in the abovementioned photograph of about 1930. By 1937 the panel had been treated again, probably by Mauro Pelliccioli.[8] It was probably during Pelliccioli's treatment that the earlier restorations were removed, revealing the original composition of the halos, throne, faces, and drapery, as well as the original angled shape of the panel. The restorer Vannoni in Florence treated it again, in c. 1952; his work probably addressed the wooden support and possibly the framing.[9] Since then no further conservation work has been done.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1928–1930, Master of Città di Castello, *Maestà (Madonna and Child with Four Angels)*, c. 1290, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 2** Johann Anton Ramboux, sketch of *Maestà (Madonna and Child with Four Angels)*, here attributed to the Master of Città di Castello, c. 1830–1840, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF) and scanning electron microscopy/energy dispersive spectrometry (SEM/EDS) of cross-sections. This analysis determined that the preparation layers are calcium sulfate (see report dated January 19, 2010, in NGA conservation files).

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- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed with an infrared hyperspectral camera operating at 960–1680 nm and a Mitsubishi M600 focal plane array camera operating at 1 to 5 microns.
- [3] The use of black, yellow, and white pigments in the verdaccio was confirmed by the abovementioned analysis (see report dated January 19, 2010, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] The reference is to a photograph made when the panel still belonged to a private collector in San Quirico d'Orcia c. 1930 (see Provenance). A print of the negative, from the Archive of the Soprintendenza of Florence (no. 11273), is in the NGA curatorial files.
- [5] The NGA scientific research department analysis showed zinc, indicating areas of restoration, in many spectra and samples (see report dated January 19, 2010, in NGA conservation files).
- [6] Some of the retouches illustrated by the photograph referred to above are so rough (especially the drapery of the Christ child and the flower in his hand) as to make one wonder if it is not the work of an amateur realized in a relatively recent period; however, a detail like the checkered front side of the throne would seem to be hardly later than the fourteenth century. In any case the painting is documented in this state by the 1930 photograph and in a sketch (fig. 2) made by Johann Anton Ramboux (1798–1866), whose *Sammlung von Umrissen dienend zur Geschichte der bildenden Künste des Mittelalters in Italien in den Jahren 1818–1822 und 1833–1843 aufgenommen*, consisting of ten volumes of copies and sketches and now in the library of the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt am Main, contains a drawing of the Washington painting (vol. 3, fol. 20, no. 507). During his first Italian visit (1818–1822), Ramboux was able to visit Siena and neighboring territories only briefly; therefore, the sketch of the Washington Madonna probably dates to his later visit in the years 1833–1843. Cf. Hans Joachim Ziemke, “Ramboux und die sienesische Kunst,” *Städel Jahrbuch 2* (1969): 255–300.
- [7] The arched top of the panel, already in a fragmentary state, is visible in the Soprintendenza photograph (mentioned in note 4 above), as well as in Ramboux’s sketch. The unusual doubling of the halos is probably a consequence of the need to regild them and yet to be sparing with the gold.
- [8] The painting, in a state still similar to that shown by the photo of c. 1930, appears without the arched top and with a few cleaning tests in the faces of the Virgin and the child, in the hand of the lower right side angel, and in the left side of the throne in a set of photographs probably made by the mid-1930s (copies in NGA curatorial files). In his expertise dated August 30, 1937 (see Entry note 6 and Panzeri 1996), Richard Offner stated that the photo of the picture he had in hand “scopre solamente in parte la superficie originale la quale è . . . ancora molta ridipinta” (only partly reveals the original surface,

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which is still heavily repainted). The same photograph had been sent to Bernard Berenson by Wildenstein's, New York (to whom the panel may have been offered for sale), on November 3, 1937 (copy in the Berenson Library at Villa I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, Florence). The restoration is credited to Pelliccioli by Panzeri. Photos of the painting during cleaning are in the Giannino Marchig collection of the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles (ND 614, box 933, photos 114497–114500).

- [9] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:173. The person in question was in all probability Ferruccio Vannoni, a frame maker who worked for Stephen Pichetto. See Gianni Mazzoni, *Quadri antichi del Novecento* (Vicenza, 2001), 21, 40 note 20 and passim.
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### PROVENANCE

Possibly the church of San Francesco in San Quirico d'Orcia (Siena).<sup>[1]</sup> Pompeo Lemmi (or Lammi?), San Quirico d'Orcia; Giacobbe Preziotti, San Quirico d'Orcia, by c. 1930;<sup>[2]</sup> (Italian art market);<sup>[3]</sup> Baron Alberto Fassini, Tivoli; Corinna Uberti Trossi, Livorno, by 1949; (Ettore Sestieri, Rome), by 1951;<sup>[4]</sup> (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence), by 1953;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 1954 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1961 to NGA. [1] The panel's original provenance is uncertain. It was recorded by Johann Anton Ramboux (1798-1866) in the first half of the nineteenth century, whose *Sammlung von Umrissen dienend zur Geschichte der bildenden Künste des Mittelalters in Italien in den Jahren 1818-1822 und 1833-1843 aufgenommen*, consisting of ten volumes of copies and sketches and now in the library of the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt am Main, contains the drawing (vol. 3, fol. 20, no. 507) of the Washington painting. During his first Italian visit (1818–1822) Ramboux was able to visit Siena and neighboring territories only briefly; therefore, the sketch of the NGA painting probably dates to his later visit in the years 1833–1843 (see Hans Joachim Ziemke, "Ramboux und die sienesische Kunst," *Städels Jahrbuch* N.S. 2 [1969]: 255-300). Ramboux notes the painting as present in a cloister of the principal church of San Quirico ("Tafel . . . welche sich in einem Kreuzgang der Hauptkirche zu S. Quirico befindet"), probably referring to the Collegiata. This church, however, never had a cloister (see A. Canestrelli, "La Pieve di S. Quirico in Osenna," *Siena monumentale* 1 [1906]: 5-21). On the other hand, in the early decades of the twentieth century the panel was considered to have come from San Francesco in San Quirico d'Orcia, a church situated in the center of town and originally provided with such a structure. The Franciscans are

known to have established a community at an early date in San Quirico; their presence there is recorded ever since the thirteenth century (Luigi Pellegrini, *Insedimenti francescani nell'Italia del Duecento*, Rome, 1984: 179). Their convent was suppressed in 1783 (Laura Martini, "Le vicende costruttive della chiesa di San Francesco," in *San Quirico d'Orcia. La Madonna di Vitaleta: arte e devozione*, San Quirico d'Orcia [Siena], 1997: 19). The panel may then have been transferred to the Collegiata, or to some other site, but in fact, we have no further information about it until c. 1930. Describing the works of art contained in the church of San Francesco in 1865, Francesco Brogi (*Inventario generale degli oggetti d'arte della provincia di Siena*, Siena, 1897) fails to cite the Gallery's painting, nor is it included in the list relating to the church of the Collegiata of San Quirico that he himself drew up. Evidently by that time the panel had been removed from the church and was either in private hands or in some small oratory; because it was the property not of the church but of a lay confraternity, its owners could have moved it from its former location. The arrival of the painting in (or its restitution to) San Francesco is conceivable after 1865, when the bishop of Montalcino entrusted the church to the Pia Commissione di Santa Maria di Vitaleta to undertake the necessary work of restoration and refurbishment of the building, later renamed Santa Maria di Vitaleta. This same commission later brought a suit against the possessors of the painting in 1930, claiming its restitution. The panel, therefore, which does not figure among the sacred furnishings entrusted by the Curia of Montalcino to the Pia Commissione at the time of the transfer of the church (in 1865), could have been reinstated to it only some time later and could have remained there for a number of years, sufficiently long enough for the inhabitants of the town to remember it (see Martini 1997). [2] The "tavola preduccesca" cited in the documentation in the archive of the Soprintendenza of Siena is described as "presso il Sig. Lemmi"; Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:173) speaks of Pompeo Lammi. In the suit brought to claim property rights over the painting, however, the owner of the painting is named as Giacobbe Preziotti (Martini 1997, 19 n. 6). [3] In November 1936, again according to the information gleaned by Laura Martini, the Ministry for National Education notified the Soprintendenza that property rights had been confirmed to belong to the private citizens who then owned the painting, and its export authorized. Probably following this decision, the restoration of the panel began and the painting was offered for sale on the Italian art market. [4] Shapley 1979, 1:173 places the panel in the Fassini collection and with the dealer Ettore Sestieri. A catalogue of the collection, then only recently formed, of barone Alberto Fassini exists, published without a date in

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the early 1930s, but it does not include this painting among those distributed among his various houses. Gertrude Coor Achenbach ("The early nineteenth-century aspect of a dispersed polyptych by the Badia a Isola Master," *The Art Bulletin* 42 [1960]: 143), who places the painting "shortly after World War II in a private collection near Tivoli," refers, probably, to that of Alberto Fassini. Elisa de Giorgi (*L'eredità Contini Bonaccossi*, Milan, 1988: 197) reports the presence of the painting in the Uberti Trossi collection. [5] The date of the painting's purchase by Contini-Bonacossi is unknown, but it must have been in his possession by 1953, when he proposed, with some insistence, to sell it to the Kress Collection (see De Giorgi 1988). [6] On 7 June 1954, the Kress Foundation made an offer to Contini-Bonacossi for sixteen paintings, including NGA 1961.9.77, which was listed as *Madonna and Child and Four Angels* by Master of Badia a Isola. In a draft of one of the documents prepared for the count's signature in connection with the offer, this painting is described as one "which came from my personal collection in Florence." Contini-Bonacossi accepted the offer on 30 June 1954; the final payment for the purchase was ultimately made in early 1957, after his death in 1955. (See copies of correspondence in NGA curatorial files.) The painting was not given to the NGA until 1961, and in a letter to Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà of 1 August 1960 (copy in NGA curatorial files), Fern Rusk Shapley continues to express doubts about it, wondering whether the *Maestà* was "good enough to warrant our making an effort . . . to get it for the National Gallery."

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# *Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes*

Also known as

Borgo Crucifix Master

Umbrian, active 1260s and 1270s

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

In 1922, Osvald Sirén coined the conventional name for the painter, presumably Umbrian by origin and training. The Swedish art historian was the first to recognize the common authorship of a painted crucifix now in the Treasury of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, two paintings of the same subject in Bologna, and the fragments *The Mourning Madonna* and *The Mourning Saint John* being discussed here.[1] To this first nucleus of works, Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà some years later (1929) added the crucifix in the church of Santa Maria in Borgo at Bologna, now exhibited at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in that city; and three painted crucifixes, in the Fornari collection at Fabriano (now in Camerino in the possession of the Cassa di Risparmio di Macerata), the Pinacoteca of Faenza, and the Museo Civico (now Collezioni Comunali d'Arte) in Bologna.[2] This catalog, which still seems essentially coherent today,[3] continued to grow in the following decades but has often been divided into various groups under different conventional names. Thus, the two panels in the National Gallery of Art and another fragment with the bust of Christ, which probably belonged originally to the same work, are usually attributed to a Borgo Crucifix Master; the crucifix in Assisi and another crucifix painted on both sides now in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne, to a Blue Crucifix Master; while the rest of the catalog, considered Bolognese or Umbrian in figurative culture, is attributed to one or the other of these masters or left in anonymity.[4] In recent years, however, scholars have reaffirmed the unity of the group originally linked together under the name of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes and have recognized the misleading character of the other proposed conventional names.[5]

The anonymous painter was probably trained in Assisi around 1255–1265, under the influence of such artists as the Master of Santa Chiara, author of the great painted crucifix in the church of Santa Chiara in the Umbrian town, datable to c. 1260,[6] and the Master of Saint Francis (Umbrian, active third quarter 13th century), responsible for the frescoes in the nave of the lower church of San

Francesco and the design of some of the stained glass in the upper church.[7] But he must also have been in contact with some local artists who followed in the footsteps of Giunta Pisano and who were then active in Spoleto and its environs, such as the Master of San Felice di Giano.[8] At a later stage in his career, the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, who (as far as we are able to judge) was almost always active for Franciscan churches and therefore was perhaps a member of that order, worked in the Marches and Emilia-Romagna, settling in Bologna, where he not only executed a number of painted crucifixes but also painted a fresco in the church of Santo Stefano and influenced the activity of local painters and miniaturists.[9]

[1] Osvald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im xiii. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), 219–225. In proposing the name of Meister der Franziskaner-Kruzifixe, Sirén defined the figurative culture from which the artist sprang as Umbro-Pisan.

[2] Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà excluded from her regrouping one of the crucifixes of San Francesco at Bologna, which she thought unclassifiable on account of its extensive overpainting, but she associated the portable cross in Smith College at Northampton, Massachusetts, with the paintings thus far included in the group. Eschewing the conventional name introduced by Sirén, Sandberg-Vavalà argued that the anonymous artist was Bolognese in origin and had gone to Assisi to work but later returned to his hometown. See Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 844–858.

[3] As Edward Garrison noted (1949), the only element alien to the catalog assembled by Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà is the crucifix in the Collezioni Comunali in Bologna; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 208.

[4] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 13 (Blue Crucifix Master), 14 (Borgo Crucifix Master), 208, 209, 211 (Bolognese anonymous works), and 213 (Umbrian anonymous work); and subsequently by various other scholars.

[5] Miklós Boskovits (2000) emphasized that Santa Maria in Borgo was not the original site of the painted crucifix now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna and that the blue pigment used in painted crucifixes was a very widespread iconographic tradition in the thirteenth century. See Miklós Boskovits, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei

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(Venice, 2000), 186. See also Silvia Giorgi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 41–44; Anna Tambini, *Storia delle arti figurative a Faenza*, vol. 1, *Le origini* (Faenza, 2006), 74–82.

[6] See Elvio Lunghi, “Maestro di Santa Chiara,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:610–611.

[7] See Elvio Lunghi, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:624–625; for the artist’s designs for stained glass, see Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 53–78.

[8] See Giordana Benazzi, in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 66–67.

[9] See Miklós Boskovits, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 196–197; Massimo Medica, “La città dei libri e dei miniatori,” in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 125.

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Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes  
Umbrian, active 1260s and 1270s

## *The Mourning Madonna*

c. 1270/1275

tempera on panel

original panel: 81 × 31.7 cm (31 7/8 × 12 1/2 in.)

overall: 82.4 × 33.5 cm (32 7/16 × 13 3/16 in.)

framed: 90.8 × 40.6 × 6 cm (35 3/4 × 16 × 2 3/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.13

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### ENTRY

Because of their relatively large size, this panel and its companion, *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*, have been considered part of the apron of a painted crucifix.[1] As their horizontal wood grain suggests, they undoubtedly formed the lateral terminals of a painting of this type, probably that belonging to the church of Santa Maria in Borgo in Bologna (now exhibited at the Pinacoteca Nazionale of that city), as Gertrude Coor was the first to recognize [fig. 1].[2] Another fragment of the work, a tondo with the bust of the Blessing Christ [fig. 2], was in the possession of the art dealer Bacri in Paris around 1939.[3]

The two panels represent, respectively, the mother of Jesus and his favorite disciple in the typical pose of mourners, with the head bowed to one side and the cheek resting on the palm of the hand.[4] As is seen frequently in Italian paintings of the late thirteenth century, Mary is wearing a purple *maphorion* over a blue robe,[5] and Saint John a steel-blue garment and purple-red mantle.[6] In

publishing them (1922), Osvald Sirén noted the stylistic affinity of the two panels with the Bolognese crucifix [fig. 3]. He inserted them in the catalog of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes,[7] a painter of mixed Umbrian-Pisan culture of the second half of the thirteenth century, whose oeuvre he himself had reconstructed. For his part, Raimond van Marle (1923) considered the fragments works of an Umbrian artist of the school of the Master of San Francesco.[8] Robert Lehman, in compiling the catalog of his father's collection (1928), accepted Sirén's opinion but proposed the date of c. 1250 for the two fragments.[9] In 1929, Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà undertook a far more thorough examination of the problem of the two fragments and their stylistic affinities. Emphasizing the Umbrian component in the painter's figurative culture, she stated that he was active in the years close to 1272 [10] and had worked extensively in Emilia-Romagna.

While most art historians have accepted Sirén's view and the conventional name he coined for the master,[11] advocates of a contrary thesis have not been lacking. There are those who support the thesis that the two fragments are Pisan in derivation, or even propose Giunta Pisano as the master of the crucifix.[12] Other art historians insist that the painter was Bolognese and exclude from his oeuvre the paintings of Umbrian provenance.[13] Today, however, there seems no good reason to deny the common authorship of the oeuvre mainly consisting of crucifixes first assembled by Sirén, or to reject the name he attached to it, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes.[14]

The chronological sequence of the works attributable to the anonymous master is still under discussion. Useful clues can be deduced, however, from a comparison between some passages, such as the figure of the mourning Saint John, that frequently recur in his paintings. In my view, the pictorial treatment of the apostle in the crucifixes in the Treasury of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, the Pinacoteca of Faenza, the bank in Camerino, and the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna not only confirm that these works were all painted by the same master but also suggest that their order of execution must have been that listed above. In the four versions of the image of Saint John, the design seems to gain in fluidity and the contours in movement, while the forms become more segmented, or ruffled, by the increasingly close-set alignment of the drapery folds. At the same time, the pose of the apostle gradually assumes the hanchement so dear to Gothic taste. These changes are present, of course, in the works of other contemporary artists and provide points of reference for the dating of our two panels. Thus, the figure of Saint John in the painting in Assisi seems to be close in style to that executed by

the Master of Santa Chiara between 1253 and 1260 (crucifix in the Basilica of Santa Chiara at Assisi),<sup>[15]</sup> while the version of the same image now in the National Gallery of Art seems more closely comparable, both in elegance of proportions and in pose, to the mourning Saint John by the Master of San Francesco, part of the painted crucifix in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia, dated 1272.<sup>[16]</sup> The period of time indicated by these works ought also to circumscribe the years of activity of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes. On the other hand, the more lyrical manner of this master in comparison with the Umbrian masters cited above suggests that during the years spent in Umbria he was especially in contact with such painters as the Master of San Felice di Giano, the master of the crucifix (no. 17, unfortunately undated) in the Pinacoteca of Spoleto.<sup>[17]</sup> His style clearly differs from that of the Bolognese followers of Giunta Pisano,<sup>[18]</sup> and this circumstance in itself seems to rebut the hypothesis that he had been trained in the Emilian city. Yet it cannot be excluded that the artistic climate of Bologna could have stimulated successive developments in his career, especially the town's vital and increasingly sophisticated tradition of producing miniatures for illuminated manuscripts, along with the influence of the sculpted Arca in the church of San Domenico, completed not long before the crucifix under discussion.<sup>[19]</sup>

That the two fragments formed part of the crucifix now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna must remain a hypothesis that only proper scientific and technical analysis of the panels could corroborate. Yet the dimensions and pictorial treatment of the panels now divided among the galleries of Bologna and Washington and a private collection provide strong arguments to support the view that they originally belonged together. As for the measurements, the two panels in the Gallery, slightly cropped to the sides, are very similar in size to the upper terminal of the Bolognese crucifix [fig. 4].<sup>[20]</sup> A virtual identity can also be seen in the pictorial treatment of these works. They all reveal the same search for a stylistic balance between Giuntesque formulae and a tendency towards the new needs of elegance and softness in the modeling of the figure. The similarity between the rapid brushstrokes that create the forms in the figures of the Madonna [fig. 5] and Saint John and in the crucifix in Bologna seems to me evident. All three panels, moreover, reveal the same manner of producing relief effects by sudden flashes of light, using the same technique of applying delicate touches of white to the green underpaint preparation. The effect of this pictorial freedom and of the graceful and humanizing rendering of the figures would not fail to stimulate the Bolognese miniaturists active in the last quarter of the thirteenth century.<sup>[21]</sup>



**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a painted crucifix, formerly in San Francesco, Bologna, by the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes (color images are NGA objects): a. *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels* (above) and the *Kneeling Saint Francis* (below), and *Saint Helen* (added by Jacopo di Paolo) (fig. 3); b. *The Mourning Madonna*; c. *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*; d. *Bust of the Blessing Christ* (fig. 2)



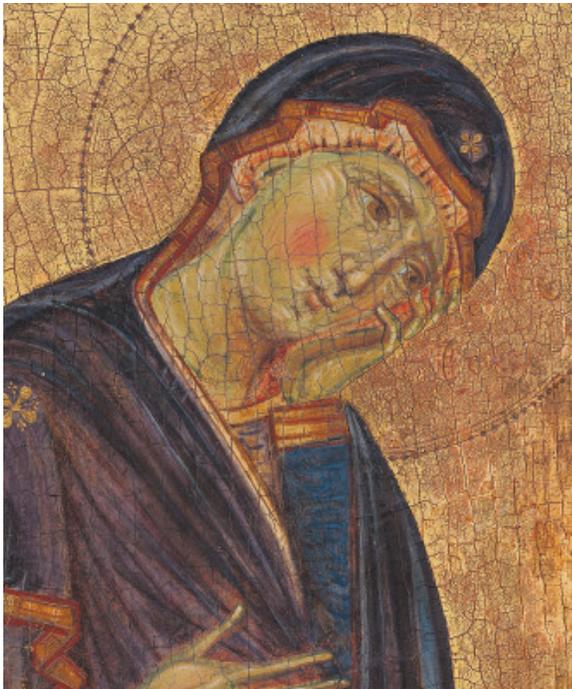
**fig. 2** Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *Bust of the Blessing Christ*, c. 1270/1275, tempera on panel, now lost



**fig. 3** Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels* (above) and the *Kneeling Saint Francis* (below), and *Saint Helen* (added by Jacopo di Paolo), c. 1270/1275, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna



**fig. 4** Detail of upper terminal, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels*, c. 1270/1275, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna

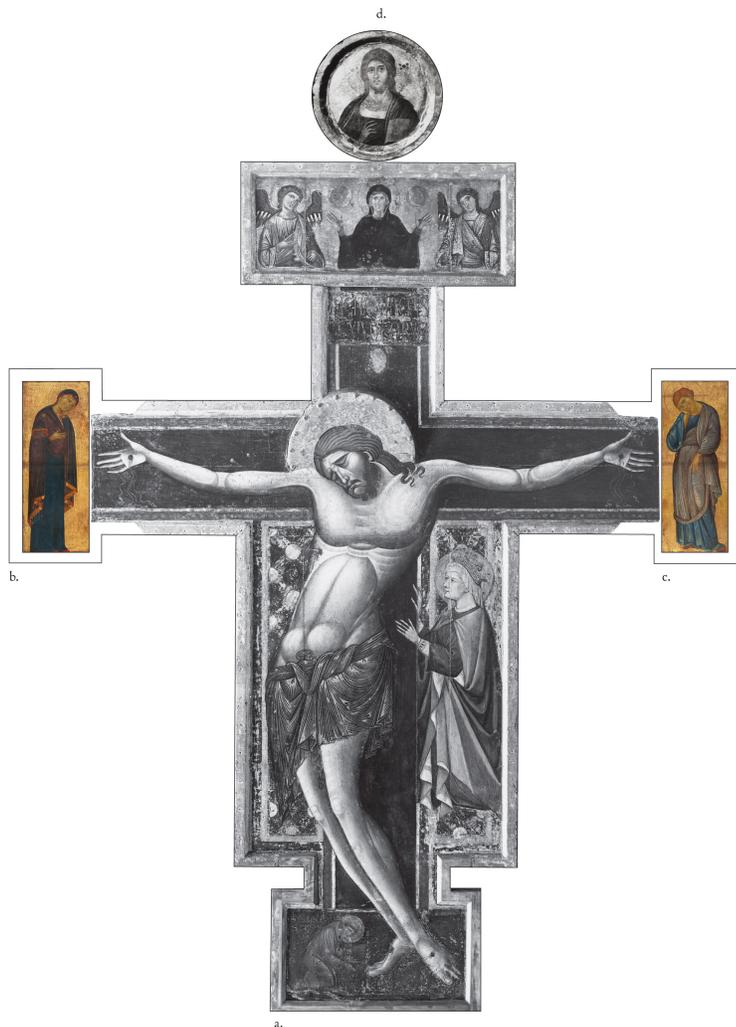


**fig. 5** Detail, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *The Mourning Madonna*, 1270/1275, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a painted crucifix, formerly in San Francesco, Bologna, by the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes:

- a. *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels* (above) and the *Kneeling Saint Francis* (below), and *Saint Helen* (added by Jacopo di Paolo) (Entry fig. 3)
- b. *The Mourning Madonna*
- c. *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*
- d. *Bust of the Blessing Christ* (Entry fig. 2)

## NOTES

- [1] See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 174–176, and, on the genre of the painted crucifixes, Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 400–406.
- [2] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 221, considered the panels to belong to the apron (*tabellone*) of a painted crucifix (i.e., the lateral compartments flanking the body of Christ). Gertrude Coor was the first to recognize that the fragments belong to the crucifix of Santa Maria in Borgo; she orally communicated this conclusion to Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:312 n. 4. Previously, Giulia Sinibaldi, in *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937*, ed. Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti (Florence, 1943), 151, had proposed that the two paintings belonged to the crucifix formerly in the choir and now in the Library of the Convent of San Francesco; but cf. in this regard Silvia Giorgi, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 200–201.
- [3] It was Edward Garrison who recognized that the fragment, which measures 40 cm in diameter, belonged to his “Borgo Crucifix Master.” The panel, with a provenance from the Oertel collection in Dresden, was stolen from the dealer Bacri in 1939 and has never been rediscovered. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 219. Gertrude Coor proposed that it originally formed part of the Santa Maria in Borgo crucifix in a verbal communication to Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:312 n. 4.
- [4] This was a gesture of sorrow already familiar in classical art and widespread in medieval art. See Moshe Barasch, *Gestures of Despair in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art* (New York, 1976), 129 n. 15; François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 181–184.
- [5] The *maphorion* was a sort of shawl used in Byzantium both in male and female costume; see Harry Kühnel, ed., *Bildwörterbuch der Kleidung und Rüstung: Vom Alten Orient bis zum ausgehenden Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1992), 168–169. A common element in Byzantine and Byzantinizing representations of the Madonna, an example of *maphorion* was preserved as a much-venerated relic in the Blancherna monastery in Istanbul; see Averil Cameron, “The Early Cult of the Virgin,” in *The Mother of God: The Representation of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 11–13.

- [6] The distinctive colors of the saint are generally an azure (or blue) tunic and a pink (or red) mantle; cf. Margrit Lisner, "Die Gewandfarben der Apostel in Giotto's Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbbikonographie mit Notizen zu älteren Aposteldarstellungen in Florenz, Assisi und Rom," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53 (1990): 334.
- [7] "Ihr Zusammenhang mit dem bolognesen Kruzifix geht überzeugend sowohl aus der Figurenzeichnung wie aus dem Typen und der Faltenbehandlung vor," Osvald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), 222.
- [8] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 1, *From the 6th until the End of the 13th Century* (The Hague, 1923), 402.
- [9] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), nos. 59, 60.
- [10] Recognizing that establishing a common authorship for the various painted crucifixes with a provenance from Umbria and Emilia-Romagna was problematic, Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà asserted that it was at least plausible to assume they were works of "un unico maestro. . . probabilmente Bolognese . . . che si sarebbe recato ad Assisi...e poi tornato a Bologna portando con sé...gli insegnamenti del Maestro di San Francesco" (a single master, probably Bolognese, who would have gone to Assisi and later returned to Bologna, bringing with him the teachings of the Master of Saint Francis). Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 857.
- [11] August L. Mayer, "Die Sammlung Philip Lehman," *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 115; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1945), 4–5; Robert Langton Douglas, "Recent Additions to the Kress Collection," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 88 (1946): 85; Alfred M. Frankfurter, *Supplement to the Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New York, 1946), 15; Hans Vollmer, "Meister des hl. Franziskus von Assisi," in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1950), 37:105; Fern Rusk Shapley and John Shapley, *Comparisons in Art: A Companion to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC* (New York, 1957), 13, pl. 3; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 4; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:312–313; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 287, 646, 665; Pietro Scarpellini, "Le pitture," in *Il tesoro della Basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto (Assisi, 1980), 40–41 (though he referred to the work under the alternative name of

Maestro Crocifissi Blu); Anna Tambini, *Pittura dall'Alto Medioevo al Tardogotico nel territorio di Faenza e Forlì* (Faenza, 1982), 34–35 (who adopted as the conventional name for the group “Maestro di Santa Maria in Borgo”); Elvio Lunghi, “Maestro dei Crocifissi Blu,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:596; Filippo Todini, *La pittura umbra dal Duecento al primo Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1989), 1:125; Angelo Tartuferi, *Giunta Pisano* (Soncino, 1991), 82, 94; Patricia Lurati, in Sauver Assise, ed., *Giovanni Morello* (Milan, 1998), 50 (all with the name “Maestro dei Crocifissi Blu,” to whom Todini and Tartuferi denied the crucifix now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna); Laurence B. Kanter and Pia Palladino, in *The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Laurence B. Kanter (Milan, 1999), 64; Daniele Benati et al., in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 106 n. 42, 125, 186, 194, 197–200, 201, 203, 210; Silvia Giorgi, “Maestro dei Crocifissi Francescani,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 2:534; Silvia Giorgi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 43; Anna Tambini, *Storia delle arti figurative a Faenza*, vol. 1, *Le origini* (Faenza, 2006), 75, 79. The only clearly dissenting opinion seems to be that of Berenson, who wrote the name of Coppo di Marcovaldo as the master on the back of the photograph sent to him for his examination (copy in NGA curatorial files), but Joanna Cannon also considered the attribution scarcely convincing. See Joanna Cannon, “The Era of the Great Painted Crucifix: Giotto, Cimabue, Giunta Pisano, and their Anonymous Contemporaries,” *Renaissance Studies* 16 (2002): 576.

[12] See Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 5; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 6; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 24 (to be attributed “almost certainly to Giunta”). Recently, Mariagiulia Burrese and Antonino Caleca suggested Giunta’s authorship, though with a question mark and without mentioning the Washington panels. See Mariagiulia Burrese and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 73, 74–75.

[13] Giulia Sinibaldi, in *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937*, ed. Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti (Florence, 1943), 149, 151 (who classified the panels as works of a Bolognese Giuntesque painter, to be distinguished from the master of the Umbrian paintings to whom Osvald Sirén and Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà connected them); and Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 14, 221 n. 605 (who attributed to the

“Borgo Crucifix Master” only the crucifix now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna, the fragments being discussed here, and the tondo placed on top of the cimasa formerly in the possession of the dealer Bacri in Paris). Osvald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im xiii. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), 223, 224; Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 845, 855, 857, 884.

- [14] Apart from the fragmentary fresco representing the Madonna and Child Enthroned and Saint Peter, which I have added to the catalog of the painter, two panels of a dismantled diptych have also been recognized as works of the same master: the one leaf representing the Crucifixion now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and its companion panel, *Madonna and Child*, in a private collection, identified by Filippo Todini. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 196; Ferdinando Bologna, *La pittura italiana delle origini* (Rome, 1962), 79; and Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:376 fig. 577. The name Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes also is now generally accepted in the catalogs of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, whereas the conventional name of Maestro del Crocifisso di Borgo had been preferred in the past. See Rosa D’Amico, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna* (Venice, 2001), 12–14; and Silvia Giorgi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 41–44.
- [15] On this work, see Elvio Lunghi, “La decorazione pittorica della chiesa,” in *La basilica di Santa Chiara in Assisi* (Ponte San Giovanni, Perugia, 1994), 151–164.
- [16] On the painting, see Serena Romano, in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 63–65.
- [17] For essential information on the Master of San Felice di Giano, see Giordana Benazzi, in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 66–67. The crucifix in the Museo in Spoleto is reproduced in Filippo Todini, *La pittura umbra dal Duecento al primo Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1989), 2: figs. 26, 27.
- [18] I refer to the painted crucifix in the Collezioni Comunali d’Arte in Bologna, which Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà (1929) ascribed to the catalog of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes but which is generally classified in the more recent literature as a work of an anonymous Bolognese master, or the crucifix in the church of Santa Croce at Villa Verucchio near Forlì. See

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 855; Silvia Giorgi, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 210–212; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 217.

[19] See Anita Fiderer Moskowitz, *Nicola Pisano's Arca di San Domenico and Its Legacy* (University Park, PA, 1994).

[20] In the absence of the original frame, it cannot be established how the panels now in Washington were joined to the crucifix of which they formed part. But if we consider that the width of the two lateral terminals in both the crucifix in the Muzzarelli Chapel of San Francesco in Assisi and in that in the Pinacoteca at Faenza is the same as the height of the upper terminal, it seems significant that the terminal still joined to the *cimasa* of the crucifix in the Pinacoteca of Bologna—the *Madonna and Two Angels*—has measurements very close to those of the Gallery's panels, namely, 33 × 84 cm. I wish to thank Dr. Paola Checchi for kindly measuring this part of the crucifix for me.

[21] Massimo Medica, “La città dei libri e dei miniatori,” in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 123–125, pointed out the probable influence of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes on Bolognese miniatures of the time.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Both this painting and its companion, *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*, were executed on wood panels formed from at least three members with horizontal grain.<sup>[1]</sup> The joins in both paintings line up with one another. One of the joins runs through the panels at the heights of the figures' hips and another slightly below their knees. A third join or check runs through the top of the figure's head in both panels, though it is more prevalent in Saint John the Evangelist. The panels were prepared with gesso, and the backgrounds of both panels are gilded. Incised lines demarcate areas to be gilded from those to be painted, and the gilded areas were prepared with red bole. The paint was applied with bold, deliberate brushstrokes. The halos are delineated by incised lines and decorated with punched dots and freely inscribed curvilinear motifs. The decorative gold borders on the Virgin's robe are mordant gilded.

The panels are in fair state. During a treatment by Stephen Pichetto in 1944, they were thinned and attached to secondary panels with auxiliary cradle supports. The

panels (together with their secondary support and cradle) are now 4.5 cm thick. Strips of wood have been attached to the edges of the panels, probably during the 1944 treatment. The fact that the halos of both figures are slightly truncated at the top and the Madonna's robe cut off at the bottom suggests that the painted surface has been slightly cropped above and below in both panels. It is possible that the panels were trimmed on the other sides, too. Several large checks can be seen in the figure of the Virgin, at the height of her right arm, and below the lowest join line in the lower part of her robe. The painted surface is somewhat worn in both panels, with darkened inpainting evident along some of the joins. The gold ground is badly abraded, especially around the edges, more so in the Madonna panel than in that of Saint John. The Madonna's robe and much of Saint John's clothing have been heavily glazed or overpainted, most likely during an undocumented treatment carried out probably when the two panels appeared on the art market sometime before 1922.[2] The varnish applied in 1944 has discolored slightly.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Because the panel was thinned, mounted on an auxiliary wood panel, and then cradled, it is difficult to see clearly the join lines in the original panel in x-radiographs, but a slight horizontal disruption in the curve of the panel (on the front) occurring through the figure's heads, hips, and below their knees suggests join lines in these areas. The joins are located at approximately 18 cm and 42 cm from the bottom edge in both panels.
- [2] On Stephen Pichetto's intervention, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:313 n. 8. She reported that the panels were cradled, cleaned, restored, and varnished on this occasion; however, the photographs published by Sirén in 1922 show the two fragments practically in the same state as they are at present. The 1944 restoration therefore must have been preceded by an earlier one and must have been rather light as far as the painted surface is concerned. *Saint John the Evangelist* must have been treated at least one other time prior to Pichetto's treatment. In the photograph published by Robert Lehman in 1928, the join in the center of the panel is considerably cracked and open. However, this was repaired in the photographs taken prior to Pichetto's treatment. Interestingly, the join is not cracked in the photograph published by Sirén in 1922. Either Lehman used an old photograph or the join opened up between 1922 and 1928. See Osvald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), pl. 82; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 60.

## PROVENANCE

The two fragments (NGA 1952.5.13 and .14) were originally lateral terminals of a painted Crucifix presumably made for the church of San Francesco, Bologna, sometime after 1254 and before 1278;<sup>[1]</sup> the Crucifix is known to have been in the Lombardi Malvezzi Chapel in that church in 1577,<sup>[2]</sup> and was transported to the Bolognese church of Santa Maria in Borgo in 1801 (perhaps by which time its two lateral terminals might have been removed);<sup>[3]</sup> purchased, probably in Italy, by Osvald Sirén [1879–1966], Stockholm, by 1922.<sup>[4]</sup> Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; purchased June 1943 by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] Writing around 1385–1390, Fra Bartolomeo da Pisa in his treatise *De conformitate* describes the case of a friar who was reprimanded by the Father General of his order and went to complain in front of the Crucifix in the church of San Francesco in Bologna, which is said to have consoled him in reply. “Frater iste dicitur fuisse magister Joannes Peccam Anglicus,” adds the author (see Fra Bartolomeo da Pisa, “De conformitate vitae Beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Jesu,” *Analecta Franciscana* 4 [1906]: 521–522). The friar in question was the celebrated Franciscan theologian John Peckham, who arrived in Italy from England in 1276 and stayed there till 1279. Lucas Wadding (*Annales minorum*, vol. 5 [1642], ed. G.M. Fonseca, Quaracchi, 1931: 58) also reports the episode, inserting it in events of the year 1278. Albeit with the necessary caution, this year, or at least the period of time covered by Peckham’s residence in Italy, can thus be considered a *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the painting, which indeed seems datable to the 1270s on stylistic grounds. Perhaps 1254, when the apse of the church collapsed, can be considered a *terminus post quem* for the Crucifix, as Silvia Giorgi suggests (*Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna. Catalogo generale-I*, ed. J. Bentini, G.P. Cammarota, and D. Scaglietti Kelescian, Venice, 2004). In 1299 it was apparently on the choir-screen of the church (Donal Cooper, *Projecting Presence: the Monumental Crosses in the Italian Church interior*, in *Presence: The Inherence of the Prototype within Images and other Objects*, ed. Robert Maniura and Rupert Shepherd, Aldershot and Burlington, 2006: 61 n. 42). Miklós Boskovits was unable to see any stylistic justification for dating it to the years 1254–1263, as Giorgi suggested, believing that the completion of the architecture implied that the Crucifix likewise had been realized. [2] This is suggested by an inscription visible in the church’s central chapel, behind the high altar, formerly that of the Lombardi

family and later belonging to the Malvezzi. The inscription mentions the altar erected in the chapel “in hon. SS. Crucifixi”; see Luigi Garani, *Il bel San Francesco di Bologna. La sua storia*, Bologna, 1948: 245-246. That the Crucifix in question is the one now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna is suggested by the ascertained provenance of this panel from the church of San Francesco; the other two painted Crucifixes still present in the church and its adjoining convent were brought there only in the early years of the twentieth century, and their provenance is uncertain (see Silvia Giorgi in Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei, eds., *Duecento: forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, Venice, 2000: 189, 200). [3] See Garani 1948, 245-246. Perhaps at the time of its arrival in Santa Maria in Borgo, the Crucifix was subjected to interventions that integrated its already incomplete form with the additions visible in the reproduction published by Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà (*La Croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione*, Verona, 1929: fig. 536). Here the lateral terminals, evidently lacking, are shown substituted by others, without any figural representations. It is probable, however, that the lateral terminals had been truncated earlier, as happened in the case of various other painted crucifixes, and that the fragments with the figures of the mourning Madonna and Saint John were used as devotional panels by the friars, who were then forced to abandon the convent after the suppression of religious orders in 1798. [4] Sirén (*Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1922: 221-222, 223, 224, 339, pl. 8) published the two panels as belonging to an unspecified private collection in Stockholm, but Miklós Boskovits had little hesitation in identifying the collector as Sirén himself. Sirén is known to have bought paintings both for his own pleasure and for sale. He also acted as a middleman between art dealers and collectors (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 130, 151, 153), even handling the restoration of paintings that passed through his hands (see Roger Fry, *Letters of Roger Fry*, edited by Denys Sutton, 2 vols., London, 1972: 2:400). [5] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York, Paris, 1928: n.p., pls. 59, 60. The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including this pair, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892–1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 808.

1999 The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi, Petit Palais, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1998-1999, no. 3/1, repro., as The Mourning Virgin by Master of the Blue Crucifixes (shown only in New York).

2000 Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico, Bologna, 2000, no. 50, repro.

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Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes  
Umbrian, active 1260s and 1270s

## *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*

c. 1270/1275

tempera on panel

original panel: 81.2 × 31.1 cm (31 15/16 × 12 1/4 in.)

overall: 82.2 × 33.3 cm (32 3/8 × 13 1/8 in.)

framed: 91.1 × 41.8 × 6 cm (35 7/8 × 16 7/16 × 2 3/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.14

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### ENTRY

Because of their relatively large size, this panel and its companion, *The Mourning Madonna*, have been considered part of the apron of a painted crucifix.[1] As their horizontal wood grain suggests, they undoubtedly formed the lateral terminals of a painting of this type, probably that belonging to the church of Santa Maria in Borgo in Bologna (now exhibited at the Pinacoteca Nazionale of that city), as Gertrude Coor was the first to recognize [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*).[2] Another fragment of the work, a tondo with the bust of the Blessing Christ [fig. 2], was in the possession of the art dealer Bacri in Paris around 1939.[3]

The two panels represent, respectively, the mother of Jesus and his favorite disciple in the typical pose of mourners, with the head bowed to one side and the cheek resting on the palm of the hand.[4] As is seen frequently in Italian paintings of the late thirteenth century, Mary is wearing a purple *maphorion* over a blue robe,[5] and Saint John a steel-blue garment and purple-red mantle.[6] In

publishing them (1922), Osvald Sirén noted the stylistic affinity of the two panels with the Bolognese crucifix [fig. 3]. He inserted them in the catalog of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes,[7] a painter of mixed Umbrian-Pisan culture of the second half of the thirteenth century, whose oeuvre he himself had reconstructed. For his part, Raimond van Marle (1923) considered the fragments works of an Umbrian artist of the school of the Master of San Francesco.[8] Robert Lehman, in compiling the catalog of his father's collection (1928), accepted Sirén's opinion but proposed the date of c. 1250 for the two fragments.[9] In 1929, Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà undertook a far more thorough examination of the problem of the two fragments and their stylistic affinities. Emphasizing the Umbrian component in the painter's figurative culture, she stated that he was active in the years close to 1272 [10] and had worked extensively in Emilia-Romagna.

While most art historians have accepted Sirén's view and the conventional name he coined for the master,[11] advocates of a contrary thesis have not been lacking. There are those who support the thesis that the two fragments are Pisan in derivation, or even propose Giunta Pisano as the master of the crucifix.[12] Other art historians insist that the painter was Bolognese and exclude from his oeuvre the paintings of Umbrian provenance.[13] Today, however, there seems no good reason to deny the common authorship of the oeuvre mainly consisting of crucifixes first assembled by Sirén, or to reject the name he attached to it, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes.[14]

The chronological sequence of the works attributable to the anonymous master is still under discussion. Useful clues can be deduced, however, from a comparison between some passages, such as the figure of the mourning Saint John, that frequently recur in his paintings. In my view, the pictorial treatment of the apostle in the crucifixes in the Treasury of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, the Pinacoteca of Faenza, the bank in Camerino, and the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna not only confirm that these works were all painted by the same master but also suggest that their order of execution must have been that listed above. In the four versions of the image of Saint John, the design seems to gain in fluidity and the contours in movement, while the forms become more segmented, or ruffled, by the increasingly close-set alignment of the drapery folds. At the same time, the pose of the apostle gradually assumes the *hanchement* so dear to Gothic taste. These changes are present, of course, in the works of other contemporary artists and provide points of reference for the dating of our two panels. Thus, the figure of Saint John in the painting in Assisi seems to be close in style to that executed by

the Master of Santa Chiara between 1253 and 1260 (crucifix in the Basilica of Santa Chiara at Assisi),<sup>[15]</sup> while the version of the same image now in the National Gallery of Art seems more closely comparable, both in elegance of proportions and in pose, to the mourning Saint John by the Master of San Francesco, part of the painted crucifix in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia, dated 1272.<sup>[16]</sup> The period of time indicated by these works ought also to circumscribe the years of activity of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes. On the other hand, the more lyrical manner of this master in comparison with the Umbrian masters cited above suggests that during the years spent in Umbria he was especially in contact with such painters as the Master of San Felice di Giano, the master of the crucifix (no. 17, unfortunately undated) in the Pinacoteca of Spoleto.<sup>[17]</sup> His style clearly differs from that of the Bolognese followers of Giunta Pisano,<sup>[18]</sup> and this circumstance in itself seems to rebut the hypothesis that he had been trained in the Emilian city. Yet it cannot be excluded that the artistic climate of Bologna could have stimulated successive developments in his career, especially the town's vital and increasingly sophisticated tradition of producing miniatures for illuminated manuscripts, along with the influence of the sculpted Arca in the church of San Domenico, completed not long before the crucifix under discussion.<sup>[19]</sup>

That the two fragments formed part of the crucifix now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna must remain a hypothesis that only proper scientific and technical analysis of the panels could corroborate. Yet the dimensions and pictorial treatment of the panels now divided among the galleries of Bologna and Washington and a private collection provide strong arguments to support the view that they originally belonged together. As for the measurements, the two panels in the Gallery, slightly cropped to the sides, are very similar in size to the upper terminal of the Bolognese crucifix [fig. 4].<sup>[20]</sup> A virtual identity can also be seen in the pictorial treatment of these works. They all reveal the same search for a stylistic balance between Giuntesque formulae and a tendency towards the new needs of elegance and softness in the modeling of the figure. The similarity between the rapid brushstrokes that create the forms in the figures of the Madonna [fig. 5] and Saint John and in the crucifix in Bologna seems to me evident. All three panels, moreover, reveal the same manner of producing relief effects by sudden flashes of light, using the same technique of applying delicate touches of white to the green underpaint preparation. The effect of this pictorial freedom and of the graceful and humanizing rendering of the figures would not fail to stimulate the Bolognese miniaturists active in the last quarter of the thirteenth century.<sup>[21]</sup>



**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a painted crucifix, formerly in San Francesco, Bologna, by the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes (color images are NGA objects): a. *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels* (above) and the *Kneeling Saint Francis* (below), and *Saint Helen* (added by Jacopo di Paolo) (fig. 3); b. *The Mourning Madonna*; c. *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*; d. *Bust of the Blessing Christ* (fig. 2)



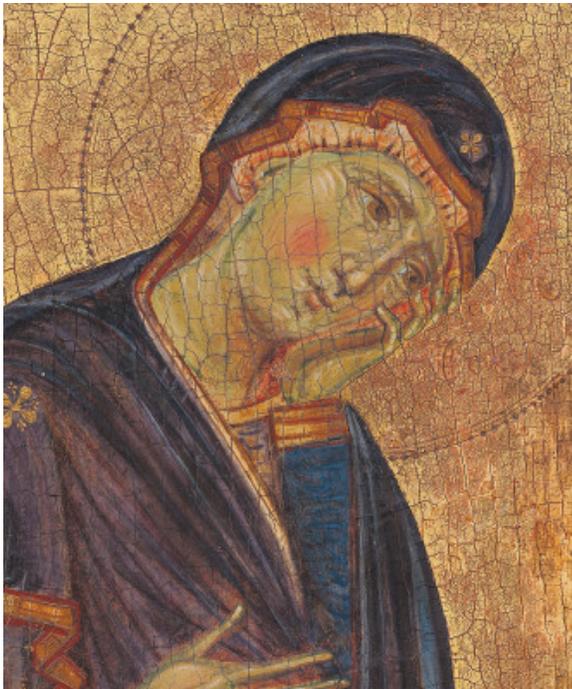
**fig. 2** Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *Bust of the Blessing Christ*, c. 1270/1275, tempera on panel, now lost



**fig. 3** Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels* (above) and the *Kneeling Saint Francis* (below), and *Saint Helen* (added by Jacopo di Paolo), c. 1270/1275, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna



**fig. 4** Detail of upper terminal, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels*, c. 1270/1275, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna

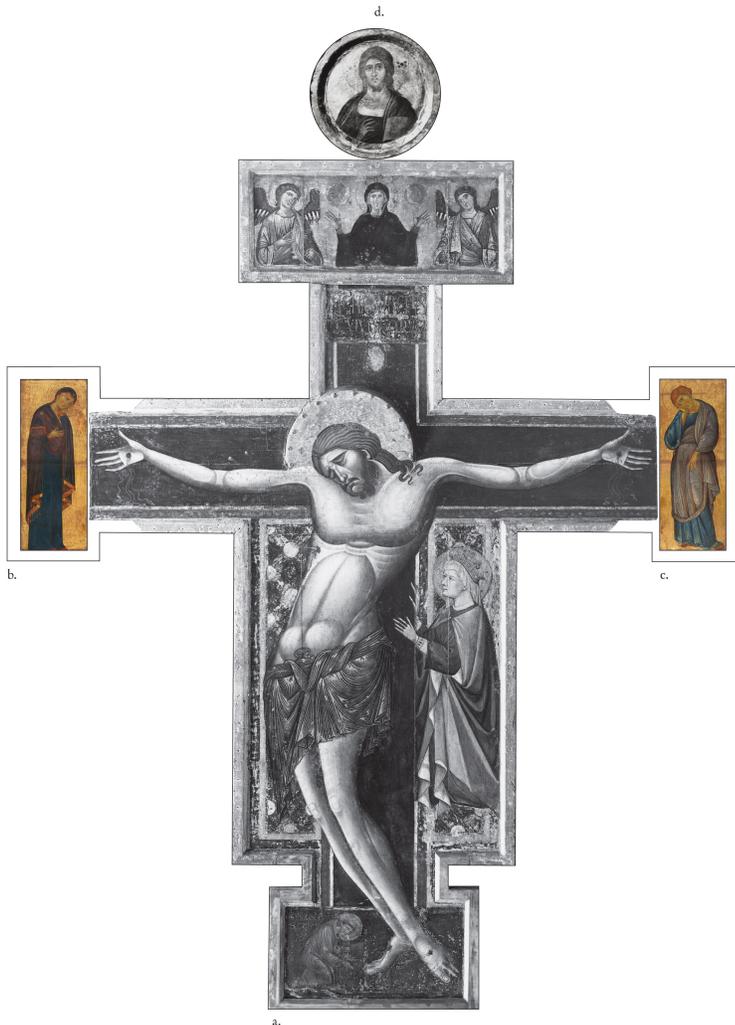


**fig. 5** Detail, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *The Mourning Madonna*, 1270/1275, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a painted crucifix, formerly in San Francesco, Bologna, by the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes:  
a. *Painted Crucifix with the Madonna between Two Angels* (above) and *the Kneeling Saint Francis* (below), and *Saint Helen* (added by Jacopo di Paolo) (Entry fig. 3)  
b. *The Mourning Madonna*  
c. *The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*  
d. *Bust of the Blessing Christ* (Entry fig. 2)

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## NOTES

- [1] See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 174–176, and, on the genre of the painted crucifixes, Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich, 1990), 400–406.
- [2] Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 221, considered the panels to belong to the apron (*tabellone*) of a painted crucifix (i.e., the lateral compartments flanking the body of Christ). Gertrude Coor was the first to recognize that the fragments belong to the crucifix of Santa Maria in Borgo; she orally communicated this conclusion to Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:312 n. 4. Previously, Giulia Sinibaldi, in *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937*, ed. Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti (Florence, 1943), 151, had proposed that the two paintings belonged to the crucifix formerly in the choir and now in the Library of the Convent of San Francesco; but cf. in this regard Silvia Giorgi, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 200–201.
- [3] It was Edward Garrison who recognized that the fragment, which measures 40 cm in diameter, belonged to his “Borgo Crucifix Master.” The panel, with a provenance from the Oertel collection in Dresden, was stolen from the dealer Bacri in 1939 and has never been rediscovered. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 219. Gertrude Coor proposed that it originally formed part of the Santa Maria in Borgo crucifix in a verbal communication to Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:312 n. 4.
- [4] This was a gesture of sorrow already familiar in classical art and widespread in medieval art. See Moshe Barasch, *Gestures of Despair in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art* (New York, 1976), 129 n. 15; François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 181–184.
- [5] The *maphorion* was a sort of shawl used in Byzantium both in male and female costume; see Harry Kühnel, ed., *Bildwörterbuch der Kleidung und Rüstung: Vom Alten Orient bis zum ausgehenden Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1992), 168–169. A common element in Byzantine and Byzantinizing representations of the Madonna, an example of *maphorion* was preserved as a much-venerated relic in the Blancherna monastery in Istanbul; see Averil Cameron, “The Early Cult of the Virgin,” in *The Mother of God: The Representation of the Virgin in Byzantine Art*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milan and London, 2000), 11–13.

- [6] The distinctive colors of the saint are generally an azure (or blue) tunic and a pink (or red) mantle; cf. Margrit Lisner, “Die Gewandfarben der Apostel in Giotto’s Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbbikonographie mit Notizen zu älteren Aposteldarstellungen in Florenz, Assisi und Rom,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53 (1990): 334.
- [7] “Ihr Zusammenhang mit dem bolognesen Kruzifix geht überzeugend sowohl aus der Figurenzeichnung wie aus dem Typen und der Faltenbehandlung vor,” Osvald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), 222.
- [8] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 1, *From the 6th until the End of the 13th Century* (The Hague, 1923), 402.
- [9] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), nos. 59, 60.
- [10] Recognizing that establishing a common authorship for the various painted crucifixes with a provenance from Umbria and Emilia-Romagna was problematic, Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà asserted that it was at least plausible to assume they were works of “un unico maestro. . . probabilmente Bolognese . . . che si sarebbe recato ad Assisi...e poi tornato a Bologna portando con sé...gli insegnamenti del Maestro di San Francesco” (a single master, probably Bolognese, who would have gone to Assisi and later returned to Bologna, bringing with him the teachings of the Master of Saint Francis). Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l’iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 857.
- [11] August L. Mayer, “Die Sammlung Philip Lehman,” *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 115; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1945), 4–5; Robert Langton Douglas, “Recent Additions to the Kress Collection,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 88 (1946): 85; Alfred M. Frankfurter, *Supplement to the Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New York, 1946), 15; Hans Vollmer, “Meister des hl. Franziskus von Assisi,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1950), 37:105; Fern Rusk Shapley and John Shapley, *Comparisons in Art: A Companion to the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC* (New York, 1957), 13, pl. 3; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 4; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:312–313; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 287, 646, 665; Pietro Scarpellini, “Le pitture,” in *Il tesoro della Basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto (Assisi, 1980), 40–41 (though he referred to the work under the alternative name of Maestro Crocifissi Blu); Anna Tambini, *Pittura*

dall'Alto Medioevo al Tardogotico nel territorio di Faenza e Forlì (Faenza, 1982), 34–35 (who adopted as the conventional name for the group “Maestro di Santa Maria in Borgo”); Elvio Lunghi, “Maestro dei Crocifissi Blu,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:596; Filippo Todini, *La pittura umbra dal Duecento al primo Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1989), 1:125; Angelo Tartuferi, *Giunta Pisano* (Soncino, 1991), 82, 94; Patricia Lurati, in *Sauver Assise*, ed., *Giovanni Morello* (Milan, 1998), 50 (all with the name “Maestro dei Crocifissi Blu,” to whom Todini and Tartuferi denied the crucifix now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna); Laurence B. Kanter and Pia Palladino, in *The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Laurence B. Kanter (Milan, 1999), 64; Daniele Benati et al., in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 106 n. 42, 125, 186, 194, 197–200, 201, 203, 210; Silvia Giorgi, “Maestro dei Crocifissi Francescani,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 2:534; Silvia Giorgi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 43; Anna Tambini, *Storia delle arti figurative a Faenza*, vol. 1, *Le origini* (Faenza, 2006), 75, 79. The only clearly dissenting opinion seems to be that of Berenson, who wrote the name of Coppo di Marcovaldo as the master on the back of the photograph sent to him for his examination (copy in NGA curatorial files), but Joanna Cannon also considered the attribution scarcely convincing. See Joanna Cannon, “The Era of the Great Painted Crucifix: Giotto, Cimabue, Giunta Pisano, and their Anonymous Contemporaries,” *Renaissance Studies* 16 (2002): 576.

[12] See Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 5; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 6; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 24 (to be attributed “almost certainly to Giunta”). Recently, Mariagiulia Burrese and Antonino Caleca suggested Giunta’s authorship, though with a question mark and without mentioning the Washington panels. See Mariagiulia Burrese and Antonino Caleca, eds., *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto* (Pisa, 2005), 73, 74–75.

[13] Giulia Sinibaldi, in *Pittura italiana del Duecento e Trecento: Catalogo della mostra giottesca di Firenze del 1937*, ed. Giulia Sinibaldi and Giulia Brunetti (Florence, 1943), 149, 151 (who classified the panels as works of a Bolognese Giuntesque painter, to be distinguished from the master of the Umbrian paintings to whom Osvald Sirén and Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà connected them); and Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 14, 221 n. 605 (who attributed to the “Borgo Crucifix Master” only the crucifix now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna,

the fragments being discussed here, and the tondo placed on top of the cimasa formerly in the possession of the dealer Bacri in Paris). Oswald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im xiii. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), 223, 224; Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 845, 855, 857, 884.

- [14] Apart from the fragmentary fresco representing the Madonna and Child Enthroned and Saint Peter, which I have added to the catalog of the painter, two panels of a dismantled diptych have also been recognized as works of the same master: the one leaf representing the Crucifixion now in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and its companion panel, *Madonna and Child*, in a private collection, identified by Filippo Todini. Cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 196; Ferdinando Bologna, *La pittura italiana delle origini* (Rome, 1962), 79; and Filippo Todini, "Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:376 fig. 577. The name Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes also is now generally accepted in the catalogs of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna, whereas the conventional name of Maestro del Crocifisso di Borgo had been preferred in the past. See Rosa D'Amico, *La Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna* (Venice, 2001), 12–14; and Silvia Giorgi, in *Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, catalogo generale*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Francesco Francia*, ed. Jadranka Bentini, Gian Piero Cammarota, and Daniela Scaglietti Kelescian (Venice, 2004), 41–44.
- [15] On this work, see Elvio Lunghi, "La decorazione pittorica della chiesa," in *La basilica di Santa Chiara in Assisi* (Ponte San Giovanni, Perugia, 1994), 151–164.
- [16] On the painting, see Serena Romano, in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 63–65.
- [17] For essential information on the Master of San Felice di Giano, see Giordana Benazzi, in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 66–67. The crucifix in the Museo in Spoleto is reproduced in Filippo Todini, *La pittura umbra dal Duecento al primo Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Milan, 1989), 2: figs. 26, 27.
- [18] I refer to the painted crucifix in the Collezioni Comunali d'Arte in Bologna, which Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà (1929) ascribed to the catalog of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes but which is generally classified in the more recent literature as a work of an anonymous Bolognese master, or the crucifix in the church of Santa Croce at Villa Verucchio near Forlì. See Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della*

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*Passione* (Verona, 1929), 855; Silvia Giorgi, in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 210–212; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 217.

[19] See Anita Fiderer Moskowitz, *Nicola Pisano's Arca di San Domenico and Its Legacy* (University Park, PA, 1994).

[20] In the absence of the original frame, it cannot be established how the panels now in Washington were joined to the crucifix of which they formed part. But if we consider that the width of the two lateral terminals in both the crucifix in the Muzzarelli Chapel of San Francesco in Assisi and in that in the Pinacoteca at Faenza is the same as the height of the upper terminal, it seems significant that the terminal still joined to the *cimasa* of the crucifix in the Pinacoteca of Bologna—the *Madonna and Two Angels*—has measurements very close to those of the Gallery's panels, namely, 33 × 84 cm. I wish to thank Dr. Paola Checchi for kindly measuring this part of the crucifix for me.

[21] Massimo Medica, “La città dei libri e dei miniatori,” in *Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, ed. Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei (Venice, 2000), 123–125, pointed out the probable influence of the Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes on Bolognese miniatures of the time.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Both this painting and its companion, *The Mourning Madonna*, were executed on wood panels formed from at least three members with horizontal grain.[1] The joins in both paintings line up with one another. One of the joins runs through the panels at the heights of the figures' hips and another slightly below their knees. A third join or check runs through the top of the figure's head in both panels, though it is more prevalent in Saint John the Evangelist. The panels were prepared with gesso, and the backgrounds of both panels are gilded. Incised lines demarcate areas to be gilded from those to be painted, and the gilded areas were prepared with red bole. The paint was applied with bold, deliberate brushstrokes. The halos are delineated by incised lines and decorated with punched dots and freely inscribed curvilinear motifs. The decorative gold borders on the Virgin's robe are mordant gilded.

The panels are in fair state. During a treatment by Stephen Pichetto in 1944, they were thinned and attached to secondary panels with auxiliary cradle supports. The panels (together with their secondary support and cradle) are now 4.5 cm thick.

*The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist*

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Strips of wood have been attached to the edges of the panels, probably during the 1944 treatment. The fact that the halos of both figures are slightly truncated at the top and the Madonna's robe cut off at the bottom suggests that the painted surface has been slightly cropped above and below in both panels. It is possible that the panels were trimmed on the other sides, too. Several large checks can be seen in the figure of the Virgin, at the height of her right arm, and below the lowest join line in the lower part of her robe. The painted surface is somewhat worn in both panels, with darkened inpainting evident along some of the joins. The gold ground is badly abraded, especially around the edges, more so in the Madonna panel than in that of Saint John. The Madonna's robe and much of Saint John's clothing have been heavily glazed or overpainted, most likely during an undocumented treatment carried out probably when the two panels appeared on the art market sometime before 1922.[2] The varnish applied in 1944 has discolored slightly.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Because the panel was thinned, mounted on an auxiliary wood panel, and then cradled, it is difficult to see clearly the join lines in the original panel in x-radiographs, but a slight horizontal disruption in the curve of the panel (on the front) occurring through the figure's heads, hips, and below their knees suggests join lines in these areas. The joins are located at approximately 18 cm and 42 cm from the bottom edge in both panels.
- [2] On Stephen Pichetto's intervention, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:313 n. 8. She reported that the panels were cradled, cleaned, restored, and varnished on this occasion; however, the photographs published by Sirén in 1922 show the two fragments practically in the same state as they are at present. The 1944 restoration therefore must have been preceded by an earlier one and must have been rather light as far as the painted surface is concerned. *Saint John the Evangelist* must have been treated at least one other time prior to Pichetto's treatment. In the photograph published by Robert Lehman in 1928, the join in the center of the panel is considerably cracked and open. However, this was repaired in the photographs taken prior to Pichetto's treatment. Interestingly, the join is not cracked in the photograph published by Sirén in 1922. Either Lehman used an old photograph or the join opened up between 1922 and 1928. See Osvald Sirén, *Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1922), pl. 82; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), no. 60.

## PROVENANCE

The two fragments (NGA 1952.5.13 and .14) were originally lateral terminals of a painted Crucifix presumably made for the church of San Francesco, Bologna, sometime after 1254 and before 1278;<sup>[1]</sup> the Crucifix is known to have been in the Lombardi Malvezzi Chapel in that church in 1577,<sup>[2]</sup> and was transported to the Bolognese church of Santa Maria in Borgo in 1801 (perhaps by which time its two lateral terminals might have been removed);<sup>[3]</sup> purchased, probably in Italy, by Osvald Sirén [1879–1966], Stockholm, by 1922.<sup>[4]</sup> Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; purchased June 1943 by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] Writing around 1385–1390, Fra Bartolomeo da Pisa in his treatise *De conformitate* describes the case of a friar who was reprimanded by the Father General of his order and went to complain in front of the Crucifix in the church of San Francesco in Bologna, which is said to have consoled him in reply. “Frater iste dicitur fuisse magister Joannes Peccam Anglicus,” adds the author (see Fra Bartolomeo da Pisa, “De conformitate vitae Beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Jesu,” *Analecta Franciscana* 4 [1906]: 521–522). The friar in question was the celebrated Franciscan theologian John Peckham, who arrived in Italy from England in 1276 and stayed there till 1279. Lucas Wadding (*Annales minorum*, vol. 5 [1642], ed. G.M. Fonseca, Quaracchi, 1931: 58) also reports the episode, inserting it in events of the year 1278. Albeit with the necessary caution, this year, or at least the period of time covered by Peckham’s residence in Italy, can thus be considered a *terminus ante quem* for the execution of the painting, which indeed seems datable to the 1270s on stylistic grounds. Perhaps 1254, when the apse of the church collapsed, can be considered a *terminus post quem* for the Crucifix, as Silvia Giorgi suggests (*Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna. Catalogo generale-I*, ed. J. Bentini, G.P. Cammarota, and D. Scaglietti Kelescian, Venice, 2004). In 1299 it was apparently on the choir-screen of the church (Donal Cooper, *Projecting Presence: the Monumental Crosses in the Italian Church interior*, in *Presence: The Inherence of the Prototype within Images and other Objects*, ed. Robert Maniura and Rupert Shepherd, Aldershot and Burlington, 2006: 61 n. 42). Miklós Boskovits was unable to see any stylistic justification for dating it to the years 1254–1263, as Giorgi suggested, believing that the completion of the architecture implied that the Crucifix likewise had been realized. [2] This is suggested by an inscription visible in the church’s central chapel, behind the high altar, formerly that of the Lombardi

family and later belonging to the Malvezzi. The inscription mentions the altar erected in the chapel “in hon. SS. Crucifixi”; see Luigi Garani, *Il bel San Francesco di Bologna. La sua storia*, Bologna, 1948: 245-246. That the Crucifix in question is the one now in the Pinacoteca of Bologna is suggested by the ascertained provenance of this panel from the church of San Francesco; the other two painted Crucifixes still present in the church and its adjoining convent were brought there only in the early years of the twentieth century, and their provenance is uncertain (see Silvia Giorgi in Massimo Medica and Stefano Tumidei, eds., *Duecento: forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna*, Venice, 2000: 189, 200). [3] See Garani 1948, 245-246. Perhaps at the time of its arrival in Santa Maria in Borgo, the Crucifix was subjected to interventions that integrated its already incomplete form with the additions visible in the reproduction published by Evelyn Sandberg Vavalà (*La Croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione*, Verona, 1929: fig. 536). Here the lateral terminals, evidently lacking, are shown substituted by others, without any figural representations. It is probable, however, that the lateral terminals had been truncated earlier, as happened in the case of various other painted crucifixes, and that the fragments with the figures of the mourning Madonna and Saint John were used as devotional panels by the friars, who were then forced to abandon the convent after the suppression of religious orders in 1798. [4] Sirén (*Toskanische Maler im XIII. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1922: 221-222, 223, 224, 339, pl. 8) published the two panels as belonging to an unspecified private collection in Stockholm, but Miklós Boskovits had little hesitation in identifying the collector as Sirén himself. Sirén is known to have bought paintings both for his own pleasure and for sale. He also acted as a middleman between art dealers and collectors (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 130, 151, 153), even handling the restoration of paintings that passed through his hands (see Roger Fry, *Letters of Roger Fry*, edited by Denys Sutton, 2 vols., London, 1972: 2:400). [5] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York, Paris, 1928: n.p., pls. 59, 60. The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including this pair, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892–1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 809.

1999 The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi, Petit Palais, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1998-1999, no. 3/2, repro., as The Mourning [same] by Master of the Blue Crucifixes (shown only in New York).

2000 Duecento: Forme e colori del Medioevo a Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico, Bologna, 2000, no. 50, repro.

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# *Master of Saint Francis*

Umbrian, active third quarter 13th century

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Active, so far we know, solely for Franciscan churches and perhaps himself a member of the order, this anonymous artist was first identified and his oeuvre reconstructed by Henry Thode (1885).[1] The name-piece of the group of works that Thode assembled is the panel with a full-length figure of Saint Francis in the museum of the basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Assisi. Also assigned to this painter by Thode were five frescoes with stories from the legend of Saint Francis in the lower church of the same basilica; the painted crucifix in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Perugia, dated 1272; and other works, not all of which are now recognized as works by this master. Subsequently this nucleus was first whittled down by the elimination of reattributed works, and then augmented with various other paintings, such as the fragmentary fresco (*Madonna and Child with an Angel*) in the lower church of the basilica in Assisi; although the authorship of the latter is disputed, it should probably be considered the result of the painter's first stylistic phase and as having been executed in connection with the burial of Cardinal Pietro di Barro in 1252.[2]

The characteristic features of the style of the Master of Saint Francis, an artist probably trained in Umbria, are rapid and energetic drawing, brilliant color, and the effort to capture the character and state of mind of the personages represented, who express themselves with vivid and elegant gestures. In his painting, as Luigi Coletti (1941) observed, "the bronze-like hardness and the dramatic tension [of his predecessors of more direct Byzantine dependence] are dissolved in a composition characterized by gentler rhythms . . . by planar masses concentrated entirely in the foreground, and by broad stains [of color] that absorb the chiaroscuro in delicate pearly harmonies." [3] Attempts have also been made to consider the Master of Saint Francis a kind of "humorist" [4] who exaggerated the formulae inherited from Byzantine art to give a stronger expressive charge to the personages he created. But in fact the roots of the style of this anonymous master are to be sought not so much in the figurative culture of Byzantium as in painting in Spoleto in the mid-thirteenth century [5] and in French and English Gothic painting. A clear testimony of this latter influence is given by the stained-glass windows of

the upper church of San Francesco, where the large quatrefoils of the transept were realized by transalpine artists, probably from France, on the south side, while the style of the Master of Saint Francis can be recognized in the forms of the opposite side.[6] In some of the windows of the nave, for example in the one with the stories of Saint Thomas,[7] the two workshops seem to have worked side by side. The execution of these works is variously dated; from the stylistic point of view, they suggest a phase less advanced than the crucifix of 1272 and the panels being discussed here, with a provenance from Perugia. It may be assumed that the artist began his career in Assisi, in contact both with exponents of local painting and with the transalpine masters active in the basilica, and that he produced not only stained glass and paintings (both murals and on panel) but also illuminated manuscripts in the 1250s and 1260s.[8]

[1] Henry Thode, *Franz von Assisi und die Anfänge der Kunst der Renaissance in Italien* (Berlin, 1885), 86–87, 219–221.

[2] Cf. Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini (intro. and comm.), *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 181. Recently, Alessio Monciatti has placed in doubt both the authorship of the fresco and its relation with the tomb of Pietro di Barro but has confirmed the dating of the fragment to c. 1250–1260; see Alessio Monciatti, in *La basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Giorgio Bonsanti (Modena, 2002), 341.

[3] Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 25: “la bronzea durezza e la tensions drammatica [dei suoi predecessori di più stretta osservanza bizantina] si sciolgono in una composizione a ritmi più dolcemente cadenzati . . . a masse pianeggianti affiorate tutte in primo piano, larghe macchie che assorbono il chiaroscuro in raffinati accordi perlacei.”

[4] Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento (1948),” in *Edizione delle opere complete di Roberto Longhi*, 14 vols. (Florence, 1961–1984), 7(1974):8; Ferdinando Bologna, *La pittura italiana delle origini* (Rome, 1962), 78.

[5] The earlier literature (and more recently Coletti 1949; Martin and Ruf 1997) assumed the Pisan origin of the master’s art, while Jürgen Schultze (1963) and Pietro Scarpellini (1982) considered it influenced by Serbian painting of the mid-thirteenth century. The present writer (Boskovits 1973) has emphasized the artist’s links with painting in Spoleto in the mid-thirteenth century. See Luigi Coletti, *Gli affreschi della Basilica di Assisi* (Bergamo, 1949), 19–23; Frank Martin and Gerhard

Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 65–72; Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 109–150; Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini (intro. and comm.), *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 180; Miklòs Boskovits, *Pittura umbra e marchigiana fra Medioevo e Rinascimento: Studi nella Galleria Nazionale di Perugia* (Florence, 1973), 4.

[6] On the stained glass attributed to the Master of Saint Francis, cf. Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 267–290, who attributed the rest of the stained glass of the nave and that of the south transept to a *gotische Werkstatt* (253–267).

[7] I refer in particular to a stained-glass window panel in the north wall of the third bay of the entrance that Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf (1997) attributed to a “Gothic workshop.” These authors suggested a date of c. 1275. See Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 265, figs. 119, 125. It seems clear to me, however, that the figure to the extreme left of the scene was drawn not by the same artist as the rest of the scene but by the Master of Saint Francis.

[8] The chronology of the artist is still very controversial. Most art historians have followed Edward B. Garrison (1949) in dating his career to the period c. 1265–1280, while the older literature proposed for the frescoes of the lower church of San Francesco at Assisi dates close to or even antecedent to the midcentury; cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 27–28. My own suggestion, placing the execution of the frescoes in relation to the consecration of the church in 1253, now seems to me to push the dating too far back; cf. Miklòs Boskovits, *Pittura umbra e marchigiana fra Medioevo e Rinascimento: Studi nella Galleria Nazionale di Perugia* (Florence, 1973), 3–7. The frescoes were probably painted c. 1257–1261, as suggested, for example, by Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 59, 114. For the activity of the Master of Saint Francis as a miniaturist, cf. Laurence B. Kanter and Pia Palladino, in *The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi*, ed. Giovanni Morello and Laurence B. Kanter (Milan, 1999), 140–141.

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## Master of Saint Francis

Umbrian, active third quarter 13th century

# Saint James Minor

c. 1272

tempera on panel

painted surface: 48.3 × 22.5 cm (19 × 8 7/8 in.)

overall size: 49.8 × 24.2 cm (19 5/8 × 9 1/2 in.)

framed: 58.7 × 33 × 6 cm (23 1/8 × 13 × 2 3/8 in.)

Inscription: on the arch: SANCTVS JACOB [A]LPHEI Q[VI] COGNOMINAT[VS] E[ST] IV[STVS] [1]

[1] James Minor, usually identified with the apostle James the son of Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3) or with James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19), was, according to tradition, the first bishop of Jerusalem; he was also nicknamed "the Just"; cf. Wilhelm Pratscher, "Jakobus (Herrenbruder)," in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, edited by Ernst Dassmann, 10 vols. Stuttgart, 1937-2003: 16(1991):1227-1243.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.15

## ENTRY

This panel and its companion, *Saint John the Evangelist*, originally formed part of an altarpiece painted on both sides. The side displayed to the faithful presumably showed four stories of Christ flanked by saints and prophets [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*), while the rear side showed the apostles and Saint Francis, full length [fig. 2] (see also *Reconstruction*). Of the main side of the altarpiece, which had already been dismembered by 1793,[1] only the components of the right part have survived, namely *Prophet Isaiah* ([fig. 3], treasury of the basilica of San Francesco, Assisi)[2] and *Deposition* [fig. 4], *Lamentation* [fig. 5], and *Saint Anthony of Padua* [fig. 6], all three now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia.[3] Nothing has survived of the left part of the dossal, which perhaps showed Jeremiah (or another prophet), the counterpart of Isaiah on the other side, flanked by two other scenes of the Passion and another full-length saint, corresponding to Saint Francis on the back. The centerpiece of the dossal, probably a Madonna and Child, has also been lost.[4] On the back of the dossal,

from left to right, were *Saint Francis* ([fig. 7], now Galleria Nazionale dell' Umbria, Perugia, no. 24); *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* ([fig. 8], The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; see note 1); the two panels being discussed here from the National Gallery of Art; *Saint Andrew* [fig. 9], in the past erroneously identified with other apostles (Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia, no. 23)[5]; and *Saint Peter* ([fig. 10], formerly Stoclet collection, Brussels; acquired by the Italian State in 2002 for the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia, no. 1393). As for the lost central panel on the rear side, images of the Madonna and Child or Christ Enthroned have been proposed.[6] To the right of the central image, the presence of six other apostles can be assumed; two of them presumably were combined in a single panel, as in the case of the Metropolitan Museum of Art painting. It is likely, lastly, that the seventh figure, the one closest to the central panel, was the apostle Saint Paul.[7]

Both the arrangement of this series of figures, standing under arcades, and their architectural framing were inspired, as Dillian Gordon (1982) showed, by an early Christian sarcophagus formerly kept in the church of San Francesco al Prato (and now in the Oratory of San Bernardino in Perugia); it had been used as the tomb of the Blessed Egidio (Egido),[8] one of the first companions of Saint Francis, who died near Perugia in 1262 and was greatly venerated in that city.[9] Since the same church also housed the large painted crucifix dated 1272 likewise executed by the Master of Saint Francis and now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia,[10] Gordon proposed a similar date for the altarpiece as a whole—a very plausible hypothesis, even if not everyone has accepted it.[11]

As Edward B. Garrison (1949) and other scholars recognized, the altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato should be considered one of the earliest examples of the type of altarpiece classifiable as “low dossal.” Both its large size and the fact that it was painted on both sides suggest that it was intended for the high altar of the church.[12] Its measurements cannot have diverged very much from Jürgen Schultze’s (1961) calculations (0.58 × 3.5 m).[13] Its external profile was probably distinguished by a central gable, whether arched or triangular, placed over the lost central panel,[14] an archaic type that was replaced as early as the last decade of the thirteenth century by the more modern form of multigabled dossals.[15]

The question of the authorship of the work has never been seriously disputed (even though some art historians have preferred to attribute the dispersed Perugian dossal to the workshop of the Master of Saint Francis).[16] Greater

uncertainties surround its date. To elucidate the question, some preliminary reflections on the main stages in the painter's career are needed.

Two plausibly datable works can be of help in this regard. Some have attributed to the Master of Saint Francis the Madonna and Child with an angel frescoed on the north wall of the nave in the lower church of the basilica of San Francesco in Assisi and considered it to have been executed in 1252 or just after.[17] The cycle of narrative frescoes on both walls of the same nave, on the other hand, unanimously has been attributed to the same artist and dated to around 1260.[18] Comparing them with the one securely dated work of the painter, the painted crucifix of 1272 in Perugia, suggests that the elegant, lively figures in the Washington panels—Saint John turning his head to the right, Saint James stepping forward to the left—are closer to the figures of the cycle with stories of Christ and of Saint Francis than to the fragmentary image of the Madonna. With its more summary design and the static poses of its figures, the latter recalls on the one hand the figurative tradition of artists active in the middle decades of the century, such as Simeone and Machilone from Spoleto,[19] and on the other the manner of the German workshop that executed the earliest stained-glass windows in the basilica of Assisi, those of the apse of the upper church.[20]

As new artists joined the enterprise of decorating the basilica at Assisi, however, styles rapidly changed. A transalpine artist of considerable stature must already have been at work there around 1260, introducing stylistic models more closely attuned to the Gothic taste in western Europe. Under the guidance of this master the large windows of the transept of the upper church were realized, and among the artists working at his side was the Master of Saint Francis. In the windows assignable to him, the Umbrian artist responded with great sensitivity to the poetic aspirations of his transalpine companion; he repeated some of his ideas and forms both in his own stained-glass windows and in the cycle of narrative frescoes in the lower church, combining them with the rapid gestures and the strong expressive charge characteristic of his own native Umbrian culture. Thus, the stained-glass quatrefoils on the north side of the upper church, characterized by the plastic relief given to the bodies and the harsh vigor expressed in their poses, should be considered the result of a less advanced phase in the artist's career than the mural cycle.[21] The panel paintings executed for the Franciscan church of Perugia must belong to later years, presumably after an interval of some duration. Here the refined elegance prescribed by the Gothic style is expressed with particular evidence in the lean figures of the two panels with stories of Christ, and also in

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those with single figures. What is striking in them is the aristocratic refinement of their physiognomic types, their spontaneous and improvised poses, and the capricious undulation of the borders of their mantles [fig. 11]. Unfortunately, the few other works known to us do not offer sufficient clues to estimate how long a period of time must have elapsed between the works of the Master of Saint Francis in Assisi and those in Perugia.[22] On the other hand, the virtual identity of the style observable in the crucifix dated 1272 and in the surviving fragments of the altarpiece suggest that the two works must have been executed close to each other in time.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, front side, right portion, by the Master of Saint Francis: a. *Prophet Isaiah* (fig. 3); b. *Deposition* (fig. 4); c. *Lamentation* (fig. 5); d. *Saint Anthony of Padua* (fig. 6)



**fig. 2** Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, rear side, left portion, by the Master of Saint Francis (color images are NGA objects): a. *Saint Francis* (fig. 7); b. *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* (fig. 8); c. *Saint James Minor*; d. *Saint John the Evangelist*; e. *Saint Andrew* (fig. 9); f. *Saint Peter* (fig. 10)



**fig. 3** Master of Saint Francis, *Prophet Isaiah*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Museo del Tesoro della Basilica di San Francesco, Assisi



**fig. 4** Master of Saint Francis, *Deposition*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 5** Master of Saint Francis, *Lamentation*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 6** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Anthony of Padua*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 7** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Francis*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 8** Master of Saint Francis, *Saints Bartholomew and Simon*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection



**fig. 9** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



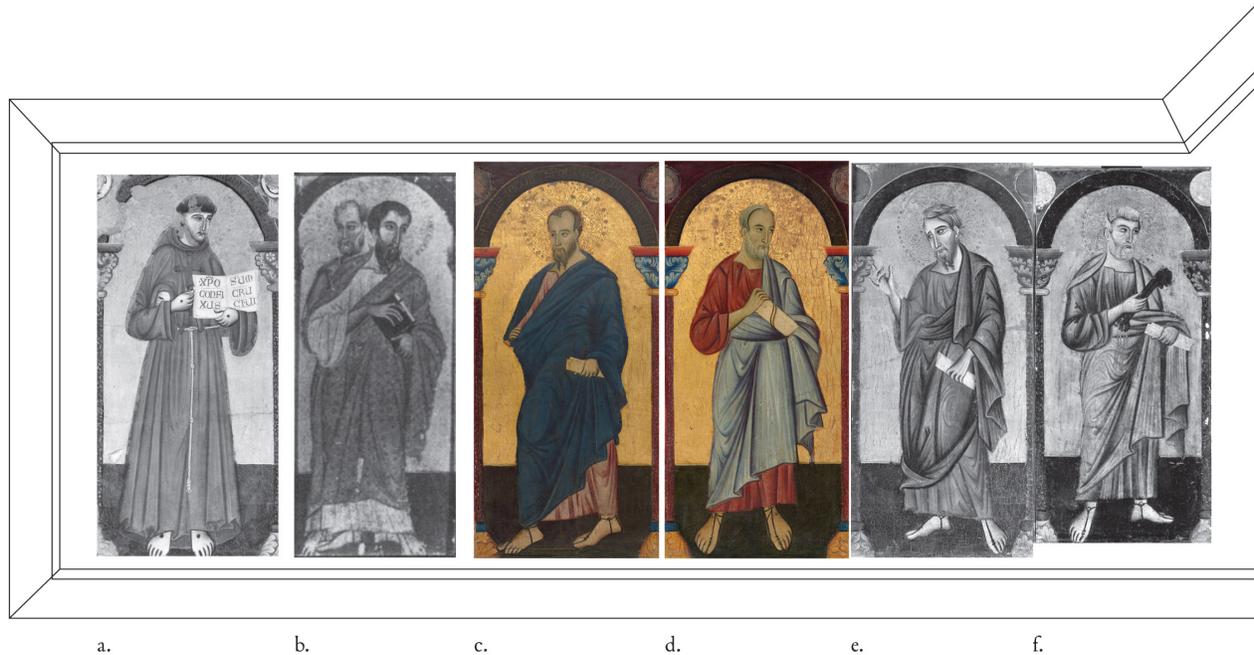
**fig. 10** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Peter*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 11** Detail, Master of Saint Francis, *Saint James Minor*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTIONS**



Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, rear side, left portion, by the Master of Saint Francis:

- a. *Saint Francis* (Entry fig. 7)
- b. *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* (Entry fig. 8)
- c. *Saint James Minor*
- d. *Saint John the Evangelist*
- e. *Saint Andrew* (Entry fig. 9)
- f. *Saint Peter* (Entry fig. 10)

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstructions below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, front side, right portion, by the Master of Saint Francis:

- a. *Prophet Isaiah* (Entry fig. 3)
- b. *Deposition* (Entry fig. 4)
- c. *Lamentation* (Entry fig. 5)
- d. *Saint Anthony of Padua* (Entry fig. 6)

## NOTES

- [1] See Provenance note 4.
- [2] Pietro Scarpellini, "Le pitture," in *Il tesoro della Basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto (Assisi, 1980), 43–44. Raimond Van Marle was the first to publish the painting and to report its location as being in the treasury, where it remains today. Raimond van Marle, "Il Maestro di San Francesco," *Rassegna d'arte antica e moderna* 6, no. 1 (1919): 15, fig. 9.
- [3] See Provenance note 1. Jürgen Schultze, "Zur Kunst des 'Franziskusmeisters,'" *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 144, and others have asserted, correctly in my view, that as the principal side of the altarpiece, the side depicting the scenes of the Passion would have faced the nave. The fact that the architectural framing in relief would have conferred a richer and more solemn appearance on this side also leads to

the same conclusion. Serena Romano, however, expressed doubts on the matter, and Donal Cooper maintained that the side with the apostles would have faced the nave and aisles of the church. Serena Romano, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 60; Donal Cooper, “Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in Pre-Tridentine Umbria,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 64 (2001): 9–12.

- [4] Edward Garrison (1949), followed by Dillian Gordon (1982), maintained that the central panel of the side with the scenes of the Passion would have represented the Crucifixion, while Jürgen Schultze (1963) argued that an iconographic theme more suitable for such a situation would have been a Madonna and Child Enthroned. Gordon has since (2002) accepted his proposal. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 171; Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 71; Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 144–145; Dillian Gordon, “Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Perugian Double-Sided Altarpieces: Form and Function” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 229–234. An altarpiece of a format and date not too dissimilar from the one being considered here, the work of the Master of Farneto in the Galleria Nazionale dell’ Umbria in Perugia (no. 27), seems to support the latter hypothesis. See Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 34–35.
- [5] Giovanni Cecchini (1932) identified the saint as Saint John the Evangelist, Edward Garrison (1949) as Saint Matthew, and Francesco Santi (1969) as Saint Matthew. But the inscription found during a recent restoration (SANCTVS [F]VIT IN PATRAS) establishes that the apostle in question can only be Andrew, martyred, according to tradition, in Patras; see Serena Romano, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 58. Cf. Giovanni Cecchini, *La Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria in Perugia* (Rome, 1932), 21; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 162; Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 30–31.
- [6] Edward Garrison (1949) proposed the Crucifixion as an alternative to the image of the Madonna and Child, while Jürgen Schultze (1963) argued that the lost central image could have represented Christ Enthroned. Dillian

Gordon (2002) also accepted the latter hypothesis. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 163; Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 142–143; Dillian Gordon, “Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Perugian Double-Sided Altarpieces: Form and Function,” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 229–230.

- [7] Cf. Jürgen Schultze, “Ein Duecento-Altar aus Assisi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 10 (1961): 62.
- [8] “The marble sarcophagus is sculpted with [the]...enthroned Christ in the centre, with standing figures...on either side; several of these...are doubled under one arch, several holding scrolls”; all these motifs are also present in the altarpiece of the Master of Saint Francis. What is particularly worthy of note, however, is “the curious pose of St. James with the right arm tucked up into a sling of drapery...found in both outermost figures of the sarcophagus.” This “awkward arrangement,” which according to Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) “may be due to the intention of showing him holding the fuller’s club, symbol of the martyrdom of James the Minor,” is in fact merely a further sign of the fidelity with which the thirteenth-century painter tried to imitate the early Christian model. See Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 75; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:325 n. 2.
- [9] Cf. Silvana Vecchio, “Egidio d’Assisi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome, 1993), 42:312–316.
- [10] Inv. n. 26; see Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 26–28. The crucifix, a panel of large dimensions (489 × 352 cm), presumably had been intended to be placed—like other paintings of this kind—over the choir screen, instead of over the altar, as is sometimes asserted. Its position can be supposed to be similar to that illustrated by the well-known fresco depicting the Miracle of Greccio in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi.
- [11] Dillian Gordon (1982) interpreted the report according to which the sarcophagus of the Blessed Egidio was to be seen below the “Altare del Crocifisso” in 1647, in the sense that the sarcophagus formed the altar table and that the altarpiece painted by the Master of Saint Francis was placed above it. In Gordon’s view, the altarpiece and the large painted crucifix were produced c. 1272 as elements of a single project. In their later publications, Filippo Todini (1986) and Elvio Lunghi (1986) expressed doubts about the

destination of the altarpiece for the Franciscan church of Perugia, while Luiz Marques (1987) revived the old thesis that the altarpiece had been executed for the lower church of Assisi in c. 1260. On the other hand, although they accepted a date close to 1272, both Gail Solberg (1992) and Donal Cooper (2001) cast doubt on the common destination of the panels by the Master of Saint Francis and the sarcophagus of the Blessed Egidio. The latter, in fact, is documented in a side chapel and not on the site of the high altar. Serena Romano (1994), followed by Vittoria Garibaldi (2002), was convinced that the altarpiece of the Master of Saint Francis did indeed stand over the sarcophagus of the Blessed Egidio, but in the crypt of the church, and that it was executed at a “data più vicina al 1262 (sistemazione delle reliquie del Beato Egidio) che al 1272.” See Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S.

Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 75–76; Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:376; Elvio Lunghi, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:624; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 61–64; Gail E. Solberg, *Taddeo di Bartolo: His Life and Work* (PhD diss., New York University, 1991), 634; Donal Cooper, “‘Qui Perusii in archa saxea tumulatus’: The Shrine of Beato Egidio in San Francesco al Prato, Perugia,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 69 (2001): 226–230; Serena Romano, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 60; Vittoria Garibaldi, *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Guida* (Milan, 2002), 14.

- [12] For the earliest panels painted on both front and rear sides, cf. Julian Gardner, “Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure,” in *La pittura nel xiv e xv secolo, il contributo dell’analisi tecnica alla storia dell’arte*, ed. Hendrik W. van Os and J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322; Miklós Boskovits, “Appunti per una storia della tavola d’altare: Le origini,” *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 422–438.
- [13] Jürgen Schultze, “Ein Duecento-Altar aus Assisi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 10 (1961): 63–64.
- [14] Edward Garrison calculated the width of the original dossal by the Master of San Francesco as c. 370 cm. Gordon proposed instead that the altarpiece and the large crucifix by the master had the same width, i.e., c. 352 cm. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 171; Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 76.

- [15] On dossals of this type, cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 168. Julian Gardner noted that the “mixture of narrative scenes and standing saints employs an iconographical model already enunciated by Nicola Pisano in his Siena Duomo pulpit.” Julian Gardner, “Some Aspects of the History of the Italian Altar, ca. 1250–ca. 1350: Placement and Decoration,” in *Objects, Images and the Word: Art in the Service of the Liturgy*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, 2003), 151.
- [16] Thus Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 170, and, at least initially, Francesco Santi, *La Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria in Perugia*, Itinerari dei musei e monumenti d’Italia 90 (Rome, 1956), 7.
- [17] Jürgen Schultze (1963) published it as a work related to the narrative frescoes by the Master of Saint Francis on the walls of the church. Basing his view on a sixteenth-century text by Fra’ Ludovico, Pietro Scarpellini (Fra’ Ludovico da Pietralunga 1982) asserted that it had been executed to decorate the burial place of Cardinal Pietro di Barro, who died in 1252 and was buried in the area of the lower church where the fresco was situated. More recent studies cast doubt on the attribution to the Master of Saint Francis; they preferred to see the fresco as the work of an anonymous Umbrian master (Marques 1987), or of a painter of Tuscan culture (Cadei 1991), or of Roman masters still active in Assisi in the 1270s (Andaloro 2001). Filippo Todini (1986), on the other hand, asserted that it was a work of the earliest phase of the Master of Saint Francis, and it seems to me that this thesis is fully confirmed by comparison with passages of the stained glass attributable to the same master in the upper church (Martin and Ruf 1997). See Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 129–130; Pietro Scarpellini, in Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini (intro. and comm.), *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 181; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 59, 60; Antonio Cadei, “Le prime immagini,” in *San Francesco: Basilica patriarcale in Assisi; Testimonianza artistica, messaggio evangelico*, ed. Roberto Caravaggi (Milan, 1991), 102; Maria Andaloro, “Tracce della prima decorazione pittorica,” in *Il cantiere pittorico della Basilica superiore di San Francesco in Assisi*, ed. Giuseppe Basile and Pasquale Magro (Assisi, 2001), 80–81; Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:375; Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), figs. 130, 142.
- [18] Joanna Cannon (1982) and Beat Brenk (1983) both indicated the publication of the *Legenda maior* of Saint Francis in 1263 as the probable *terminus ante*

*quem* for the frescoes, and more recent studies generally have accepted this proposal. See Joanna Cannon, "Dating the Frescoes by the Maestro di San Francesco at Assisi," *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 65–69; Beat Brenk, "Das Datum der Franzlegende der Unterkirche zu Assisi," in *Roma anno 1300: Atti della iv settimana di studi di storia dell'arte medievale dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza,"* ed. Angiola Maria Romanini (Rome, 1983), 229–234.

- [19] Cf. Edward B. Garrison, "Simeone and Machilone Spoletenses," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 53–58.
- [20] See Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 19–40.
- [21] Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 40–52. The very late dating that Martin proposed (c. 1275) for the stained-glass panels by the Master of Saint Francis seems difficult to accept, not only because a scene like Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata (right part of the first bay upon entering) is at variance with the description proposed by Saint Bonaventura in the *Legenda maior*, but also because it is incompatible with the stylistic evidence: the style of the stained glass in question is more archaic than the frescoes by the Master of Saint Francis in the lower church.
- [22] The works in question consist of a series of crucifixes of which the one in the Louvre, Paris (R.F. 1981.48), seems the earliest because of the pronouncedly linear definition of the slender body of Christ, its less arched position, and the fact that the head rests less heavily on the shoulder than in other similar paintings. This panel is presumably earlier than the fresco cycle of the lower church of Assisi, while the small crucifix painted on both sides now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia (no. 18), difficult to interpret because of the pronounced abrasion of its painted surface, is likely to be somewhat later in date, perhaps the second half of the 1260s. Even later is the crucifix in the Acton collection in Florence; cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 212. But the dating proposed for this painting, 1280–1290, is far too late: it must in my view antedate the crucifix dated 1272. The crucifix in the National Gallery in London (no. 6361) is probably the latest of the master's surviving works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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Both this painting and its companion, *Saint John the Evangelist*, were executed on a single plank of horizontal-grain wood prepared with gesso. The x-radiographs show that the distinctive wood grain pattern is continuous between the two panels, proving that they were once part of the same plank, with *Saint James Minor* on the left and *Saint John the Evangelist* on the right.[1] The backgrounds are gilded, and each halo is decorated with a curvilinear incised design and two sizes of rosette punches around its border. Areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole, and incised lines are visible between the painted and gilded areas. Infrared reflectography reveals a detailed brush underdrawing defining contours within the painted portions and the fold patterns in the figures' drapery.[2] The paint was applied in the discrete brushstrokes typical of tempera technique, with green underpaint in the flesh areas. The x-radiographs reveal small, filled holes located approximately 0.75 cm in from the edges of each panel, which may be the means of attachment of now-lost framing.[3] There are nine holes visible in *Saint John the Evangelist* and ten holes in *Saint James Minor*.

Stephen Pichetto "cradled, cleaned, restored, and varnished" both panels in 1944.[4] The paint is generally in good condition on both panels, although it is less well preserved on *Saint James Minor* than on *Saint John the Evangelist*. The photographs of the paintings published by Robert Lehman (1928) show small, localized areas of flaking along the contours, in the robe, and on the forehead of Saint James Minor, as well as in the architectural framing above him, and in the area close to the lower edge of that painting. Darkened inpaint is visible in small patches in Saint James Minor's halo in these photographs. The photographs show losses along the edges of Saint John the Evangelist's robes, in the arch, and along the top and bottom edges of that panel. The two roundels in the spandrels of the arch at the top right and left of each panel, which may have been decorated with colored glass, have been excavated down to the wood. The varnish applied to both paintings in 1944 is now somewhat discolored.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] See Dillian Gordon for an examination of the wood grain on the backs of other panels on the front side of the dossal as an aid to establishing the panels' original placement in the dossal. Dillian Gordon, "A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco," *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 71–72.

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- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera system.
- [3] These holes are visible before filling and inpainting in the “before work” photos taken in 1943, prior to Pichetto’s treatment.
- [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:325. However, comparison of the photograph taken before Pichetto’s treatment (dated 1943) with that published by Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), nos. 61, 62, implies that another treatment took place between 1928 and 1943.
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### PROVENANCE

Executed in all probability for the church of San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, where at least part of the fragments belonging to the same altarpiece were still preserved in 1793;<sup>[1]</sup> probably privately owned in Perugia;<sup>[2]</sup> Anton de Waal [1837–1917], Rome;<sup>[3]</sup> probably (Paolo Paolini, Rome), by 1921;<sup>[4]</sup> Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] William Young Ottley (*A Series of Plates Engraved after the Paintings and Sculptures of the Most Eminent masters of the Early Florentine School*, London, 1826: pl. 1) describes having seen the *Deposition* and *Lamentation*, from the same altarpiece and now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia, in the convent of San Francesco in Perugia in 1793. Evidently, as Dillian Gordon (“A Perugian provenience for the Franciscan double - sided altar - piece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 [1982]: 72 n. 41) observes, the altarpiece had already been sawn apart at that time; see the following note. Previously, Robert Lehman (*The Philip Lehman Collection, New York*, Paris, 1928: nos. CXII–CXIII), Edward B. Garrison (*Italian Romanesque Panel Painting. An Illustrated Index*, Florence, 1949: 171), and others proposed a provenance from Assisi for both NGA 1952.5.15 and .16. Jurgen Schultze (“Ein Dugento - altar aus Assisi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Istituts Florenz* 10 [1961]: 59-66; “Zur Kunst des Franziskusmeister,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 [1963]: 109-150; “Die Fresken in der Unterkirche von San Francesco zu Assisi und andere Werke des Franziskusmeister,” *Raggi* 7, no. 2 [1967]: 44-58) and Luiz C. Marques (*La peinture du Duecento en Italie Centrale*, Paris, 1987: 61-64) maintain that the painting to which the NGA panels originally belonged was executed for the high altar of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi, but most others have abandoned that

theory. [2] The two panels with *Stories of Christ* entered the Accademia di Belle Arti in Perugia in 1810 (and thence into the Galleria Nazionale, as no. 22) following the suppression of the religious orders. The panel of *Saint Anthony* (no. 21) that originally flanked the scene of *Lamentation* was acquired some time later by the Municipio of Perugia for the then Pinacoteca Civica (see Francesco Santi, *Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d'arte di età romanica e gotica*, Rome, 1969: 28). Probably, as in various other cases (see for example Miklós Boskovits and David Alan Brown, *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century*, The Systematic Catalogue of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2003: 120), the components of the dossal remained in the convent even after its dispersal, perhaps distributed for devotional reasons in the cells and then removed by individual friars after its suppression. Whatever the case, the panels that did not enter the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia apparently surfaced together on the art market in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It was probably in the same period that the figure of the Prophet Isaiah entered the treasury of the basilica in Assisi. [3] Anton de Waal arrived in Rome from his native Germany in 1868 and in 1873 became rector of the Collegio Teutonico of Santa Maria in Campo Santo in the same city, where he formed a small museum (Erwin Gatz, *Anton de Waal (1837-1917) un der Campo Santo Teutonico*, Freiburg/Breisgau, 1980). According to Schultze (1961, 64), the four panels formerly forming part of the altarpiece in San Francesco al Prato were sold by the arch-confraternity of Santa Maria della Pietà in Campo Santo Teutonico in 1921. [4] According to John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter (*The Robert Lehman Collection, I, Italian Paintings*, New York and Princeton, 1987: 80), the panel with *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Robert Lehman Collection, no. 1975.1.104), was with the dealer Paolo Paolini in Rome before Philip Lehman purchased it together with NGA 1952.5.15 and .16. [5] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York, Paris, 1928: nos. 61, 62. The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.15 and .16, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892–1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 810.

1999 The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi, Petit Palais, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1998-1999, no. 6/4, repro., as The Apostle Saint James Minor (shown only in New York in 1999).

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Master of Saint Francis  
Umbrian, active third quarter 13th century

## *Saint John the Evangelist*

c. 1272

tempera on panel

painted surface: 48.3 × 22.5 cm (19 × 8 7/8 in.)

overall: 49.8 × 24.2 cm (19 5/8 × 9 1/2 in.)

framed: 58.4 × 32.7 × 6 cm (23 × 12 7/8 × 2 3/8 in.)

Inscription: on the arch: SANCTVS I[O]HANES...SSUM...

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.16

### ENTRY

This panel and its companion, *Saint James Minor*, originally formed part of an altarpiece painted on both sides. The side displayed to the faithful presumably showed four stories of Christ flanked by saints and prophets [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*), while the rear side showed the apostles and Saint Francis, full length [fig. 2] (see also *Reconstruction*). Of the main side of the altarpiece, which had already been dismembered by 1793,[1] only the components of the right part have survived, namely *Prophet Isaiah* ([fig. 3], treasury of the basilica of San Francesco, Assisi)[2] and *Deposition* [fig. 4], *Lamentation* [fig. 5], and *Saint Anthony of Padua* [fig. 6], all three now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia.[3] Nothing has survived of the left part of the dossal, which perhaps showed Jeremiah (or another prophet), the counterpart of Isaiah on the other side, flanked by two other scenes of the Passion and another full-length saint, corresponding to Saint Francis on the back. The centerpiece of the dossal, probably a Madonna and Child, has also been lost.[4] On the back of the dossal, from left to right, were *Saint Francis* ([fig. 7], now Galleria Nazionale dell' Umbria, Perugia, no. 24); *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* ([fig. 8], The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; see note 1); the two panels being discussed here from the

National Gallery of Art; *Saint Andrew* [fig. 9], in the past erroneously identified with other apostles (Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia, no. 23);[5] and *Saint Peter* ([fig. 10], formerly Stoclet collection, Brussels; acquired by the Italian State in 2002 for the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia, no. 1393). As for the lost central panel on the rear side, images of the Madonna and Child or Christ Enthroned have been proposed.[6] To the right of the central image, the presence of six other apostles can be assumed; two of them presumably were combined in a single panel, as in the case of the Metropolitan Museum of Art painting. It is likely, lastly, that the seventh figure, the one closest to the central panel, was the apostle Saint Paul.[7]

Both the arrangement of this series of figures, standing under arcades, and their architectural framing were inspired, as Dillian Gordon (1982) showed, by an early Christian sarcophagus formerly kept in the church of San Francesco al Prato (and now in the Oratory of San Bernardino in Perugia); it had been used as the tomb of the Blessed Egidio (Egido),[8] one of the first companions of Saint Francis, who died near Perugia in 1262 and was greatly venerated in that city.[9] Since the same church also housed the large painted crucifix dated 1272 likewise executed by the Master of Saint Francis and now in the Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria in Perugia,[10] Gordon proposed a similar date for the altarpiece as a whole—a very plausible hypothesis, even if not everyone has accepted it.[11]

As Edward B. Garrison (1949) and other scholars recognized, the altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato should be considered one of the earliest examples of the type of altarpiece classifiable as “low dossal.” Both its large size and the fact that it was painted on both sides suggest that it was intended for the high altar of the church.[12] Its measurements cannot have diverged very much from Jürgen Schultze’s (1961) calculations (0.58 × 3.5 m).[13] Its external profile was probably distinguished by a central gable, whether arched or triangular, placed over the lost central panel,[14] an archaic type that was replaced as early as the last decade of the thirteenth century by the more modern form of multigabled dossals.[15]

The question of the authorship of the work has never been seriously disputed (even though some art historians have preferred to attribute the dispersed Perugian dossal to the workshop of the Master of Saint Francis).[16] Greater uncertainties surround its date. To elucidate the question, some preliminary reflections on the main stages in the painter’s career are needed.

Two plausibly datable works can be of help in this regard. Some have attributed to the Master of Saint Francis the Madonna and Child with an angel frescoed on the north wall of the nave in the lower church of the basilica of San Francesco in Assisi and considered it to have been executed in 1252 or just after.[17] The cycle of narrative frescoes on both walls of the same nave, on the other hand, unanimously has been attributed to the same artist and dated to around 1260.[18] Comparing them with the one securely dated work of the painter, the painted crucifix of 1272 in Perugia, suggests that the elegant, lively figures in the Washington panels—Saint John turning his head to the right, Saint James stepping forward to the left—are closer to the figures of the cycle with stories of Christ and of Saint Francis than to the fragmentary image of the Madonna. With its more summary design and the static poses of its figures, the latter recalls on the one hand the figurative tradition of artists active in the middle decades of the century, such as Simeone and Machilone from Spoleto,[19] and on the other the manner of the German workshop that executed the earliest stained-glass windows in the basilica of Assisi, those of the apse of the upper church.[20]

As new artists joined the enterprise of decorating the basilica at Assisi, however, styles rapidly changed. A transalpine artist of considerable stature must already have been at work there around 1260, introducing stylistic models more closely attuned to the Gothic taste in western Europe. Under the guidance of this master the large windows of the transept of the upper church were realized, and among the artists working at his side was the Master of Saint Francis. In the windows assignable to him, the Umbrian artist responded with great sensitivity to the poetic aspirations of his transalpine companion; he repeated some of his ideas and forms both in his own stained-glass windows and in the cycle of narrative frescoes in the lower church, combining them with the rapid gestures and the strong expressive charge characteristic of his own native Umbrian culture. Thus, the stained-glass quatrefoils on the north side of the upper church, characterized by the plastic relief given to the bodies and the harsh vigor expressed in their poses, should be considered the result of a less advanced phase in the artist's career than the mural cycle.[21] The panel paintings executed for the Franciscan church of Perugia must belong to later years, presumably after an interval of some duration. Here the refined elegance prescribed by the Gothic style is expressed with particular evidence in the lean figures of the two panels with stories of Christ, and also in those with single figures. What is striking in them is the aristocratic refinement of their physiognomic types, their spontaneous and improvised poses, and the capricious undulation of the borders of their mantles [fig. 11]. Unfortunately, the few

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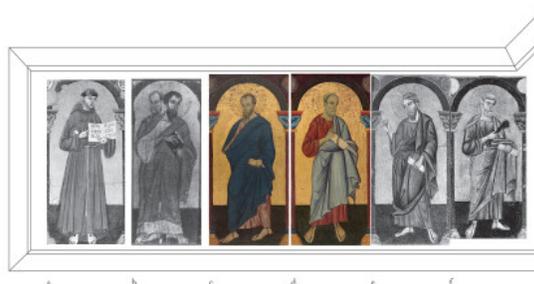
other works known to us do not offer sufficient clues to estimate how long a period of time must have elapsed between the works of the Master of Saint Francis in Assisi and those in Perugia.[22] On the other hand, the virtual identity of the style observable in the crucifix dated 1272 and in the surviving fragments of the altarpiece suggest that the two works must have been executed close to each other in time.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, front side, right portion, by the Master of Saint Francis: a. *Prophet Isaiah* (fig. 3); b. *Deposition* (fig. 4); c. *Lamentation* (fig. 5); d. *Saint Anthony of Padua* (fig. 6)



**fig. 2** Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, rear side, left portion, by the Master of Saint Francis (color images are NGA objects): a. *Saint Francis* (fig. 7); b. *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* (fig. 8); c. *Saint James Minor*; d. *Saint John the Evangelist*; e. *Saint Andrew* (fig. 9); f. *Saint Peter* (fig. 10)



**fig. 3** Master of Saint Francis, *Prophet Isaiah*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Museo del Tesoro della Basilica di San Francesco, Assisi



**fig. 4** Master of Saint Francis, *Deposition*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 5** Master of Saint Francis, *Lamentation*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 6** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Anthony of Padua*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 7** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Francis*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



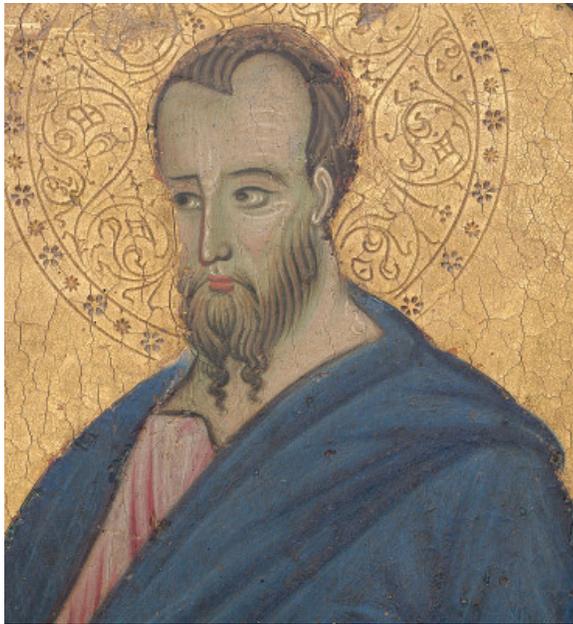
**fig. 8** Master of Saint Francis, *Saints Bartholomew and Simon*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Robert Lehman Collection



**fig. 9** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



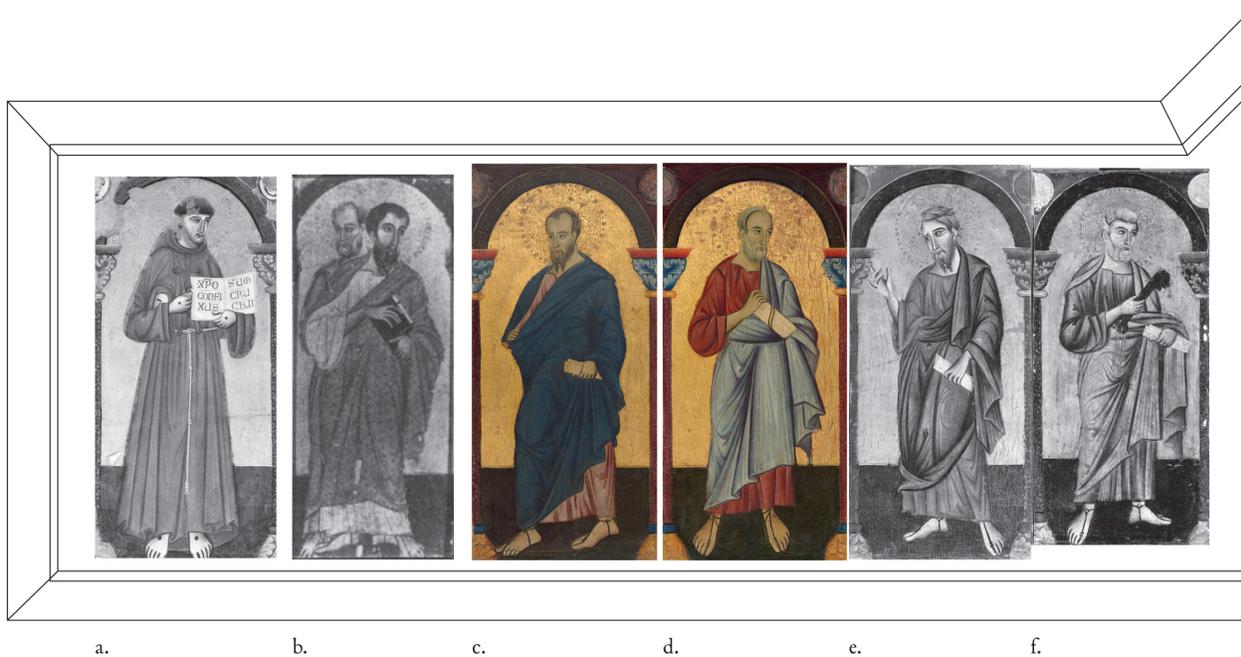
**fig. 10** Master of Saint Francis, *Saint Peter*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Image courtesy of Former Superintendent BSAE Umbria-Perugia



**fig. 11** Detail, Master of Saint Francis, *Saint James Minor*, c. 1272, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**RECONSTRUCTIONS**



Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, rear side, left portion, by the Master of Saint Francis:

- a. *Saint Francis* (Entry fig. 7)
- b. *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* (Entry fig. 8)
- c. *Saint James Minor*
- d. *Saint John the Evangelist*
- e. *Saint Andrew* (Entry fig. 9)
- f. *Saint Peter* (Entry fig. 10)

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstructions below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of an altarpiece formerly in San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, front side, right portion, by the Master of Saint Francis:

- a. *Prophet Isaiah* (Entry fig. 3)
- b. *Deposition* (Entry fig. 4)
- c. *Lamentation* (Entry fig. 5)
- d. *Saint Anthony of Padua* (Entry fig. 6)

**NOTES**

- [1] See Provenance note 4.
- [2] Pietro Scarpellini, “Le pitture,” in *Il tesoro della Basilica di San Francesco ad Assisi*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto (Assisi, 1980), 43–44. Raimond Van Marle was the first to publish the painting and to report its location as being in the treasury, where it remains today. Raimond van Marle, “Il Maestro di San Francesco,” *Rassegna d’arte antica e moderna* 6, no. 1 (1919): 15, fig. 9.
- [3] See Provenance note 1. Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 144, and others have asserted, correctly in my view, that as the principal side of the altarpiece, the side depicting the scenes of the Passion would have faced the nave. The fact that the architectural framing in relief would have conferred a richer and more solemn appearance on this side also leads to

the same conclusion. Serena Romano, however, expressed doubts on the matter, and Donal Cooper maintained that the side with the apostles would have faced the nave and aisles of the church. Serena Romano, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 60; Donal Cooper, “Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in Pre-Tridentine Umbria,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* 64 (2001): 9–12.

- [4] Edward Garrison (1949), followed by Dillian Gordon (1982), maintained that the central panel of the side with the scenes of the Passion would have represented the Crucifixion, while Jürgen Schultze (1963) argued that an iconographic theme more suitable for such a situation would have been a Madonna and Child Enthroned. Gordon has since (2002) accepted his proposal. See Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 171; Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 71; Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 144–145; Dillian Gordon, “Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Perugian Double-Sided Altarpieces: Form and Function” in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 229–234. An altarpiece of a format and date not too dissimilar from the one being considered here, the work of the Master of Farneto in the Galleria Nazionale dell’ Umbria in Perugia (no. 27), seems to support the latter hypothesis. See Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 34–35.
- [5] Giovanni Cecchini (1932) identified the saint as Saint John the Evangelist, Edward Garrison (1949) as Saint Matthew, and Francesco Santi (1969) as Saint Matthew. But the inscription found during a recent restoration (SANCTVS [F]VIT IN PATRAS) establishes that the apostle in question can only be Andrew, martyred, according to tradition, in Patras; see Serena Romano, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 58. Cf. Giovanni Cecchini, *La Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria in Perugia* (Rome, 1932), 21; Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 162; Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 30–31.
- [6] Edward Garrison (1949) proposed the Crucifixion as an alternative to the image of the Madonna and Child, while Jürgen Schultze (1963) argued that the lost central image could have represented Christ Enthroned. Dillian Gordon (2002) also accepted the latter hypothesis. See Edward B. Garrison,

*Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 163; Jürgen Schultze, "Zur Kunst des 'Franziskusmeisters,'" *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 142–143; Dillian Gordon, "Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Perugian Double-Sided Altarpieces: Form and Function," in *Italian Panel Painting of the Duecento and Trecento*, ed. Victor M. Schmidt (Washington, DC, and New Haven, 2002), 229–230.

- [7] Cf. Jürgen Schultze, "Ein Duecento-Altar aus Assisi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 10 (1961): 62.
- [8] "The marble sarcophagus is sculpted with [the]...enthroned Christ in the centre, with standing figures...on either side; several of these...are doubled under one arch, several holding scrolls"; all these motifs are also present in the altarpiece of the Master of Saint Francis. What is particularly worthy of note, however, is "the curious pose of St. James with the right arm tucked up into a sling of drapery...found in both outermost figures of the sarcophagus." This "awkward arrangement," which according to Fern Rusk Shapley (1979) "may be due to the intention of showing him holding the fuller's club, symbol of the martyrdom of James the Minor," is in fact merely a further sign of the fidelity with which the thirteenth-century painter tried to imitate the early Christian model. See Dillian Gordon, "A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco," *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 75; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:325 n. 2.
- [9] Cf. Silvana Vecchio, "Egidio d'Assisi," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome, 1993), 42:312–316.
- [10] Inv. n. 26; see Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d'arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 26–28. The crucifix, a panel of large dimensions (489 × 352 cm), presumably had been intended to be placed—like other paintings of this kind—over the choir screen, instead of over the altar, as is sometimes asserted. Its position can be supposed to be similar to that illustrated by the well-known fresco depicting the Miracle of Greccio in the upper church of San Francesco at Assisi.
- [11] Dillian Gordon (1982) interpreted the report according to which the sarcophagus of the Blessed Egidio was to be seen below the "Altare del Crocifisso" in 1647, in the sense that the sarcophagus formed the altar table and that the altarpiece painted by the Master of Saint Francis was placed above it. In Gordon's view, the altarpiece and the large painted crucifix were produced c. 1272 as elements of a single project. In their later publications, Filippo Todini (1986) and Elvio Lunghi (1986) expressed doubts about the destination of the altarpiece for the Franciscan church of Perugia, while Luiz Marques (1987) revived the old thesis that the altarpiece had been executed

for the lower church of Assisi in c. 1260. On the other hand, although they accepted a date close to 1272, both Gail Solberg (1992) and Donal Cooper (2001) cast doubt on the common destination of the panels by the Master of Saint Francis and the sarcophagus of the Blessed Egidio. The latter, in fact, is documented in a side chapel and not on the site of the high altar. Serena Romano (1994), followed by Vittoria Garibaldi (2002), was convinced that the altarpiece of the Master of Saint Francis did indeed stand over the sarcophagus of the Blessed Egidio, but in the crypt of the church, and that it was executed at a “data più vicina al 1262 (sistemazione delle reliquie del Beato Egidio) che al 1272.” See Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 75–76; Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:376; Elvio Lunghi, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:624; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 61–64; Gail E. Solberg, *Taddeo di Bartolo: His Life and Work* (PhD diss., New York University, 1991), 634; Donal Cooper, ““Qui Perusii in archa saxea tumulatus”: The Shrine of Beato Egidio in San Francesco al Prato, Perugia,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 69 (2001): 226–230; Serena Romano, “Maestro di San Francesco,” in *Dipinti, sculture e ceramiche della Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Studi e restauri*, ed. Caterina Bon Valsassina and Vittoria Garibaldi (Florence, 1994), 60; Vittoria Garibaldi, *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria: Guida* (Milan, 2002), 14.

- [12] For the earliest panels painted on both front and rear sides, cf. Julian Gardner, “Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure,” in *La pittura nel xiv e xv secolo, il contributo dell’analisi tecnica alla storia dell’arte*, ed. Hendrik W. van Os and J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322; Miklós Boskovits, “Appunti per una storia della tavola d’altare: Le origini,” *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 422–438.
- [13] Jürgen Schultze, “Ein Duecento-Altar aus Assisi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion,” *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 10 (1961): 63–64.
- [14] Edward Garrison calculated the width of the original dossal by the Master of San Francesco as c. 370 cm. Gordon proposed instead that the altarpiece and the large crucifix by the master had the same width, i.e., c. 352 cm. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 171; Dillian Gordon, “A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 76.
- [15] On dossals of this type, cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 168. Julian Gardner noted

that the “mixture of narrative scenes and standing saints employs an iconographical model already enunciated by Nicola Pisano in his Siena Duomo pulpit.” Julian Gardner, “Some Aspects of the History of the Italian Altar, ca. 1250–ca. 1350: Placement and Decoration,” in *Objects, Images and the Word: Art in the Service of the Liturgy*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, 2003), 151.

- [16] Thus Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 170, and, at least initially, Francesco Santi, *La Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria in Perugia*, Itinerari dei musei e monumenti d’Italia 90 (Rome, 1956), 7.
- [17] Jürgen Schultze (1963) published it as a work related to the narrative frescoes by the Master of Saint Francis on the walls of the church. Basing his view on a sixteenth-century text by Fra’ Ludovico, Pietro Scarpellini (Fra’ Ludovico da Pietralunga 1982) asserted that it had been executed to decorate the burial place of Cardinal Pietro di Barro, who died in 1252 and was buried in the area of the lower church where the fresco was situated. More recent studies cast doubt on the attribution to the Master of Saint Francis; they preferred to see the fresco as the work of an anonymous Umbrian master (Marques 1987), or of a painter of Tuscan culture (Cadei 1991), or of Roman masters still active in Assisi in the 1270s (Andaloro 2001). Filippo Todini (1986), on the other hand, asserted that it was a work of the earliest phase of the Master of Saint Francis, and it seems to me that this thesis is fully confirmed by comparison with passages of the stained glass attributable to the same master in the upper church (Martin and Ruf 1997). See Jürgen Schultze, “Zur Kunst des ‘Franziskusmeisters,’” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 (1963): 129–130; Pietro Scarpellini, in Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini (intro. and comm.), *Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 181; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 59, 60; Antonio Cadei, “Le prime immagini,” in *San Francesco: Basilica patriarcale in Assisi; Testimonianza artistica, messaggio evangelico*, ed. Roberto Caravaggi (Milan, 1991), 102; Maria Andaloro, “Tracce della prima decorazione pittorica,” in *Il cantiere pittorico della Basilica superiore di San Francesco in Assisi*, ed. Giuseppe Basile and Pasquale Magro (Assisi, 2001), 80–81; Filippo Todini, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento in Umbria e il cantiere di Assisi,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:375; Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), figs. 130, 142.
- [18] Joanna Cannon (1982) and Beat Brenk (1983) both indicated the publication of the *Legenda maior* of Saint Francis in 1263 as the probable *terminus ante quem* for the frescoes, and more recent studies generally have accepted this proposal. See Joanna Cannon, “Dating the Frescoes by the Maestro di

San Francesco at Assisi,” *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 65–69; Beat Brenk, “Das Datum der Franzlegende der Unterkirche zu Assisi,” in *Roma anno 1300: Atti della iv settimana di studi di storia dell’arte medievale dell’Università di Roma “La Sapienza,”* ed. Angiola Maria Romanini (Rome, 1983), 229–234.

- [19] Cf. Edward B. Garrison, “Simeone and Machilone Spoletenses,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 35 (1949): 53–58.
- [20] See Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 19–40.
- [21] Frank Martin and Gerhard Ruf, *Die Glasmalereien von San Francesco in Assisi: Entstehung und Entwicklung einer Gattung in Italien* (Regensburg, 1997), 40–52. The very late dating that Martin proposed (c. 1275) for the stained-glass panels by the Master of Saint Francis seems difficult to accept, not only because a scene like Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata (right part of the first bay upon entering) is at variance with the description proposed by Saint Bonaventura in the *Legenda maior*, but also because it is incompatible with the stylistic evidence: the style of the stained glass in question is more archaic than the frescoes by the Master of Saint Francis in the lower church.
- [22] The works in question consist of a series of crucifixes of which the one in the Louvre, Paris (R.F. 1981.48), seems the earliest because of the pronouncedly linear definition of the slender body of Christ, its less arched position, and the fact that the head rests less heavily on the shoulder than in other similar paintings. This panel is presumably earlier than the fresco cycle of the lower church of Assisi, while the small crucifix painted on both sides now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia (no. 18), difficult to interpret because of the pronounced abrasion of its painted surface, is likely to be somewhat later in date, perhaps the second half of the 1260s. Even later is the crucifix in the Acton collection in Florence; cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 212. But the dating proposed for this painting, 1280–1290, is far too late: it must in my view antedate the crucifix dated 1272. The crucifix in the National Gallery in London (no. 6361) is probably the latest of the master’s surviving works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Both this painting and its companion, *Saint James Minor*, were executed on a single plank of horizontal-grain wood prepared with gesso. The x-radiographs show that the distinctive wood grain pattern is continuous between the two panels,

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proving that they were once part of the same plank, with *Saint James Minor* on the left and *Saint John the Evangelist* on the right.[1] The backgrounds are gilded, and each halo is decorated with a curvilinear incised design and two sizes of rosette punches around its border. Areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole, and incised lines are visible between the painted and gilded areas. Infrared reflectography reveals a detailed brush underdrawing defining contours within the painted portions and the fold patterns in the figures' drapery.[2] The paint was applied in the discrete brushstrokes typical of tempera technique, with green underpaint in the flesh areas. The x-radiographs reveal small, filled holes located approximately 0.75 cm in from the edges of each panel, which may be the means of attachment of now-lost framing.[3] There are nine holes visible in *Saint John the Evangelist* and ten holes in *Saint James Minor*.

Stephen Pichetto "cradled, cleaned, restored, and varnished" both panels in 1944.[4] The paint is generally in good condition on both panels, although it is less well preserved on *Saint James Minor* than on *Saint John the Evangelist*. The photographs of the paintings published by Robert Lehman (1928) show small, localized areas of flaking along the contours, in the robe, and on the forehead of Saint James Minor, as well as in the architectural framing above him, and in the area close to the lower edge of that painting. Darkened inpaint is visible in small patches in Saint James Minor's halo in these photographs. The photographs show losses along the edges of Saint John the Evangelist's robes, in the arch, and along the top and bottom edges of that panel. The two roundels in the spandrels of the arch at the top right and left of each panel, which may have been decorated with colored glass, have been excavated down to the wood. The varnish applied to both paintings in 1944 is now somewhat discolored.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] See Dillian Gordon for an examination of the wood grain on the backs of other panels on the front side of the dossal as an aid to establishing the panels' original placement in the dossal. Dillian Gordon, "A Perugian Provenance for the Franciscan Double-Sided Altarpiece by the Maestro di S. Francesco," *The Burlington Magazine* 124 (1982): 71–72.
- [2] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Hamamatsu c/1000-03 Vidicon camera system.
- [3] These holes are visible before filling and inpainting in the "before work"

photos taken in 1943, prior to Pichetto's treatment.

- [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:325. However, comparison of the photograph taken before Pichetto's treatment (dated 1943) with that published by Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), nos. 61, 62, implies that another treatment took place between 1928 and 1943.
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## PROVENANCE

Executed in all probability for the church of San Francesco al Prato in Perugia, where at least part of the fragments belonging to the same altarpiece were still preserved in 1793;<sup>[1]</sup> probably privately owned in Perugia;<sup>[2]</sup> Anton de Waal [1837–1917], Rome;<sup>[3]</sup> probably (Paolo Paolini, Rome), by 1921;<sup>[4]</sup> Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] William Young Ottley (*A Series of Plates Engraved after the Paintings and Sculptures of the Most Eminent masters of the Early Florentine School*, London, 1826: pl. 1) describes having seen the *Deposition* and *Lamentation*, from the same altarpiece and now in the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia, in the convent of San Francesco in Perugia in 1793. Evidently, as Dillian Gordon ("A Perugian provenience for the Franciscan double - sided altar - piece by the Maestro di S. Francesco," *The Burlington Magazine* 124 [1982]: 72 n. 41) observes, the altarpiece had already been sawn apart at that time; see the following note. Previously, Robert Lehman (*The Philip Lehman Collection, New York*, Paris, 1928: nos. CXII–CXIII), Edward B. Garrison (*Italian Romanesque Panel Painting. An Illustrated Index*, Florence, 1949: 171), and others proposed a provenance from Assisi for both NGA 1952.5.15 and .16. Jürgen Schultze ("Ein Dugento - altar aus Assisi? Versuch einer Rekonstruktion," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts Florenz* 10 [1961]: 59-66; "Zur Kunst des Franziskusmeister," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 25 [1963]: 109-150; "Die Fresken in der Unterkirche von San Francesco zu Assisi und andere Werke des Franziskusmeister," *Raggi* 7, no. 2 [1967]: 44-58) and Luiz C. Marques (*La peinture du Duecento en Italie Centrale*, Paris, 1987: 61-64) maintain that the painting to which the NGA panels originally belonged was executed for the high altar of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi, but most others have abandoned that theory. [2] The two panels with *Stories of Christ* entered the Accademia di Belle Arti in Perugia in 1810 (and thence into the Galleria Nazionale, as no. 22) following the suppression of the religious orders. The panel of *Saint Anthony* (no. 21) that

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originally flanked the scene of *Lamentation* was acquired some time later by the Municipio of Perugia for the then Pinacoteca Civica (see Francesco Santi, *Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria. Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d'arte di età romanica e gotica*, Rome, 1969: 28). Probably, as in various other cases (see for example Miklós Boskovits and David Alan Brown, *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century*, The Systematic Catalogue of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 2003: 120), the components of the dossal remained in the convent even after its dispersal, perhaps distributed for devotional reasons in the cells and then removed by individual friars after its suppression. Whatever the case, the panels that did not enter the Galleria Nazionale in Perugia apparently surfaced together on the art market in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It was probably in the same period that the figure of the Prophet Isaiah entered the treasury of the basilica in Assisi. [3] Anton de Waal arrived in Rome from his native Germany in 1868 and in 1873 became rector of the Collegio Teutonico of Santa Maria in Campo Santo in the same city, where he formed a small museum (Erwin Gatz, *Anton de Waal (1837-1917) un der Campo Santo Teutonico*, Freiburg/Breisgau, 1980). According to Schultze (1961, 64), the four panels formerly forming part of the altarpiece in San Francesco al Prato were sold by the arch-confraternity of Santa Maria della Pietà in Campo Santo Teutonico in 1921. [4] According to John Pope-Hennessy and Laurence B. Kanter (*The Robert Lehman Collection, I, Italian Paintings*, New York and Princeton, 1987: 80), the panel with *Saints Bartholomew and Simon* now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Robert Lehman Collection, no. 1975.1.104), was with the dealer Paolo Paolini in Rome before Philip Lehman purchased it together with NGA 1952.5.15 and .16. [5] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York, Paris, 1928: nos. 61, 62. The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.15 and .16, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892–1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

*Saint John the Evangelist*

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1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 811.

1999 The Treasury of Saint Francis of Assisi, Petit Palais, Paris; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1998-1999, no. 6/3, repro., as The Apostle Saint John the Evangelist (shown only in New York in 1999).

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# *Master of the Washington Coronation*

Italian, active first third 14th century

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Michelangelo Muraro first coined the conventional name for this artist in 1969 and gathered under it a group of paintings previously attributed in the main to Paolo Veneziano (Venetian, active 1333 - 1358).[1] Muraro also conjectured that the anonymous master might be identifiable with Marco, brother of Paolo, who, according to a document of 1335, must have been a highly esteemed painter at this time, though none of his works have come down to us under his name.

However, judging from his stylistic characteristics, the anonymous Master of the Washington Coronation must have belonged to a generation preceding that of Paolo and his brother. Fulvio Zoliani's (1979) proposal, identifying the anonymous master instead with Martino, father of the two brothers and also a painter, cannot be excluded.[2] Unfortunately, none of the works of Martino da Venezia have come down to us, and his identification with the Master of the Washington Coronation therefore remains pure conjecture. Yet the existence of some link between the artistic formation of Paolo Veneziano and the Master of the Washington Coronation seems probable, even if it remains uncertain whether the link in question were one of kinship or apprenticeship, or mere influence.

What can be maintained with some certainty is that the name-piece of the group—the *panel* discussed here, with a date of 1324—indicates the phase of the painter's full maturity, although his career must have begun well beforehand, probably even going back to the final years of the thirteenth century. Works such as the Madonna no. 7212 in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow or the cycle of frescoes in the church of San Zan Degolà in Venice (although the latter attribution is still disputed) must date to the years around 1300 and testify to the fact that the artist had already established a reputation by the turn of the century. We can conclude, therefore, that the Master of the Washington Coronation was an exponent of the generation whose greatest representatives were Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) and Pietro Cavallini in central Italy.

Though probably trained in his hometown in contact with artists such as the Master of the Cappella Dotto, or the anonymous master of the altar-frontal in the basilica

of San Giusto in Trieste,[3] he shows particular susceptibility to the classicizing tendencies of the so-called Palaeologan Renaissance. The period of his activity, during which he accepted in an ever more pronounced manner the ideals of courtly elegance and rhythmic complexity of the Western Gothic, extended to the third decade of the fourteenth century or shortly after. Apart from satisfying the artistic needs of his own city, the Master of the Washington Coronation produced works for various other cities in the Veneto (such as Caorle, where he painted an iconostasis),[4] or those of northern Emilia or the Dalmatian coast culturally linked to Venice, such as Forlì or Split (Spalato).[5]

[1] Cf. Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 29–32. Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, “Review of *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* by R. Pallucchini,” *The Art Bulletin* 48 (1966): 120–121, linked the Washington Coronation with a group of other paintings and attributed them to an anonymous artist more archaic in style than Paolo and conjectured that he might have been Paolo’s master.

[2] Fulvio Zuliani, “Tommaso da Modena,” in *Tomaso da Modena: Catalogo*, ed. Luigi Menegazzi (Treviso, 1979), 77–79.

[3] Commenting on the panel in Trieste, Rodolfo Pallucchini (1964) spoke of an anonymous work of “fundamental byzantinism” influenced by Paolo Veneziano. The dating to the second quarter of the fourteenth century that Pallucchini suggested (and that Michelangelo Muraro [1965] accepted) seems to me too late: the painting might, I believe, still fall into the latter years of the thirteenth century and reveals the influence not of Paolo but of Palaeologan art. See Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 67 and figs. 225–226; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 141. For the Master of the Cappella Dotto, see Giovanni Valagussa, “Il Maestro della Cappella Dotto,” in *Pittura a Milano dall’Alto Medioevo al Tardogotico*, ed. Mina Gregori (Milan, 1997), 199–200.

[4] On the panels that originally formed part of the iconostasis in the cathedral of Caorle and sometimes are cited under the name of the Master of Caorle, see Mauro Lucco, “Maestro di Caorle,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:537; Carla Travi, “Il Maestro del trittico di Santa Chiara: Appunti per la pittura veneta di primo Trecento,” *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 96 n. 57; Carla Travi, “Su una recente storia della pittura del Veneto nel Trecento,” *Arte cristiana* 82 (1994): 70–72.

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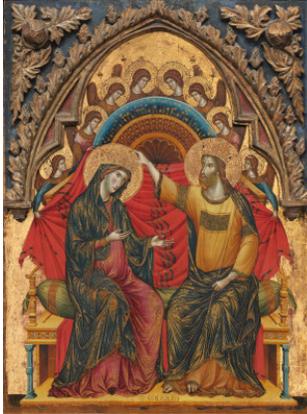
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[5] Examples are the *Crucifixion* in the Serbian Orthodox church at Split and the fragments with figures of saints in the Pinacoteca of Forlì. See, respectively, Kruno Prijatelj, “Nota su una *Crocifissione* vicina a Paolo Veneziano a Split (Spalato),” *Arte veneta* 40 (1986): 148–150; and Giovanni Valagussa, “Prima di Giotto,” in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 77–78.

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Master of the Washington Coronation  
Italian, active first third 14th century

# *The Coronation of the Virgin*

1324

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface (score lines to score lines): 99.3 × 77.4 cm (39 1/8 × 30 1/2 in.)

overall: 108.3 × 79 × 1.5 cm (42 5/8 × 31 1/8 × 9/16 in.)

framed: 115.3 × 86 × 8.9 cm (45 3/8 × 33 7/8 × 3 1/2 in.)

Inscription: on the base of the throne: MCCCXXVIII [1]

[1] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the gilding of the inscription, that of the background, and that of an area of restoration using x-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (see report dated February 9, 1999, in NGA conservation files). All three areas showed the same elements; therefore, this type of analysis could not be used to determine if the inscription is original.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.87

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## ENTRY

The Coronation of the Virgin marks the final episode of the legend of the mother of Jesus, that of her ultimate glorification after her bodily assumption into heaven. The episode first appears in medieval sources, but it was not until the thirteenth century that the scene in which Christ places the crown on his mother's head is explicitly illustrated in monumental painting and sculpture. Mary usually is represented seated on the same throne as her son and to his right as he crowns her with his right hand.[1] This scheme, which subsequently underwent some changes, especially in Tuscany,[2] was faithfully followed by Venetian painters throughout the fourteenth century and beyond. The panel in the National Gallery of Art is one of the earliest representations of the subject that has come down to us from the Veneto region.[3] An iconographic innovation introduced here, one that Paolo Veneziano (Venetian, active 1333 - 1358) subsequently revived, is the representation of the celestial spheres that can be seen behind the cloth of honor in the background.[4]

*The Coronation of the Virgin* in Washington originally must have formed part of a larger complex. No evidence has yet been found of other panels with which it might have belonged. But there are good grounds for assuming that it would have been flanked by a series of stories of Christ or stories of the Virgin, arranged in two superimposed tiers, rather than by standing figures of saints, as found, for instance, in polyptychs of the full maturity of Paolo Veneziano.[5] It may also be assumed that the Coronation would have been surmounted by a gable panel representing the Crucifixion [6] and that standing figures of saints or prophets would have been placed at the two sides of the upper register [fig. 1] (see also *Reconstruction*). I think it probable, on grounds of style and measurements, that the panel of the prophets Jeremiah and Daniel and the busts of two Evangelists [fig. 2], formerly in the Cini collection in Venice and now in another private collection, belonged to this latter zone of the polyptych;[7] the panel seems well suited to integrate the upper right-hand part of the polyptych, now lost, of which the Washington Coronation formed the center.

Who was the Master of the Washington Coronation? As regards his possible identification with Martino da Venezia, we can only speak of a working hypothesis suggested by the stylistic affinities between the painting here discussed and those of Paolo, son of Martino, and also bearing in mind the undisputed ascendancy that Paolo's bottega rapidly succeeded in winning in early fourteenth-century Venetian painting. The fact remains that the artistic profile of the Master of the Washington Coronation remains very uncertain. Art historians now generally agree on the need to exclude his works from the catalog of Paolo Veneziano, to whom they were almost unanimously attributed for some thirty years, beginning with Giuseppe Fiocco (1930–1931), and to whom the Gallery (1985), Francesca Zava Boccazzi (1993), and John Oliver Hand (2004) continued to attribute the Coronation in Washington.[8] But the alternative proposal by Michelangelo Muraro (1965, 1969), who placed the Washington panel at the center of his reconstruction of the oeuvre of an artist he considered the stylistic precursor and perhaps even the elder brother of Paolo, has met with increasing consent since the latter decades of the twentieth century.[9] Opinions differ, however, on the extent of the catalog of the Master of the Washington Coronation. Only three paintings, all chronologically close to the panel dated 1324, are unanimously, or almost unanimously, recognized as his work. They are the Madonna and Child no. 1604 in the Musei Civici in Padua;[10] the painted crucifix in the Istituto Ellenico in San Giorgio dei Greci in Venice;[11] and the fragment of a Crucifixion that surfaced at an auction sale in

Rome in 1974, but which has since gone untraced.[12] To this small group a number of other works can, in my view, be added. These include one other dated painting: namely, the altar frontal of the Blessed Leone Bembo now at the treasury of the Church of Saint Blase in Vodnjan (Dignano d'Istria) in Croatia, painted for the Venetian church of San Sebastiano in 1321. Usually ascribed to Paolo Veneziano,[13] the panel provides further evidence of the essential stylistic continuity between the manner of Paolo and that of the older master.

The two painters, however, should not be confused. From his earliest works (those datable between the second and early third decade of the century, such as the scenes from the life of the Virgin in the Musei Civici at Pesaro [14] and the frescoes on the triumphal arch and nave of the church of San Fermo at Verona),[15] Paolo Veneziano displays a more spontaneous elegance in the movement of his figures, more fluent linear rhythms in his design, and more delicate passages of chiaroscuro in his modeling. In other words, he reveals a style akin to but more modern—more attuned to the Gothic manner—than that of the Master of the Washington Coronation. In the years in which Paolo made his appearance on the scene, the activity of our anonymous master is attested to by works in which the forms tend to be more incisive and in which any cultivation of elegance in gesture, or gothicizing animation in calligraphic rhythm, is muted. Instead, the author of the Washington Coronation dedicates particular attention to the corporeal substance of his figures, which in general seem more restricted in movement and more reserved in comportment than those that populate the paintings of Paolo Veneziano.

The results of the master's activity in the 1310s, or slightly before, are probably the Crucifixion in the Serbian Orthodox church of Split (Spalato);[16] the two fragments of an altarpiece—one with three, the other with four figures of saints—now in the Pinacoteca Civica in Forlì;[17] and the so-called *Madonna delle stelle* in the church of Santi Maria e Donato in Murano.[18] These paintings are still strongly indebted to the classicizing aspirations of the Palaeologan Renaissance. But instead of cultivating the formal complexities and agitated rhythms of Byzantine painting of his day, the artist seems to draw inspiration from the powerful firmness of the bodies and the incisive figurative style of the painted images of previous decades. What remains of the important cycle of frescoes in the church of San Zan Degolà in Venice probably belongs to a slightly earlier phase in the master's career, to the years around the turn of the century. These frescoes are variously attributed and dated,[19] but it seems to me difficult to doubt their very close stylistic affinity with

the group of paintings just cited. They are truly superb examples of the painter's sophisticated figurative culture, influenced not by Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) (as has sometimes been suggested) but by the neo-Hellenistic figurative art developed in Constantinople and also in other centers of the "Byzantine Commonwealth" since the 1260s.[20] These works are preceded in date by the vigorous language of some other paintings in which the artist strives to create strong effects of plastic relief and to present his figures in illusionistically convincing architectural settings. I refer to such works as the *Madonna and Child with Donors* [fig. 3] in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow [21] and the busts of apostles from the iconostasis of Caorle Cathedral.[22] In particular, the articulation of forms in the latter, with zones of color almost geometrical in regularity, and their modeling with energetic brushstrokes and sudden flashes of white highlights suggest that they were executed within the last decade of the thirteenth century.

The fact that works of such importance had been commissioned from the artist some two to three decades before he executed the painting now in Washington shows that the Master of the Washington Coronation must have become a well-established painter by the time of its creation, even if he still proposed very different figurative ideas than those of his full maturity. If the artist followed a decidedly "philo-Byzantine" orientation in his initial phase, in his paintings of the 1320s he draws closer to the classicism pursued by Giotto and other artists of central Italy. In works such as the panel now in Washington (dated 1324) he aspires to a figural style characterized by gothicizing elegance of movement and fluency in linear rhythms [fig. 4]. These paintings reveal an undeniable kinship with the first works attributed to Paolo Veneziano. It is therefore probable that the elderly master shared a workshop around this time with the rising star of fourteenth-century Venetian painting.[23]

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



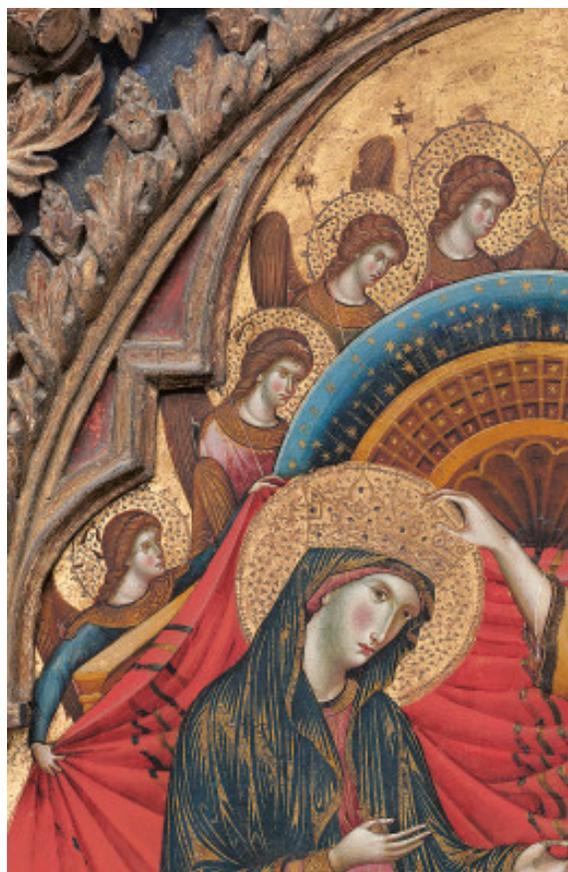
**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by the Master of the Washington Coronation: a. *The Coronation of the Virgin*; b. *Two Apostles and the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel (?)* (fig. 2)



**fig. 2** Master of the Washington Coronation, *Two Apostles and the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel (?)*, 1324, tempera on panel, formerly Vittorio Cini collection, Venice



**fig. 3** Master of the Washington Coronation, *Madonna and Child with Angels and Donors*, early fourteenth century, tempera on panel, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow. Image: bpk, Berlin/Pushkin Museum, Moscow/Roman Beniaminson/Art Resource, NY



**fig. 4** Detail, Master of the Washington Coronation, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, 1324, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a dispersed polyptych by the Master of the Washington Coronation:

- a. *The Coronation of the Virgin*
- b. *Two Apostles and the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel (?)* (Entry fig. 2)

**NOTES**

[1] See Philippe Verdier, *Le couronnement de la Vierge: Les origines et les premiers développements d'un thème iconographique* (Montréal and Paris, 1980); Marie-Louise Thérel, *Le triomphe de la vierge-église: A l'origine du décor du portail occidental de Notre-Dame de Senlis* (Paris, 1984).

[2] On paintings by Tuscan artists in which Christ crowns Mary generally with both hands, cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio,

new ed. (Florence, 2001), 531–539. In the earliest version of this iconography in Tuscan painting, the panel by Guido da Siena (c. 1270–1275) now in the Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery in London, Jesus places the crown on his mother’s head with his right hand only. See Gertrude Coor, “The Earliest Italian Representation of the Coronation of the Virgin,” *The Burlington Magazine* 99 (1957): 328–330.

- [3] A fresco in the church of Santi Fermo e Rustico in Verona representing the Coronation of the Virgin must date several years before 1324. Now much damaged, it was rightly restored to the young Paolo Veneziano (Venetian, active 1333 - 1358) by Andrea De Marchi (2004) with a dating to the early third decade. The painting, executed c. 1320 according to the present writer (see Boskovits 2009), is similar in iconography to the Coronation in Washington, but the composition, adjusted to the oblong shape of the frescoed space, is densely thronged with angels to the sides of the throne. Very similar to the composition of the present panel is the embroidered antependium from the cathedral of Krk (Veglia) in Croatia, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (cf. Gamulin 1964). The work is difficult to date but presumably originated in years not far removed from the execution of the painting discussed here. Andrea De Marchi (2004) kindly brought to my attention another early representation of the subject, a now fragmentary fresco of the Coronation of the Virgin in Gemona Cathedral in Friuli, datable to the 1320s. See Andrea De Marchi, “La prima decorazione della chiesa francescana,” in *I santi Fermo e Rustico: Un culto e una chiesa, per il XVII centenario del loro martirio (304–2004)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli and Caterina Gemma Brenzoni (Verona, 2004), 205–206; Miklós Boskovits, “Paolo Veneziano: Riflessioni sul percorso, 1,” *Arte cristiana* 97 (2009): 83; Grgo Gamulin, “Alcune proposte per Maestro Paolo,” *Emporium* 139 (1964): 151–153.
- [4] As found in polyptych no. 21 of the Gallerie dell’Accademia in Venice and in the fragmentary panel of the Museo di Palazzo Venezia in Rome. The motif of the star-studded celestial sphere is also present in the antependium of Krk and the fresco of Gemona cited in the previous note. Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), figs. 144 and 183.
- [5] Cf. the altarpieces of San Pantalon at Venice, that of the stories of Saint Lucy at Krk (Croatia), and polyptych no. 21 of the Accademia in Venice. The five small panels with stories of the Virgin in the Museo Civico in Pesaro probably come from a similar polyptych. Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), figs. 19–23.
- [6] Although most Venetian polyptychs of the fourteenth century have come down to us either disassembled or incomplete, two altarpieces painted by Paolo Veneziano—in the Bishop’s Palace of Krk and the (now dismembered) polyptych from the Collegiata of Pirano (on loan to the Museo di Palazzo

Venezia in Rome)—still retain a gable panel with the Crucifixion. Another panel that retains its upper Crucifixion is the small altarpiece in the Galleria Nazionale in Parma, on which see Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), figs. 48, 162, 74.

[7] Rodolfo Pallucchini (1964) published the panel, citing its provenance as the collection of the art historian Detlev von Hadeln (1878–1935) in Florence and its size as 26 × 90 cm. According to Pallucchini, the panel in question is a work by Paolo Veneziano dating to c. 1330 and must have originally formed part of the predella of a now disassembled polyptych. Michelangelo Muraro (1969) accepted that proposal, although he did not exclude the alternative suggestion that the four figures originally belonged to “una piccola iconostasi” (a small iconostasis). More recently, Mauro Lucco (1992) included the painting in the catalog of the Master of Caorle, the conventional name for an artist whose outlines perfectly coincide, in my view, with those of the Master of the Washington Coronation. See Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 29, 250, fig. 65; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 151–152; Mauro Lucco, “Maestro di Caorle,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:537. The alternation of full-length prophets and half-figure apostles would seem to exclude the alleged provenance of the former Cini collection panel either from a predella or from an iconostasis. Yet just such an alternation of painted figures of different scale is found in the upper register of various polyptychs from Venice or from the Veneto, e.g., that of Santa Chiara, a work by Paolo Veneziano now in the Accademia in Venice; that of Guariento now in the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles; or that of Giusto de’ Menabuoi in the baptistry of Padua; see Pallucchini (1964), figs. 137, 315, 399. The proportions of the individual panels of the former Cini painting, less squat than those of the predellas of Venetian altarpieces of the period, also suggest that they are more likely to belong to the upper register of an altarpiece. As regards it possibly belonging to the Washington Coronation, I can only make a tentative hypothesis, given that I am only familiar with the work from photographs; however, the stylistic features of the two paintings show that they belong to the same chronological phase of the painter, and even their proportional relations make their common origin plausible. In fact the lost laterals of the Coronation, to judge from the still intact polyptychs of Paolo Veneziano’s earliest phase (such as the altarpiece in Krk and the polyptych of Santa Chiara now in the Accademia in Venice), must have been only slightly broader than the centerpiece.

[8] Following its late nineteenth-century attribution—by whom remains unclear—to Caterino Veneziano (in the caption of the nineteenth-century photograph cited in Technical Summary note 3), Raimond van Marle (1924) cited the Coronation as an anonymous work of “gothico-byzantine style.”

Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà in 1930 expressed the view that “it is highly feasible to attribute it to Maestro Paolo himself,” and in the following year Giuseppe Fiocco (1930–1931) unhesitatingly confirmed this attribution. Subsequently, only Viktor Lazarev, at least in a first publication dating to 1931, preferred to leave the painting in anonymity, while other art historians, until 1965, remained convinced of Paolo’s authorship. See Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 4, *The Local Schools of North Italy of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 5–6; Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà, “Maestro Paolo Veneziano,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 57 (1930): 165 n. 5; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, “Über eine neue Gruppe byzantinisch-venezianischer Trecento-Bilder,” *Art Studies* 8 (1931): 13 n. 3. Giuseppe Fiocco, “Le primizie di maestro Paolo Veneziano,” *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 887–888; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 300; Francesca Zava Boccazzi, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *Dizionario della pittura e dei pittori*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo and Bruno Toscano, 6 vols. (Turin, 1993), 4:139; John Hand, *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection* (New York, 2004), 10.

- [9] Michelangelo Muraro, “Maestro Paolo da Venezia: Fortuna critica,” *Ateneo veneto* 3 (1965): 92, 96; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 21, 26, 28–30, 157–159 et passim, pls. 1–2. Lazarev (1965) was the first to reunite the Washington Coronation with the Madonna no. 1604 in the Musei Civici in Padua and with the Madonna (no. I. str. 141) in the National Museum in Belgrade, classifying them as works of a predecessor, perhaps even the master, of Paolo Veneziano. The same scholar (1966) further explained that it was Muraro who had convinced him in the course of a conversation that the painting in the National Gallery of Art should be excluded from Paolo’s catalog. See Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, “Saggi sulla pittura veneziana dei secoli XIII–XIV: La maniera greca e il problema della scuola cretese,” *Arte veneta* 19 (1965): 24–26, 31 n. 62; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, “Review of La pittura veneziana del Trecento by R. Pallucchini,” *The Art Bulletin* 48 (1966): 120–121. Muraro himself then tried to reconstruct the production of the Master of the Washington Coronation, assigning him not only the panels in Padua and Belgrade but also the Madonna no. 7212 in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, the above-mentioned fragment with figures of saints and prophets formerly in the Cini collection in Venice, and the painted crucifix now in the church of San Giorgio dei Greci in Venice. Some other works that Muraro ascribed to the anonymous master, whom he hypothetically identified with Marco, brother of Paolo, should rather be ascribed to other hands, according to the present writer: the Madonna in Belgrade; the painted crucifix in the monastery of the Benedictine nuns at Trogir (Traù); and that in the Borla collection at Trino Vercellese all probably should be considered youthful works by Paolo himself. For these works, see Rosa D’Amico and Tatjana Bošnjak, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo*

*Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 144; Grgo Gamulin, *The Painted Crucifixes in Croatia* (Zagreb, 1983), 120 and pl. IV; Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 48 and fig 156. The antependium in the monastery of the Benedictine sisters at Zadar (Zara) and the mosaics of the baptistry of San Marco in Venice are presumably the work of other, as yet unidentified Venetian artists of the period. As for the cartoon for the stained-glass window with the figure of the Baptist in the lower church of San Francesco at Assisi, I think it is attributable to Jacopo Torriti. Cf. Alessandro Tomei, *Iacobus Torriti pictor: Una vicenda figurativa del tardo Duecento romano* (Rome, 1990), 68. Following Muraro's intervention, many art historians continued to maintain with varying degrees of conviction the attribution of the Washington Coronation to Paolo Veneziano, while others preferred to leave it in anonymity. Cf. Giuseppe Marchini, *Corpus vitrearum Medii Aevi*, vol. 1, *Le vetrate dell'Umbria* (Rome, 1973), 136; Luciano Gargan, *Cultura e arte nel Veneto al tempo del Petrarca* (Padua, 1978), 58; Hans Belting, "Introduzione," in *Il medio oriente e l'occidente nell'arte del XIII secolo, Atti del XXIV congresso internazionale di storia dell'arte, September 10–18, 1979*, ed. Hans Belting (Bologna, 1982), 10 n. 20; Marvin Eisenberg, *Lorenzo Monaco* (Princeton, 1989), 61 n. 83; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 213. Since the 1970s, an ever growing number of scholars have accepted Muraro's proposal, and even in some cases his conjectural attribution to Marco Veneziano: Michelangelo Muraro, "Maestro Marco e Maestro Paolo da Venezia," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Antonio Morassi* (Venice, 1971), 23, 30–31; Giuseppe Marchini, *Corpus vitrearum Medii Aevi*, vol. 1, *Le vetrate dell'Umbria* (Rome, 1973), 136; Lucio Grossato, ed., *Da Giotto al Mantegna* (Milan, 1974), no. 9; "Paolo Veneziano," in *Dizionario enciclopedico Bolaffi dei pittori e degli incisori italiani: Dall' XI al XX secolo*, ed. Alberto Bolaffi and Umberto Allemandi, 11 vols. (Turin, 1975), 8:323; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:326–328; Pietro Scarpellini (intro. and comm.), in *Fra Ludovico da Pietralunga and Pietro Scarpellini, Descrizione della Basilica di S. Francesco e di altri Santuari di Assisi* (Treviso, 1982), 344; Robert Gibbs, *L'occhio di Tomaso: Sulla formazione di Tomaso da Modena* (Treviso, 1981), 37; Robert Gibbs, "A Fresco by Marco or Paolo Veneziano in Treviso," *Studi trevisani* 1 (1984): 27–29, 30 n. 7; Robert Gibbs, *Tomaso da Modena: Painting in Emilia and the March of Treviso, 1340–1380* (Cambridge, 1989), 29; Robert Gibbs, "Master of the Washington Coronation," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 20:784; Robert Gibbs, "Paolo Veneziano," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:30; Mauro Lucco, "Pittura del Trecento a Venezia," in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:181; Mauro Lucco, "Marco di

Martino da Venezia,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:634; Mauro Lucco, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:648; Mauro Lucco, “Maestro dell’Incoronazione della Vergine di Washington,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:534; Mauro Lucco, “Marco di Martino da Venezia (Marco Veneziano),” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:541–542; Mauro Lucco, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:544; Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 127, 128; Fulvio Zuliani, in *Da Giotto al tardogotico: Dipinti dei Musei Civici di Padova del Trecento e della prima metà del Quattrocento*, ed. Davide Banzato and Franca Pellegrini (Rome, 1989), 77–79; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, “Venezia,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 1:22; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1998), 9:157; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, eds. Francesca Flores d’Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 142; Carla Travi, “Il Maestro del trittico di Santa Chiara: Appunti per la pittura veneta di primo Trecento,” *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 96 n. 57; Carla Travi, “Su una recente storia della pittura del Veneto nel Trecento,” *Arte cristiana* 82 (1994): 71; Clara Santini, “Un’antologia pittorica del primo Trecento nella chiesa di San Francesco a Udine,” *Arte cristiana* 82 (1994): 188; Clara Santini, “Un episodio della pittura veneziana di primo Trecento: Il ‘Maestro dell’Incoronazione della Vergine di Washington,’” *Il Santo* 37 (1997): 123–145; Italo Furlan, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d’Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 118; Viktorija Markova, *Italija: Sobranie živopisi*, vol. 1, VIII–XVI vekov (Moscow, 2002), 43; Andrea De Marchi, “Peintre vénitien vers 1320,” in *Splendeurs de la peinture italienne, 1250–1510* (Paris, 2005), 26–28; Andrea De Marchi, “Polyptyques vénitiens: Anamnèse d’une identité méconnue,” in *Autour de Lorenzo Veneziano: Fragments de polyptyques vénitiens du XIVe siècle*, ed. Andrea De Marchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2005), 14–15; Andrea De Marchi, “La postérité du devant d’autel à Venise: Retables orfèvres et retables peints,” in *The Altar and its Environment, 1150–1400*, ed. J.E.A. Kroesen and Victor Michael Schmidt (Turnhout, 2009), 63.

- [10] Cf. Lucio Grossato, ed., *Da Giotto al Mantegna* (Milan, 1974), no. 9; Fulvio Zuliani, in *Da Giotto al tardogotico: Dipinti dei Musei Civici di Padova del Trecento e della prima metà del Quattrocento*, ed. Davide Banzato and Franca Pellegrini (Rome, 1989), 77–79. Francesca Flores d’Arcais claimed to detect—erroneously, in my view—differences between this panel and the Coronation in Washington, “soprattutto nella maggiore composità della

Madonna padovana...a differenza della morbidissima ed elegante struttura delle figure Kress [i.e., the figures of the Washington panel] avvolte in vesti che molto più si legano alla tradizione bizantina..." (above all in the greater solidity of the Paduan Madonna...as distinguished from the soft and elegant structure of the Kress figures, wrapped in draperies much more closely tied to the Byzantine tradition). Francesca Flores d'Arcais, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 142.

- [11] Cf. Maria Cristina Bandera Viani, *Museo delle icone bizantine e post bizantine e Chiesa di San Giorgio dei Greci* (Bologna, 1988), 1–2; Clara Santini, "Un episodio della pittura veneziana di primo Trecento: Il 'Maestro dell'Incoronazione della Vergine di Washington,'" *Il Santo* 37 (1997): 125 and pl. 5.
- [12] Cf. Christie's, Rome, May 20, 1974, lot. 73. Measuring 53 × 73 cm, it is a fragment of the lower part of a panel depicting the Crucifixion. The sale catalog linked this work with the circle of the painter of the Washington Coronation, and Carla Travi later inserted it in the catalog of the Master of Caorle (alternative name of the Master of the Washington Coronation). Carla Travi, "Il Maestro del trittico di Santa Chiara: Appunti per la pittura veneta di primo Trecento," *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 96 n. 57.
- [13] On the panel now at Vodnjan, *Blessed Leone Bembo with a Donor, Angels, and Four Stories of His Life*, cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 22–24, figs. 27–34. Various scholars (including Flores d'Arcais 1992) have attributed it to Paolo Veneziano, but Filippo Pedrocco (2003) cited it as the work of a "maestro precedente" (i.e., a master earlier than Paolo). In my view, the Vodnjan panel belongs to the catalog of the Master of the Washington Coronation. See Francesca Flores d'Arcais, "Venezia," in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 1:29, 32, 34; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 213; Miklós Boskovits, "Paolo Veneziano: Riflessioni sul percorso, 1," *Arte cristiana* 97 (2009): 88 n. 21.
- [14] Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 20–21, and figs. 19–23, and in more recent years Alessandro Marchi, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 146. In my view, Marchi's dating to the third decade of the fourteenth century should be pushed back to the second decade.
- [15] See Andrea De Marchi, "La prima decorazione della chiesa francescana," in *I santi Fermo e Rustico: Un culto e una chiesa, per il XVII centenario del loro martirio (304–2004)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli and Caterina Gemma Brenzoni (Verona, 2004), 199–219. De Marchi (206) dated the frescoed decoration of

the church in Verona to the early 1320s, in a period “in cui il giovanissimo Paolo sembra muoversi ancora sotto tutela del Maestro dell’Incoronazione del 1324, forse suo padre Martino” (in which the very young Paolo seems still to be moving under the tutelage of the Master of the 1324 Coronation, perhaps his father Martino). But a slightly earlier dating, to the end of the second decade, should not be excluded. Paolo died between 1358 and 1362, so he probably would not have been all that young around 1315.

- [16] Published by Kruno Prijatelj, “Nota su una Crocifissione vicina a Paolo Veneziano a Split (Spalato),” *Arte veneta* 40 (1986): 148–150, the painting was restored to the Master of Caorle by Mauro Lucco, “Maestro di Caorle,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:537; and by Carla Travi, “Il Maestro del trittico di Santa Chiara: Appunti per la pittura veneta di primo Trecento,” *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 96 n. 57.
- [17] The two fragments in Forlì, left in anonymity by earlier art historians such as Edward B. Garrison (1949) and Giordano Viroli (1980), were attributed to the Master of Caorle by Giovanni Valagussa (1995). Cf. Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 237; Giordano Viroli, ed., *La Pinacoteca Civica di Forlì* (Forlì, 1980), 6–7; Giovanni Valagussa, “Prima di Giotto,” in *Il Trecento riminese: Maestri e botteghe tra Romagna e Marche*, ed. Daniele Benati (Milan, 1995), 77–78.
- [18] Published as a work of the “Veneto-Byzantine school of the 14th century” by Ettore Merkel, “Isole del nord della Laguna,” *Quaderni della Soprintendenza ai beni artistici e storici di Venezia* 14 (1986): 159–160, the panel was reassigned to the Master of Caorle by the present writer. Cf. Carla Travi, “Su una recente storia della pittura del Veneto nel Trecento,” *Arte cristiana* 82 (1994): 71.
- [19] Discussed by Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 10, figs. 2–4, as examples of a “bizantinismo...[che] sembra decantarsi in un classicismo ellenistico, mediante una costruzione intensamente plastica della forma...alla fine del Duecento” (Byzantinism which seems to decant itself into a Hellenistic classicism by means of an intensely plastic construction of forms...at the end of the thirteenth century), the San Zan Degolà frescoes were interpreted as an “announcement of the art of Paolo Veneziano” by Michelangelo Muraro, “Antichi affreschi veneziani,” in *Le meraviglie del passato* (Verona, 1954), 688. Sergio Bettini (1954) noted their kinship with the mosaic dated 1277 on the ciborium of the Basilica Eufrasiana in Parenzo (Istria), and Italo Furlan (2002) dated them even earlier, to c. 1260. According to Luciano Bellosi, on the other hand (1985), the architectural settings of these frescoes were “troppo solide e concrete per non postulare un precedente assisiato” (too concrete and solid not to postulate a precedent [for them] in Assisi), and this implied a dating to the early years of the fourteenth century. A late thirteenth-century date had already been postulated by Lazarev (1965), the first to compare the San Zan

Degolà cycle with the Madonna in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow and the Washington Coronation, followed by Boskovits (1989), who included in the master's oeuvre, in addition to the aforesaid works, the panels in Caorle (for which see also note 22 below). Travi (1994) then categorically affirmed the common authorship of the frescoes and the group of paintings formerly combined with the Washington Coronation under the conventional name of the Master of Caorle. See Sergio Bettini, "I mosaici dell'atrio di San Marco e il loro seguito," *Arte veneta* 8 (1954): 7–24; Italo Furlan, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 118; Luciano Bellosi, *La pecora di Giotto* (Turin, 1985), 147 n. 93, 214; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, "Saggi sulla pittura veneziana dei secoli XIII–XIV: La maniera greca e il problema della scuola cretese," *Arte veneta* 19 (1965): 24–26, 31 n. 62; Miklós Boskovits, "Pittura e miniatura a Milano: Duecento a primo Trecento" in *La nuova città dal Comune alla Signoria*, ed. Carlo Bertelli, *Il millennio ambrosiano* (Milan, 1989), 67 n. 68; Carla Travi, "Su una recente storia della pittura del Veneto nel Trecento," *Arte cristiana* 82 (1994): 71.

- [20] The neo-Hellenistic tendency, attested in the field of monumental painting by the frescoes of Sopoani, is also exemplified by various icons in the collection of the monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai, or by the miniatures in the *Prophet Book* of the Biblioteca Vaticana (Vat. Gr. 1153), or those of the Gospels (ms. 5) of the Monastery of Iviron on Mount Athos and of ms. grec. 54 in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. Cf. Vojislav J. Đuri, *Byzantinische Fresken in Jugoslawien* (Munich, 1976) 54–57; Helen C. Evans, ed., *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)* (New Haven, 2004), 356–365.
- [21] Published by Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, "Saggi sulla pittura veneziana dei secoli XIII–XIV: La maniera greca e il problema della scuola cretese," *Arte veneta* 19 (1965): 23–25, as the work of an anonymous Venetian master dating to c. 1310–1315, it was restored to the Master of the Washington Coronation by Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 125. For a review of the fortuna critica, cf. Viktorija Markova, *Italija: Sobranie živopisi*, vol. 1, *VIII–XVI vekov* (Moscow, 2002), 41–43. Cf. also notes 9 and 19 above.
- [22] Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 59–60 and figs. 203–204, published the six panels in question, with busts of apostles; he attributed them to a Master of Caorle. In his view, this master was a follower of Paolo during the phase of his full maturity. Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 109–110, in contrast, thought that these penetrating images of apostles are even later in date, ascribing them to a "pittore veneto-bizantino del tardo Trecento" (Venetian-Byzantine painter of the late fourteenth century). More correctly, Mauro Lucco (1992) connected the panels in Caorle with some works in the catalog of the

Master of the Washington Coronation, while Travi (1994) combined under the conventional name of the Master of Caorle the majority of the works attributable to the master of the panel in Washington. Cf. Mauro Lucco, "Maestro di Caorle," in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 2:537; Carla Travi, "Su una recente storia della pittura del Veneto nel Trecento," *Arte cristiana* 82 (1994): 71–72.

[23] Although various scholars have expressed doubt, I think Rodolfo Pallucchini (1964) was right to see the hand of the young Paolo in the figures of the two tiny donors painted kneeling at the feet of the wooden relief of San Donato in the altarpiece at Murano, a work dated 1310 and hence the earliest testimony of the artist's activity. See Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 19 and figs. 16–18. Apart from the paintings cited in notes 3–5 above, I think that Paolo's initial phase also should include some paintings significantly attributed in the past to the Master of the National Museum in Belgrade (inv. I str. 141). Cf. Rosa D'Amico and Tatjana Bošnjak, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 144–145. These include two painted crucifixes, one in the monastery of the Benedictine nuns at Trogir and the other in the Borla collection at Trino Vercellese (see above note 9).

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting was executed on a two-member, vertically grained poplar panel.[1] Mario Modestini thinned and cradled the panel during a restoration treatment in 1953.[2] The x-radiographs reveal that four knots were cut out of the panel and replaced with insets, and the areas were covered with pieces of fabric. The artist applied the paint on a moderately thick gesso ground, apparently without the help of a preparatory underdrawing. The main lines of the draperies were incised into the gesso, but they do not correspond to the gilded highlights of the mantles of Christ and of the Virgin in the painting. The artist used green underpaint in the flesh tones and mordant gilding on top of the paint to decorate the draperies. The upper part of the painted area terminates in a mixtilinear arch placed within an ogival arch with crocketed ornament. The spandrels to its side, forming the upper angles of the wooden support, were originally covered by the frame and therefore were not gilded or painted but only gessoed. In these areas the artist sometimes wiped his brushes and, on the left side, sketched a pinnacle-shaped form (perhaps a detail of the original frame), discovered after the removal of the surviving remainder of the frame. The painted surface is generally in fair

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condition. A considerable number of small scattered losses appear in the central part of the gold ground as well as in the draperies (especially in the Virgin's mantle), whereas along the bottom edge of the panel the paint is irregularly fractured, obliterating the riser of the dais. An old photograph, taken in the late nineteenth century [fig. 1],[3] shows the picture covered with dirt and darkened varnish. Another photo [fig. 2], made before the 1953 treatment, proves that in the meantime the painting was probably treated.[4] During the last recorded treatment, another discolored varnish was removed and the losses were inpainted.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, late nineteenth century, Master of the Washington Coronation, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, 1324, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 2** Archival photograph, pre-1953, Master of the Washington Coronation, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, 1324, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified the wood (see report dated May 30, 1989, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:328, mentioned that Mario Modestini “cradled, cleaned and restored” the painting in 1953.
- [3] This photo (Naya, no. 880; negative now with Osvaldo Böhm in Venice) is not listed in the catalogs of the photographer Carlo Naya (1816–1882) that I

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have been able to consult. However, the *Catalogo generale dei quadri e affreschi esistenti nelle chiese di Venezia* published by his firm in 1900 listed negatives numbered above 2000, so the one cited here presumably had been executed some years earlier. See also Provenance note 1.

[4] Photograph in the NGA conservation files.

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### PROVENANCE

Antonio Dal Zotto [1841–1918], Venice.[1] Dr. J. Carl [or Carlo?] Broglio, Paris;[2] purchased jointly 27 July 1950 by (Thos. Agnew and Sons, Ltd., London) and (Rudolf Heinemann, New York); Agnew share sold to (Rudolf Heinemann, New York); (M. Knoedler and Co., New York);[3] purchased February 1952 as by Paolo Veneziano by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[4] gift 1952 to NGA. [1] On the life and career of the sculptor Dal Zotto see Livia Alberton Vinco da Sesso, "Antonio dal Zotto," in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 77 vols., Rome, 1960–: 32(1986): 285–287. In 1889 Dal Zotto married Ida Lessjak, widow of the photographer Carlo Naya, and after her death in 1893 Dal Zotto became owner of Naya's successful firm specializing in views of Venice and reproductions of works of art. According to Alberton Vinco da Sesso, Naya had also amassed a collection of ancient statuary, and it cannot be excluded that the Gallery's painting actually came from the photographer's collection. Nonetheless, the catalogue of the sculptor's estate sale, *Collezione del fu Comm. Antonio del Zotto e già Giuseppe Piccoli* (Geri-Salvadori, Venice, 1-16 September 1919), does not cite the painting, which perhaps had already been sold. [2] Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia*, Milano, 1969: 157, transmits the reported provenance of the painting from the Broglio collection, annotated on a photograph in the photographic archive of the Biblioteca Berenson at the Villa I Tatti, Florence. The Agnew stockbooks record the painting as no. J0332 and identify the Broglio family member from whom it was purchased. [3] The Agnew records (kindly confirmed by Venetia Constantine of Agnew's, e-mail, 28 June 2010, in NGA curatorial files) give details about the joint purchase and indicate that Agnew's share in the painting was sold to Heinemann on 16 June 1952, several months after the February date of the Knoedler bill of sale to the Kress Foundation (see note 4). Constantine speculates that Agnew might have recorded the date when payment for their share was actually received from Heinemann, rather than the date when they made the decision to sell their share. Heinemann often worked in tandem with Knoedler's, for whom he was at one time

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managing partner, and may have done so in this instance. [4] The bill of sale from Knoedler's to the Kress Foundation for twelve paintings, including this one, is dated 6 February 1952; payment was made in three installments, the final one on 5 September 1952. See also M. Knoedler and Co. Records, accession number 2012.M.54, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: Series II, Box 76 (Sales Book No. 16, Paintings, 1945-1953). Copies of the Knoedler bill and sale record are in NGA curatorial files.

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# *Nardo di Cione*

Florentine, active from c. 1340; died 1365/1366

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Although his name occurs in documents for the first time in the years between 1346 and 1348, when he enrolled in the *Arte dei Medici e Speziali* (the Florentine guild to which painters also belonged),<sup>[1]</sup> Nardo, brother of the painters Andrea and Jacopo, was already considered one of the leading painters of his city by midcentury.<sup>[2]</sup> An artist whose paintings have been described as fragile, delicate, dreamy, or remote, characterized by a peculiar, “lyrical mood,”<sup>[3]</sup> Nardo must have been trained under the influence of such painters as Maso and Stefano. Of the few works by his hand cited in the documents, only the fragments of a cycle of frescoes in the Oratorio del Bigallo in Florence, commissioned in 1363, have survived, but it has been argued, probably correctly, that an image of the Madonna formerly in the Ufficio della Gabella dei Contratti, once signed and dated 1356, can be identified with the panel of the Madonna and Child with four saints now in the Brooklyn Museum in New York.<sup>[4]</sup> It is also certain that the painter made his will in May 1365 and that by the following year he was already reported dead.

Nardo’s catalog has been reconstructed, especially thanks to Osvald Sirén (1908) and Richard Offner (1924, 1960), largely on the basis of stylistic comparisons with the frescoes (*Last Judgment*, *Paradise*, and *Inferno*) in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella, given to him by a trustworthy fifteenth-century source, Lorenzo Ghiberti.<sup>[5]</sup> The murals, especially the best-preserved scene in the cycle, that of Paradise, described by Offner as “one of the most ambitious and grandiose achievements in a single fresco in Florentine history,”<sup>[6]</sup> are undoubtedly to be considered Nardo’s masterpiece. They must have been painted immediately prior to 1357,<sup>[7]</sup> when the altarpiece painted by his brother Andrea was installed in the chapel. The close-packed throng of figures in this cycle, men and women of proud mien but also capable of expressing deep emotions, is modeled with extreme care, with delicate passages of chiaroscuro. A series of other paintings with similar characteristics presumably dates to the same period; they include such works as the polyptych formerly in the National Gallery in Prague (now in the Castle of Bojnice in Slovakia), *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the two panels with saints in the Alte Pinakothek in

Munich. The final phase of the painter's presumably brief career is exemplified in turn by two polyptychs, both dated 1365, respectively in the Galleria dell'Accademia and in the Museo dell'Opera at Santa Croce in Florence. In both altarpieces the marked effects of plasticity and the rigor of the compositional structure reveal Nardo's gradual assimilation of the more essential and severe manner of his brother, Andrea di Cione. Still under discussion are the works produced during the artist's first phase, in the 1340s. We can probably place in it such works as the *Madonna and Child* in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts or another version of the same subject in the Yale University Art Gallery at New Haven,[8] and the detached mural paintings from the Cappella Giochi e Bastari in the church of the Badia in Florence, presumably completed in part before midcentury.

[1] According to Irene Hueck, "Le matricole dei pittori fiorentini prima e dopo il 1320," *Bollettino d'arte* 57 (1972): 121, contrary to what previous studies have maintained, Nardo could not have enrolled in the guild earlier than 1346.

[2] According to an undated document probably written shortly after the Black Death, which struck Italy in 1348 (Archivio di Stato, Pistoia, Patrimonio Ecclesiastico C 450), Nardo, together with his brother Andrea, was ranked among the best Florentine painters of the time. Cf. Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, Mo, 1982), 257.

[3] Cf. Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 99–112.

[4] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 15.

[5] "Nardo, ne' frati predicatori fece la capella dello 'nferno": Julius von Schlosser, ed., *Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 1, *Commentarii* (Berlin, 1912), 40. Cf. Osvald Sirén, *Giottino und seine Stellung in der gleichzeitigen florentinischen Malerei*, *Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien* (Leipzig, 1908), 71–76; Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 99–112; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960).

[6] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), v.

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[7] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), v, 47–51.

[8] No. 1943.208; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 115–117 (as “Follower of Daddi”); for the attribution to Nardo di Cione, cf. Richard Offner, Miklós Boskovits, and Enrica Neri Lusanna, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 3, *The Works of Bernardo Daddi*, new ed. (Florence, 1989), 385.

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Nardo di Cione  
Florentine, active from c. 1340; died 1365/1366

## *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows [entire triptych]*

c. 1360

tempera on panel

overall: 76 × 66.4 cm (29 15/16 × 26 1/8 in.)

Inscription: middle panel, on base of the frame: AVE.GRATIA.PLENA.DO[MINUS  
TECUM] (Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; from Luke 1:28)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.261.a-c

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### ENTRY

This portable triptych, in the form of a tabernacle with gabled central panel and closing shutters, was clearly intended for private devotion. The external decoration of the lateral panels is purely ornamental, conforming to Tuscan tradition [fig. 1].<sup>[1]</sup> When the shutters are opened, the composition is more unusual, since the central image of the Madonna bearing the child in her arms<sup>[2]</sup> is presented as a three-quarter-length standing figure, whereas the two saints by whom she is flanked are full length. This combination, found in some cases in Sienese Trecento art,<sup>[3]</sup> is rare in Florentine painting. It is seen in some works of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) dating to the years 1335–1340.<sup>[4]</sup> The presence of the Man of Sorrows in the trefoil at the top of the tabernacle is also very uncommon.<sup>[5]</sup>

On publishing the painting with an attribution to Nardo di Cione (which is unanimously accepted),<sup>[6]</sup> Richard Offner (1924) noted its affinities with the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence. He considered it to have been executed by the mid-1350s, among other reasons because he detected in it vivid reminiscences of Bernardo Daddi, an artist who had died in 1348.<sup>[7]</sup> Later, in the volume of the *Corpus of Florentine Painting* dedicated to

Nardo, Offner seems to have preferred an earlier dating, c. 1345–1350.[8] In the National Gallery of Art catalogs, without any convincing motivation, the tabernacle was invariably dated to c. 1360, a view accepted by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), Andrew Ladis (1982), Serena Skerl Del Conte (1995), John O. Hand (2004), and Federica Baldini (2008).[9] A dating to the 1350s was proposed, in turn, by Gyorgy Gommosi (1927–1928), Hans Dietrich Gronau (1937), Barbara Klesse (1967), Olga Pujmanova (1984), and Stefano Petrocchi (1997).[10] Erling S. Skaug (1994), Gert Kreytenberg (1996, 2000), and Angelo Tartuferi (2001) have preferred a relatively late dating, placing the small triptych after 1360, in the last years of the artist's life.[11]

In his remarkable analysis of the triptych, then in the Goldman collection, Offner did not disguise his great admiration for this painting: he praised it for the “gemlike solidity” of its colors, the “introspection, greater warmth and simpler humanity” of its protagonists, and in particular the “passionate tenderness” of Mary's face [fig. 2].[12] Offner saw in this triptych an expression of the “lyrical rumination” that distinguished Nardo's work as a whole.[13] He also praised the finished workmanship of its technique, “in which sharpness and honesty of execution become a kind of preciosity.”[14] Indeed, the present-day observer cannot but be enchanted by the extreme accomplishment of its execution, which its exceptionally fine state allows us to appreciate fully. We may observe, for example, such details as the exquisite painting of the child's transparent, almost invisible, close-fitting shirt, revealing the delicacy of the small body below it; or that of the silky beard of Saint John [fig. 3] that overlaps the dense folds of his mantle; or the naturalness with which Mary's hands support the child, their tapering fingers penetrating the folds of the gold-embroidered brocade that envelops the lower limbs of the infant Jesus.

Yet, in spite of its excellent condition and extremely high level of quality, the former Goldman triptych now in the National Gallery of Art does not seem to have particularly drawn the attention of scholars in the half century since Offner wrote his appreciative essay. The reason for this can perhaps be found in its extremely simple and clear composition and its stylistic character so manifestly Nardesque that it cannot leave any doubts about its authorship. If any doubts persist, they concern not the triptych's attribution but its date. Yet the chronology of the apparently rather brief artistic trajectory of Nardo di Cione is a very intricate question and, after Offner, few other scholars have attempted to tackle it. Our only secure points of reference for ordering Nardo's works are the triptychs dated 1365

and the probable date of 1356–1357 for the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel. On this basis it can be maintained with some confidence that, as Offner astutely observed, the execution of the Gallery painting must be situated closer to the Strozzi frescoes, even though it is difficult to establish whether it should precede or postdate them. In the chronological reconstruction of Nardo's career proposed in Offner's monograph dedicated to the artist (1960), the triptych was placed in a group of paintings that also included the triptych formed by *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the laterals in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich,[15] another triptych now in the National Gallery in London,[16] and the polyptych in Bojnice Castle (Slovakia).[17] Though none of these paintings are dated, they do seem to anticipate problems that the artist would successfully resolve in the mural cycle in the Strozzi Chapel.[18] Yet some clues perhaps suggest a slightly later date for the painting discussed here.

In the London Coronation, the artist does not appear to be interested in placing his figures in a three-dimensional space: Jesus and his mother sit on a virtually invisible throne, and, both by their position in profile and by the preference shown for wide expanses of color, testify to the artist's wish to reduce the plasticity of forms to the surface plane. In the two groups of five saints of the laterals now in Munich, the regilding of parts of the ground and the retouching of the draperies have altered the paintings' original appearance, but the soft modeling of the faces, the delicate tonal passages that define the strongly simplified forms, and the decoration of the halos[19] seem to confirm the common origin of the three panels and their relatively precocious date.

An aura of grandeur is conferred on the polyptych now in Bojnice by its relatively squat and ponderously solemn figures who yet seem more free in their movements, and who wear mantles constructed of deep and broad folds [fig. 4]. Here, too, the artist dispenses with an architectural throne (Mary's seat is created by a sumptuously embroidered gold cloth, on which the various planes are suggested by nothing more than the shifting intensity of light), but—in contrast to the panels in Munich—he accentuates the plasticity of the bodies in various ways. The saints are mainly presented frontally, but the chiaroscuro is denser and the expressive power of their gestures is heightened by their foreshortened arms, which seem to project outward from the surface plane of the painting towards the spectator. The precious brocaded stuffs of some of the female saints' garments here are no longer surface planes, as in the Saint Julian in the Alte Pinakothek, but instead follow the volumetric substance of the forms: they not only envelop but

also model the bodies. In the halos of this polyptych, the incised foliated motifs are largely replaced by punch marks, although these are made to stand out against the granulated ground, as in the halos in the triptych now divided between London and Munich.[20] The same kind of gold tooling recurs in the triptych discussed here, although here the decoration impressed in the gold ground consists exclusively of punched motifs, in part reworked.[21]

Aspects of the gold tooling and of the ornamental motifs of the gilded stuff that envelops the child underline the Washington triptych's affinity with the Bojnice polyptych and the Madonna and Child in the Brooklyn Museum in New York.[22] Yet several features of our painting reveal a change of direction in Nardo's style. We may note, for instance, the more slender proportions of the figures and the tendency to give an almost geometrical regularity to the drapery folds, which here assume angular forms and at times brusquely interrupt with sudden projections the placid fluidity of the contours. Moreover, the rather frowning seriousness of the faces of the two saints, modeled with more marked chiaroscuro and few but deep wrinkles, or their thick hair and wiry-looking beards [fig. 5],[23] seem more in keeping with the paintings of Nardo's full maturity than with those hitherto cited or with the murals in the Strozzi Chapel. In the Goldman Madonna, in short, Nardo, without abandoning the grace and delicacy of his previous works, begins to draw close to the severe essentiality of form pursued by his brother Andrea until the mid-1350s. Similar developments can be observed in his triptych now in the National Gallery in London, or the frescoes in the Cappella di Sant'Anna in the cloister (Chiostro dei Morti) at Santa Maria Novella [24]—that is, in works probably dating to the early 1360s, but at any rate earlier than the two altarpieces dated 1365.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



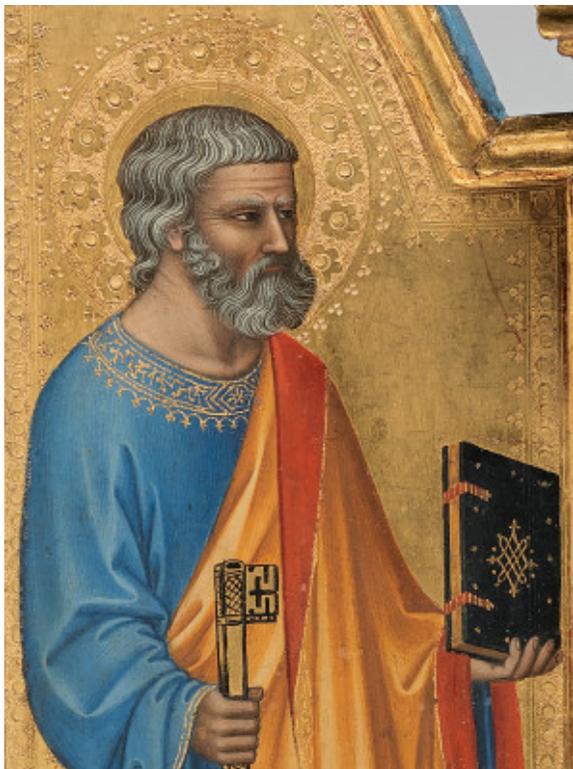
**fig. 2** Detail of Mary, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint John, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 4** Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, Bojnice Castle, Slovakia



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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#### NOTES

- [1] Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), figs. 40–41, 68 n. 76, cited several other triptychs similarly decorated.
- [2] The iconographic type of the standing Madonna and Child can be traced back to the Byzantine *Hodegetria*. It began to spread in central Italy only in the late thirteenth century, probably through the influence of French Gothic sculpture, first in the sculpture of Giovanni Pisano and other Siennese and Pisan masters and then in painting. Cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 42; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York,

1954), 119, 147.

- [3] The best known example of the combination of the three-quarter Madonna with full-length saints in the laterals is Duccio's triptych in the National Gallery in London (no. 566), but it is also found in a polyptych by Luca di Tommè in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 586), in which the two saints that flank the Virgin are three-quarter length, whereas the other saints on the outer sides of the polyptych are full length.
- [4] The paintings by Bernardo Daddi in question are the triptych in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence; the other dismantled triptych of identical composition now divided between the Pinacoteca Vaticana (no. 174) and the Kunstmuseum in Bern (no. 880); and a third similar triptych, which entered the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in recent years (no. 93.PB.16). Cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 191–200; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 99–103; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 574–578.
- [5] As Richard Offner noted, this iconographic motif normally appears in the central zone of the predella and not in the gable of altarpieces. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 24.
- [6] The panel, it seems, had entered the Goldman collection as a work of Orcagna; see Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 99. Subsequently, the attribution to Orcagna was reaffirmed in a number of manuscript expertises by leading art historians of the period, of which one was dated 1938 and signed by Adolfo Venturi, while Giuseppe Fiocco proposed an improbable attribution to Jacopo di Cione (Florentine, c. 1340 - c. 1400?) in another of these testimonials; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:342. Copies of the expertises are in NGA curatorial files.
- [7] "The Goldman Virgin," Richard Offner wrote, "stands even closer [than the *Madonna with Child and Saints* now in the Brooklyn Museum] to the female figures in the Strozzi Chapel Paradise. The lurking movement in her easy posture, the slight yielding tilt of her head, its mould, the hair, the flat nose, the dainty budded lips and above them a sharp caret joined by two parallels to the nostrils, will be found again and again there." Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in*

*America* 12 (1924): 111. In another passage, the same scholar (on page 106) observed that, in spite of their affinities, “even Daddi’s Madonnas, of all Florentine Madonnas most closely related to those of Nardo, seem to live in a far different world.”

- [8] Richard Offner proposed this time frame for such works as *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the polyptych in Bojnice, and the triptych in the National Gallery in London. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), ix–x n. 6. See below notes 9–11.
- [9] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 154, 241; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 138; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 157, 247; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 21; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 95; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 34, fig. 75; Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 75; Serena Skerl Del Conte, *Antonio Veneziano e Taddeo Gaddi nella Toscana della seconda metà del Trecento* (Pasian di Prato, Udine, 1995), 108; John Hand, *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection* (New York, 2004), 13; Federica Baldini, in *L’eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 16, 168, 169.
- [10] Gyorgy Gommosi, “Nardo di Cione és a Szépmvészeti Múzeum somzée-féle Madaonnaja,” *Az Országos Magyar Szépmvészeti Múzeum: Évkönyvei* 5 (1927–1928): 16; Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 86 n. 152, 89; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294, 371; Olga Pujmanová, in *Národní galerie v Praze*, ed. Jiřího Kotalíka (Prague, 1984), 52; Stefano Petrocchi, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:650.
- [11] Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–178; Gert Kreytenberg, “Cione,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 7:336; Angelo Tartuferi, *Dal Duecento agli Orcagna: Il restauro della Madonna col Bambino di ignoto fiorentino del Duecento e del trittico di Santa Maria degli Angeli di Nardo di Cione* (Livorno, 2001), 68, 75 n. 32.
- [12] Richard Offner, “Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman

Collection,” *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105; Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 103, 104.

- [13] Richard Offner, “Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection,” *Art in America* 12 (1924): 106.
- [14] Richard Offner, “Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection,” *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105.
- [15] Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Ionides Collection, no. C.A.I. 104; Alte Pinakothek, Munich, nos. W.A.F. 1027, 1028. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 13–22.
- [16] London, National Gallery, no. 581. Richard Offner considered this panel as “representative of an era...of progressive preparation for the Strozzi cycle,” with a dating c. 1345–1350. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), v (for quote), x, 37–40. More recently, Dillian Gordon (1985), developing Offner’s hypothesis that Bartolomeo di Lapo Benini was the donor of the altarpiece (which is known to have come from the Florentine church of San Giovanni Battista della Calza), suggested a very late date of execution, c. 1365. She based her proposal also on Erling S. Skaug’s (1983) observations on the punch marks used to decorate the halos in the panel. On the basis of its stylistic characteristics, however, the painting would better fit into Nardo’s chronology around 1360, in my opinion. Cf. Dillian Gordon, “Nardo di Cione’s Altarpiece: Three Saints,” *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 9 (1985): 21–23; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–179.
- [17] The polyptych, acquired in the late nineteenth century for the Pálffy Castle in Bojnice (now Slovakia), was transferred to the Prague National Gallery (nos. O 2376–2385) after the Second World War; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 33–35. Subsequently, it passed to the National Gallery in Bratislava and from there was restored to its original seat at Bojnice.
- [18] “Nardo’s frescoes,” Richard Offner concluded, “were started soon after the tabernacle [Orcagna’s monumental work executed for the church of Orsanmichele starting in 1352] was begun, and were very probably brought to an end before Orcagna’s polyptych was set upon the altar of the [Strozzi] chapel in 1357”; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 47.
- [19] In all three panels, the floriated motifs incised in the halos stand out against

the granulated ground. Analyzing this decoration, Erling S. Skaug observed that in the London–Munich panel “the small four-point punch rosetta has been used not for granulation but as an independent motif. The same effect is to be found in the Washington tabernacle. It remains to be proved,” he added cautiously, “that this rare feature in Nardo’s tooling habits actually connects these works in time, but the possibility deserves attention.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178.

[20] On the various techniques of gold tooling, see Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:62–66.

[21] “Re-worked tooling,” explained Erling S. Skaug, “is...in the Stockholm [Nationalmuseum, no. 2259], Prague and New Haven [Yale University Art Gallery, nos. 1971.13–14] panels mainly confined to the addition of a blunt point in the centers of medium-size six-petalled motifs. In halo and frame borders of the Washington and London–Munich panels, however, re-working even of medium-size circle motifs by blunt point inside frequently occurs.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178 n. 18.

[22] Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294–295, registered the presence of fabrics decorated with motifs very similar to those of the gold-embroidered brocade of the child in the Washington triptych, in the polyptych now at Bojnice, and in the Madonna and Child with Saints in the Brooklyn Museum. For this latter panel—identifiable, according to Millard Meiss’s plausible proposal, with the altarpiece formerly in the office of the Gabella de’ Contratti in Florence and according to a seventeenth-century source signed and dated 1356—see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 67–69; and Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 15 n. 15. See also Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1932), 26:39; and Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 58.

[23] These characteristics are fully manifest in the two triptychs dated 1365 in the Galleria dell’Accademia and Museo di Santa Croce. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth*

*Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 85–96 (as “Following of Nardo di Cione”); Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 182–191; and Angelo Tartuferi, in *Angeli, santi e demoni: Otto capolavori restaurati; Santa Croce quaranta anni dopo (1966–2006)*, Problemi di conservazione e restauro, ed. Marco Ciatti, Cecilia Frosinini, and Chiara Rossi Scarzanella (Florence, 2006), 111–112.

[24] See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 75–78. Giovanni di Bartolo Steccuti, who had patronage of the chapel, is known to have died in 1360 and was buried there. Among the frescoes in question, the figure of Saint John the Evangelist (see Offner 1960, pl. XXIX) offers interesting affinities with the same saint in the Washington triptych.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This triptych is one of the few early Italian panels in the collection that has not been cradled. The wooden support of the central panel is vertically grained. A knotty section of the left side of the panel was replaced by the insertion from the front side of eleven rectangular blocks of wood, before the application of the cloth interleaf and the gesso layer. The frame and base of the triptych are original. The inscription is on a horizontally grained piece of wood that was set into the base. The wings are formed of single boards with vertical grain; it is unclear whether the spiral colonnettes by which they are joined to the main panel are original—repaired and regilded—or modern. The back of the wings are covered by paint imitating porphyry, with an ornamental decoration at the center that feigns the effect of inlaid work [fig. 1].

The figures and some of the drapery folds were delineated with incised lines. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns reveals underdrawing and hatchmarking, which is more prevalent in the Madonna and Child than in Saint John and Saint Peter.[1] The areas of flesh were prepared with a green underpaint, which was not modeled. Discrete paint strokes are visible in the clothing, but the paint is well blended in the flesh tones. Mordant gilding was used to form the gold decorative borders of the Virgin’s and saints’ robes. The lining of the Madonna’s robe was originally brocade, probably with silver gilding and green paint.[2] Punched designs decorate the figures’ halos, the border of each panel, the

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brocade swaddling cloth, the carpet, and the gable.

The central panel has a slight convex warp. Probably in an effort to flatten the wood, the back of the panel was scored from the top right corner approximately to the center, at an angle that follows the wood grain. The back of the panel is covered by a layer of modern reddish brown pigment. The base, including the area around the blue paint of the inscription, has been regilded; the upper frame members retain their original gilding, which has been locally repaired. The painted surface is generally very well preserved. There is inpainting in the bust of the Man of Sorrows, in the gable trefoil, and in Christ's swaddling cloth. The brocade lining of the Madonna's robe has been overpainted. The painting was treated by Stephen Pichetto in 1937 and again by Mario Modestini in 1955.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with J and K astronomy filters.
  - [2] The NGA scientific research department performed x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Silver and elements associated with green and blue pigments were found (see report dated December 22, 2010, in NGA conservation files).
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## PROVENANCE

Gustav Adolf Wilhelm von Ingenheim [1789-1855], who acquired it in the first half of the nineteenth century, probably in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> Ingenheim family, Schloss Reisewitz, Silesia; sold 1922 to (A.S. Drey, Munich); sold 1923 to Henry Goldman [1856-1937], New York;<sup>[2]</sup> sold January 1937 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[3]</sup> sold 1937 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[4]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] According to Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. The Fourteenth Century*, Section IV, Vol. II, Nardo di Cione, New York, 1960: 24), who obtained the information from Dr. Manfred Graf von Ingenheim, a descendant of the collector, Count von Ingenheim “had acquired some of his paintings during his stay in Italy (1820–1840), and had received others as gifts from the king of Prussia.” Indeed, the center panel of the National Gallery’s triptych has a label on the reverse that reads, “Kaiser Friedrich Palais / Zimmer No. 251 / Lfde No. 39,” but the painting has not yet been located in an early catalogue of the Prussian royal collections. According to a contemporary report (Carl August Böttiger, “Gemäldesammlung des Grafen von Ingenheim.” *Artistisches Notizenblatt* [appendix to *Abend Zeitung*] 7 [1927]: 26-28), by 1827 the count had no fewer than seventy-eight select Italian Old Masters (“auserwählte Stücke italienischer Meister”) in his collection, which at that time was housed in Munich but was about to be transferred to Paris. Böttiger, who quotes the collector’s words, claims these paintings were purchased in Italy in the years 1816-1817 and 1822-1824. [2] Offner 1960, 24. [3] Letter, Henry Goldman to Duveen Brothers, 5 January 1937; copy in NGA curatorial files. Goldman confirms the sale to the company of nine paintings and one sculpture; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 312, box 457, folder 4. [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, National Gallery of Art, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979, 1:342.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

2008 L’eredità di Giotto. Arte a Firenze 1340-1375, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, 2008, no. 36, repro.

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Nardo di Cione  
Florentine, active from c. 1340; died 1365/1366

## *Madonna and Child, with the Man of Sorrows [middle panel]*

c. 1360

tempera on panel

painted surface: 45.1 × 26 cm (17 3/4 × 10 1/4 in.)

overall: 75.6 × 30.2 cm (29 3/4 × 11 7/8 in.)

Inscription: on base of the frame: AVE.GRATIA.PLENA.DO[MINUS TECUM] (Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; from Luke 1:28)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.261.b

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### ENTRY

This panel is part of a portable triptych in the form of a tabernacle with gabled central panel and closing shutters that was clearly intended for private devotion. The external decoration of the lateral panels is purely ornamental, conforming to Tuscan tradition [fig. 1].<sup>[1]</sup> When the shutters are opened, the composition is more unusual, since the central image of the Madonna bearing the child in her arms <sup>[2]</sup> is presented as a three-quarter-length standing figure, whereas the two saints by whom she is flanked (*Saint Peter [left panel]* and *Saint John the Evangelist [right panel]*) are full length. This combination, found in some cases in Sienese Trecento art,<sup>[3]</sup> is rare in Florentine painting. It is seen in some works of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) dating to the years 1335–1340.<sup>[4]</sup> The presence of the Man of Sorrows in the trefoil at the top of the tabernacle is also very uncommon.<sup>[5]</sup>

On publishing the painting with an attribution to Nardo di Cione (which is unanimously accepted),<sup>[6]</sup> Richard Offner (1924) noted its affinities with the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence. He considered it to have been executed by the mid-1350s, among other reasons because he detected in it vivid reminiscences of Bernardo Daddi, an artist who had died in 1348.<sup>[7]</sup> Later, in the volume of the *Corpus of Florentine Painting* dedicated to

Nardo, Offner seems to have preferred an earlier dating, c. 1345–1350.[8] In the National Gallery of Art catalogs, without any convincing motivation, the tabernacle was invariably dated to c. 1360, a view accepted by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), Andrew Ladis (1982), Serena Skerl Del Conte (1995), John O. Hand (2004), and Federica Baldini (2008).[9] A dating to the 1350s was proposed, in turn, by Gyorgy Gommosi (1927–1928), Hans Dietrich Gronau (1937), Barbara Klesse (1967), Olga Pujmanova (1984), and Stefano Petrocchi (1997).[10] Erling S. Skaug (1994), Gert Kreytenberg (1996, 2000), and Angelo Tartuferi (2001) have preferred a relatively late dating, placing the small triptych after 1360, in the last years of the artist's life.[11]

In his remarkable analysis of the triptych, then in the Goldman collection, Offner did not disguise his great admiration for this painting: he praised it for the “gemlike solidity” of its colors, the “introspection, greater warmth and simpler humanity” of its protagonists, and in particular the “passionate tenderness” of Mary's face [fig. 2].[12] Offner saw in this triptych an expression of the “lyrical rumination” that distinguished Nardo's work as a whole.[13] He also praised the finished workmanship of its technique, “in which sharpness and honesty of execution become a kind of preciosity.”[14] Indeed, the present-day observer cannot but be enchanted by the extreme accomplishment of its execution, which its exceptionally fine state allows us to appreciate fully. We may observe, for example, such details as the exquisite painting of the child's transparent, almost invisible, close-fitting shirt, revealing the delicacy of the small body below it; or that of the silky beard of Saint John [fig. 3] that overlaps the dense folds of his mantle; or the naturalness with which Mary's hands support the child, their tapering fingers penetrating the folds of the gold-embroidered brocade that envelops the lower limbs of the infant Jesus.

Yet, in spite of its excellent condition and extremely high level of quality, the former Goldman triptych now in the National Gallery of Art does not seem to have particularly drawn the attention of scholars in the half century since Offner wrote his appreciative essay. The reason for this can perhaps be found in its extremely simple and clear composition and its stylistic character so manifestly Nardesque that it cannot leave any doubts about its authorship. If any doubts persist, they concern not the triptych's attribution but its date. Yet the chronology of the apparently rather brief artistic trajectory of Nardo di Cione is a very intricate question and, after Offner, few other scholars have attempted to tackle it. Our only secure points of reference for ordering Nardo's works are the triptychs dated 1365

and the probable date of 1356–1357 for the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel. On this basis it can be maintained with some confidence that, as Offner astutely observed, the execution of the Gallery painting must be situated closer to the Strozzi frescoes, even though it is difficult to establish whether it should precede or postdate them. In the chronological reconstruction of Nardo's career proposed in Offner's monograph dedicated to the artist (1960), the triptych was placed in a group of paintings that also included the triptych formed by *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the laterals in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich,[15] another triptych now in the National Gallery in London,[16] and the polyptych in Bojnice Castle (Slovakia).[17] Though none of these paintings are dated, they do seem to anticipate problems that the artist would successfully resolve in the mural cycle in the Strozzi Chapel.[18] Yet some clues perhaps suggest a slightly later date for the painting discussed here.

In the London Coronation, the artist does not appear to be interested in placing his figures in a three-dimensional space: Jesus and his mother sit on a virtually invisible throne, and, both by their position in profile and by the preference shown for wide expanses of color, testify to the artist's wish to reduce the plasticity of forms to the surface plane. In the two groups of five saints of the laterals now in Munich, the regilding of parts of the ground and the retouching of the draperies have altered the paintings' original appearance, but the soft modeling of the faces, the delicate tonal passages that define the strongly simplified forms, and the decoration of the halos [19] seem to confirm the common origin of the three panels and their relatively precocious date.[20]

An aura of grandeur is conferred on the polyptych now in Bojnice by its relatively squat and ponderously solemn figures who yet seem more free in their movements, and who wear mantles constructed of deep and broad folds [fig. 4]. Here, too, the artist dispenses with an architectural throne (Mary's seat is created by a sumptuously embroidered gold cloth, on which the various planes are suggested by nothing more than the shifting intensity of light), but—in contrast to the panels in Munich—he accentuates the plasticity of the bodies in various ways. The saints are mainly presented frontally, but the chiaroscuro is denser and the expressive power of their gestures is heightened by their foreshortened arms, which seem to project outward from the surface plane of the painting towards the spectator. The precious brocaded stuffs of some of the female saints' garments here are no longer surface planes, as in the Saint Julian in the Alte Pinakothek, but instead follow the volumetric substance of the forms: they not only envelop but

also model the bodies. In the halos of this polyptych, the incised foliated motifs are largely replaced by punch marks, although these are made to stand out against the granulated ground, as in the halos in the triptych now divided between London and Munich.[21] The same kind of gold tooling recurs in the triptych discussed here, although here the decoration impressed in the gold ground consists exclusively of punched motifs, in part reworked.

Aspects of the gold tooling and of the ornamental motifs of the gilded stuff that envelops the child underline the Washington triptych's affinity with the Bojnice polyptych and the Madonna and Child in the Brooklyn Museum in New York.[22] Yet several features of our painting reveal a change of direction in Nardo's style. We may note, for instance, the more slender proportions of the figures and the tendency to give an almost geometrical regularity to the drapery folds, which here assume angular forms and at times brusquely interrupt with sudden projections the placid fluidity of the contours. Moreover, the rather frowning seriousness of the faces of the two saints, modeled with more marked chiaroscuro and few but deep wrinkles, or their thick hair and wiry-looking beards [fig. 5],[23] seem more in keeping with the paintings of Nardo's full maturity than with those hitherto cited or with the murals in the Strozzi Chapel. In the Goldman Madonna, in short, Nardo, without abandoning the grace and delicacy of his previous works, begins to draw close to the severe essentiality of form pursued by his brother Andrea until the mid-1350s. Similar developments can be observed in his triptych now in the National Gallery in London, or the frescoes in the Cappella di Sant'Anna in the cloister (Chiostro dei Morti) at Santa Maria Novella [24]—that is, in works probably dating to the early 1360s, but at any rate earlier than the two altarpieces dated 1365.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



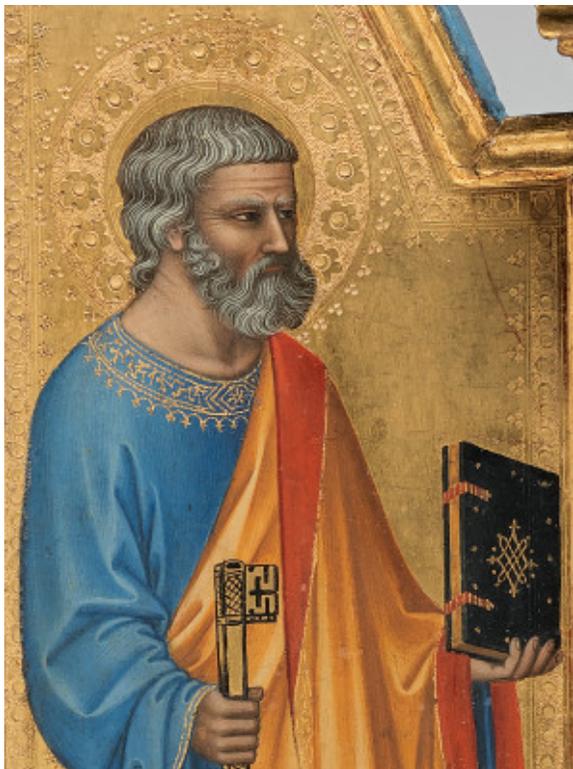
**fig. 2** Detail of Mary, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint John, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 4** Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, Bojnice Castle, Slovakia



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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## NOTES

- [1] Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), figs. 40–41, 68 n. 76, cited several other triptychs similarly decorated.
- [2] The iconographic type of the standing Madonna and Child can be traced back to the Byzantine *Hodegetria*. It began to spread in central Italy only in the late thirteenth century, probably through the influence of French Gothic sculpture, first in the sculpture of Giovanni Pisano and other Siennese and Pisan masters and then in painting. Cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 42; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York,

1954), 119, 147.

- [3] The best known example of the combination of the three-quarter Madonna with full-length saints in the laterals is Duccio's triptych in the National Gallery in London (no. 566), but it is also found in a polyptych by Luca di Tommè in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 586), in which the two saints that flank the Virgin are three-quarter length, whereas the other saints on the outer sides of the polyptych are full length.
- [4] The paintings by Bernardo Daddi in question are the triptych in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence; the other dismantled triptych of identical composition now divided between the Pinacoteca Vaticana (no. 174) and the Kunstmuseum in Bern (no. 880); and a third similar triptych, which entered the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in recent years (no. 93.PB.16). Cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 191–200; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 99–103; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 574–578.
- [5] As Richard Offner noted, this iconographic motif normally appears in the central zone of the predella and not in the gable of altarpieces. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 24.
- [6] The panel, it seems, had entered the Goldman collection as a work of Orcagna; see Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 99. Subsequently, the attribution to Orcagna was reaffirmed in a number of manuscript expertises by leading art historians of the period, of which one was dated 1938 and signed by Adolfo Venturi, while Giuseppe Fiocco proposed an improbable attribution to Jacopo di Cione (Florentine, c. 1340 - c. 1400?) in another of these testimonials; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:342. Copies of the expertises are in NGA curatorial files.
- [7] "The Goldman Virgin," Richard Offner wrote, "stands even closer [than the *Madonna with Child and Saints* now in the Brooklyn Museum] to the female figures in the Strozzi Chapel Paradise. The lurking movement in her easy posture, the slight yielding tilt of her head, its mould, the hair, the flat nose, the dainty budded lips and above them a sharp caret joined by two parallels to the nostrils, will be found again and again there." Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in*

*America* 12 (1924): 111. In another passage, the same scholar (on page 106) observed that, in spite of their affinities, “even Daddi’s Madonnas, of all Florentine Madonnas most closely related to those of Nardo, seem to live in a far different world.”

- [8] Richard Offner proposed this time frame for such works as *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the polyptych in Bojnice, and the triptych in the National Gallery in London. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), ix–x n. 6. See below notes 9–11.
- [9] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 154, 241; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 138; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 157, 247; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 21; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 95; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 34, fig. 75; Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 75; Serena Skerl Del Conte, *Antonio Veneziano e Taddeo Gaddi nella Toscana della seconda metà del Trecento* (Pasian di Prato, Udine, 1995), 108; John Hand, *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection* (New York, 2004), 13; Federica Baldini, in *L’eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 16, 168, 169.
- [10] Gyorgy Gommosi, “Nardo di Cione és a Szépmvészeti Múzeum somzée-féle Madaonnaja,” *Az Országos Magyar Szépmvészeti Múzeum: Évkönyvei* 5 (1927–1928): 16; Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 86 n. 152, 89; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294, 371; Olga Pujmanová, in *Národní galerie v Praze*, ed. Jiího Kotalíka (Prague, 1984), 52; Stefano Petrocchi, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:650.
- [11] Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–178; Gert Kreytenberg, “Cione,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 7:336; Angelo Tartuferi, *Dal Duecento agli Orcagna: Il restauro della Madonna col Bambino di ignoto fiorentino del Duecento e del trittico di Santa Maria degli Angeli di Nardo di Cione* (Livorno, 2001), 68, 75 n. 32.
- [12] Richard Offner, “Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman

Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105; Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 103, 104.

- [13] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 106.
- [14] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105.
- [15] Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Ionides Collection, no. C.A.I. 104; Alte Pinakothek, Munich, nos. W.A.F. 1027, 1028. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 13–22.
- [16] London, National Gallery, no. 581. Richard Offner considered this panel as "representative of an era...of progressive preparation for the Strozzi cycle," with a dating c. 1345–1350. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), v (for quote), x, 37–40. More recently, Dillian Gordon (1985), developing Offner's hypothesis that Bartolomeo di Lapo Benini was the donor of the altarpiece (which is known to have come from the Florentine church of San Giovanni Battista della Calza), suggested a very late date of execution, c. 1365. She based her proposal also on Erling S. Skaug's (1983) observations on the punch marks used to decorate the halos in the panel. On the basis of its stylistic characteristics, however, the painting would better fit into Nardo's chronology around 1360, in my opinion. Cf. Dillian Gordon, "Nardo di Cione's Altarpiece: Three Saints," *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 9 (1985): 21–23; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–179.
- [17] The polyptych, acquired in the late nineteenth century for the Pálffy Castle in Bojnice (now Slovakia), was transferred to the Prague National Gallery (nos. O 2376–2385) after the Second World War; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 33–35. Subsequently, it passed to the National Gallery in Bratislava and from there was restored to its original seat at Bojnice.
- [18] "Nardo's frescoes," Richard Offner concluded, "were started soon after the tabernacle [Orcagna's monumental work executed for the church of Orsanmichele starting in 1352] was begun, and were very probably brought to an end before Orcagna's polyptych was set upon the altar of the [Strozzi] chapel in 1357"; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 47.
- [19] In all three panels, the floriated motifs incised in the halos stand out against

the granulated ground. Analyzing this decoration, Erling S. Skaug observed that in the London–Munich panel “the small four-point punch rosetta has been used not for granulation but as an independent motif. The same effect is to be found in the Washington tabernacle. It remains to be proved,” he added cautiously, “that this rare feature in Nardo’s tooling habits actually connects these works in time, but the possibility deserves attention.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178.

[20] On the various techniques of gold tooling, see Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:62–66.

[21] “Re-worked tooling,” explained Erling S. Skaug, “is...in the Stockholm [Nationalmuseum, no. 2259], Prague and New Haven [Yale University Art Gallery, nos. 1971.13–14] panels mainly confined to the addition of a blunt point in the centers of medium-size six-petalled motifs. In halo and frame borders of the Washington and London–Munich panels, however, re-working even of medium-size circle motifs by blunt point inside frequently occurs.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178 n. 18.

[22] Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294–295, registered the presence of fabrics decorated with motifs very similar to those of the gold-embroidered brocade of the child in the Washington triptych, in the polyptych now at Bojnice, and in the Madonna and Child with Saints in the Brooklyn Museum. For this latter panel—identifiable, according to Millard Meiss’s plausible proposal, with the altarpiece formerly in the office of the Gabella de’ Contratti in Florence and according to a seventeenth-century source signed and dated 1356—see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 67–69; and Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 15 n. 15. See also Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1932), 26:39; and Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 58.

[23] These characteristics are fully manifest in the two triptychs dated 1365 in the Galleria dell’Accademia and Museo di Santa Croce. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth*

*Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 85–96 (as “Following of Nardo di Cione”); Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 182–191; and Angelo Tartuferi, in *Angeli, santi e demoni: Otto capolavori restaurati; Santa Croce quaranta anni dopo (1966–2006)*, Problemi di conservazione e restauro, ed. Marco Ciatti, Cecilia Frosinini, and Chiara Rossi Scarzanella (Florence, 2006), 111–112.

[24] See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 75–78. Giovanni di Bartolo Steccuti, who had patronage of the chapel, is known to have died in 1360 and was buried there. Among the frescoes in question, the figure of Saint John the Evangelist (see Offner 1960, pl. XXIX) offers interesting affinities with the same saint in the Washington triptych.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The triptych including this work, *Saint Peter* [left panel], and *Saint John the Evangelist* [right panel] is one of the few early Italian panels in the collection that has not been cradled. The wooden support of the central panel is vertically grained. A knotty section of the left side of the panel was replaced by the insertion from the front side of eleven rectangular blocks of wood, before the application of the cloth interleaf and the gesso layer. The frame and base of the triptych are original. The inscription is on a horizontally grained piece of wood that was set into the base. The wings are formed of single boards with vertical grain; it is unclear whether the spiral colonnettes by which they are joined to the main panel are original—repaired and regilded—or modern. The back of the wings are covered by paint imitating porphyry, with an ornamental decoration at the center that feigns the effect of inlaid work [fig. 1].

The figures and some of the drapery folds were delineated with incised lines. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns reveals underdrawing and hatchmarking, which is more prevalent in the Madonna and Child than in Saint John and Saint Peter.[1] The areas of flesh were prepared with a green underpaint, which was not modeled. Discrete paint strokes are visible in the clothing, but the paint is well blended in the flesh tones. Mordant gilding was used to form the gold decorative borders of the Virgin’s and saints’ robes. The lining of the Madonna’s robe was originally brocade, probably with silver gilding and green

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paint.[2] Punched designs decorate the figures' halos, the border of each panel, the brocade swaddling cloth, the carpet, and the gable.

The central panel has a slight convex warp. Probably in an effort to flatten the wood, the back of the panel was scored from the top right corner approximately to the center, at an angle that follows the wood grain. The back of the panel is covered by a layer of modern reddish brown pigment. The base, including the area around the blue paint of the inscription, has been regilded; the upper frame members retain their original gilding, which has been locally repaired. The painted surface is generally very well preserved. There is inpainting in the bust of the Man of Sorrows, in the gable trefoil, and in Christ's swaddling cloth. The brocade lining of the Madonna's robe has been overpainted. The painting was treated by Stephen Pichetto in 1937 and again by Mario Modestini in 1955.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with J and K astronomy filters.
  - [2] The NGA scientific research department performed x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Silver and elements associated with green and blue pigments were found (see report dated December 22, 2010, in NGA conservation files).
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## PROVENANCE

Gustav Adolf Wilhelm von Ingenheim [1789-1855], who acquired it in the first half of the nineteenth century, probably in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> Ingenheim family, Schloss Reisewitz, Silesia; sold 1922 to (A.S. Drey, Munich); sold 1923 to Henry Goldman [1856-1937], New York;<sup>[2]</sup> sold January 1937 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[3]</sup> sold 1937 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[4]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] According to Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. The Fourteenth Century*, Section IV, Vol. II, Nardo di Cione, New York, 1960: 24), who obtained the information from Dr. Manfred Graf von Ingenheim, a descendant of the collector, Count von Ingenheim “had acquired some of his paintings during his stay in Italy (1820–1840), and had received others as gifts from the king of Prussia.” Indeed, the center panel of the National Gallery’s triptych has a label on the reverse that reads, “Kaiser Friedrich Palais / Zimmer No. 251 / Lfde No. 39,” but the painting has not yet been located in an early catalogue of the Prussian royal collections. According to a contemporary report (Carl August Böttiger, “Gemäldesammlung des Grafen von Ingenheim.” *Artistisches Notizenblatt* [appendix to *Abend Zeitung*] 7 [1927]: 26-28), by 1827 the count had no fewer than seventy-eight select Italian Old Masters (“auserwählte Stücke italienischer Meister”) in his collection, which at that time was housed in Munich but was about to be transferred to Paris. Carl August Böttiger, who quotes the collector’s words, claims these paintings were purchased in Italy in the years 1816-1817 and 1822-1824. [2] Offner 1960, 24. [3] Letter, Henry Goldman to Duveen Brothers, 5 January 1937; copy in NGA curatorial files. Goldman confirms the sale to the company of nine paintings and one sculpture; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 312, box 457, folder 4. [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, National Gallery of Art, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979, 1:342.

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2008 L’eredità di Giotto. Arte a Firenze 1340-1375, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, 2008, no. 36, repro.

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Nardo di Cione  
Florentine, active from c. 1340; died 1365/1366

## *Saint John the Evangelist [right panel]*

c. 1360

tempera on panel

painted surface: 45.4 × 12.4 cm (17 7/8 × 4 7/8 in.)

overall: 49 × 17 × 1.8 cm (19 5/16 × 6 11/16 × 11/16 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.261.c

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### ENTRY

This panel is part of a portable triptych in the form of a tabernacle with gabled central panel and closing shutters that was clearly intended for private devotion. The external decoration of the lateral panels is purely ornamental, conforming to Tuscan tradition [fig. 1].[1] When the shutters are opened, the composition is more unusual, since the central image of the Madonna bearing the child in her arms (*Madonna and Child, with the Man of Sorrows [middle panel]*)[2] is presented as a three-quarter-length standing figure, whereas the two saints by whom she is flanked (this panel and *Saint Peter [left panel]*) are full length. This combination, found in some cases in Sienese Trecento art,[3] is rare in Florentine painting. It is seen in some works of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) dating to the years 1335–1340.[4] The presence of the Man of Sorrows in the trefoil at the top of the tabernacle is also very uncommon.[5]

On publishing the painting with an attribution to Nardo di Cione (which is unanimously accepted),[6] Richard Offner (1924) noted its affinities with the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence. He considered it to have been executed by the mid-1350s, among other reasons because he detected in it vivid reminiscences of Bernardo Daddi, an artist who had died in 1348.[7] Later, in the volume of the *Corpus of Florentine Painting* dedicated to Nardo, Offner seems to have preferred an earlier dating, c. 1345–1350.[8] In the National Gallery of Art catalogs, without any convincing motivation, the tabernacle was invariably dated to c. 1360, a view accepted by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), Andrew Ladis (1982), Serena Skerl Del Conte (1995), John O. Hand (2004), and

Federica Baldini (2008).[9] A dating to the 1350s was proposed, in turn, by Gyorgy Gommosi (1927–1928), Hans Dietrich Gronau (1937), Barbara Klesse (1967), Olga Pujmanova (1984), and Stefano Petrocchi (1997).[10] Erling S. Skaug (1994), Gert Kreytenberg (1996, 2000), and Angelo Tartuferi (2001) have preferred a relatively late dating, placing the small triptych after 1360, in the last years of the artist's life.[11]

In his remarkable analysis of the triptych, then in the Goldman collection, Offner did not disguise his great admiration for this painting: he praised it for the “gemlike solidity” of its colors, the “introspection, greater warmth and simpler humanity” of its protagonists, and in particular the “passionate tenderness” of Mary's face [fig. 2].[12] Offner saw in this triptych an expression of the “lyrical rumination” that distinguished Nardo's work as a whole.[13] He also praised the finished workmanship of its technique, “in which sharpness and honesty of execution become a kind of preciousness.”[14] Indeed, the present-day observer cannot but be enchanted by the extreme accomplishment of its execution, which its exceptionally fine state allows us to appreciate fully. We may observe, for example, such details as the exquisite painting of the child's transparent, almost invisible, close-fitting shirt, revealing the delicacy of the small body below it; or that of the silky beard of Saint John [fig. 3] that overlaps the dense folds of his mantle; or the naturalness with which Mary's hands support the child, their tapering fingers penetrating the folds of the gold-embroidered brocade that envelops the lower limbs of the infant Jesus.

Yet, in spite of its excellent condition and extremely high level of quality, the former Goldman triptych now in the National Gallery of Art does not seem to have particularly drawn the attention of scholars in the half century since Offner wrote his appreciative essay. The reason for this can perhaps be found in its extremely simple and clear composition and its stylistic character so manifestly Nardesque that it cannot leave any doubts about its authorship. If any doubts persist, they concern not the triptych's attribution but its date. Yet the chronology of the apparently rather brief artistic trajectory of Nardo di Cione is a very intricate question and, after Offner, few other scholars have attempted to tackle it. Our only secure points of reference for ordering Nardo's works are the triptychs dated 1365 and the probable date of 1356–1357 for the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel. On this basis it can be maintained with some confidence that, as Offner astutely observed, the execution of the Gallery painting must be situated closer to the Strozzi frescoes, even though it is difficult to establish whether it should precede or

postdate them. In the chronological reconstruction of Nardo's career proposed in Offner's monograph dedicated to the artist (1960), the triptych was placed in a group of paintings that also included the triptych formed by *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the laterals in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich,[15] another triptych now in the National Gallery in London,[16] and the polyptych in Bojnice Castle (Slovakia).[17] Though none of these paintings are dated, they do seem to anticipate problems that the artist would successfully resolve in the mural cycle in the Strozzi Chapel.[18] Yet some clues perhaps suggest a slightly later date for the painting discussed here.

In the London Coronation, the artist does not appear to be interested in placing his figures in a three-dimensional space: Jesus and his mother sit on a virtually invisible throne, and, both by their position in profile and by the preference shown for wide expanses of color, testify to the artist's wish to reduce the plasticity of forms to the surface plane. In the two groups of five saints of the laterals now in Munich, the regilding of parts of the ground and the retouching of the draperies have altered the paintings' original appearance, but the soft modeling of the faces, the delicate tonal passages that define the strongly simplified forms, and the decoration of the halos [19] seem to confirm the common origin of the three panels and their relatively precocious date.

An aura of grandeur is conferred on the polyptych now in Bojnice by its relatively squat and ponderously solemn figures who yet seem more free in their movements, and who wear mantles constructed of deep and broad folds [fig. 4]. Here, too, the artist dispenses with an architectural throne (Mary's seat is created by a sumptuously embroidered gold cloth, on which the various planes are suggested by nothing more than the shifting intensity of light), but—in contrast to the panels in Munich—he accentuates the plasticity of the bodies in various ways. The saints are mainly presented frontally, but the chiaroscuro is denser and the expressive power of their gestures is heightened by their foreshortened arms, which seem to project outward from the surface plane of the painting towards the spectator. The precious brocaded stuffs of some of the female saints' garments here are no longer surface planes, as in the Saint Julian in the Alte Pinakothek, but instead follow the volumetric substance of the forms: they not only envelop but also model the bodies. In the halos of this polyptych, the incised foliated motifs are largely replaced by punch marks, although these are made to stand out against the granulated ground, as in the halos in the triptych now divided between London and Munich.[20] The same kind of gold tooling recurs in the triptych discussed here,

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although here the decoration impressed in the gold ground consists exclusively of punched motifs, in part reworked.[21]

Aspects of the gold tooling and of the ornamental motifs of the gilded stuff that envelops the child underline the Washington triptych's affinity with the Bojnice polyptych and the Madonna and Child in the Brooklyn Museum in New York.[22] Yet several features of our painting reveal a change of direction in Nardo's style. We may note, for instance, the more slender proportions of the figures and the tendency to give an almost geometrical regularity to the drapery folds, which here assume angular forms and at times brusquely interrupt with sudden projections the placid fluidity of the contours. Moreover, the rather frowning seriousness of the faces of the two saints, modeled with more marked chiaroscuro and few but deep wrinkles, or their thick hair and wiry-looking beards [fig. 5],[23] seem more in keeping with the paintings of Nardo's full maturity than with those hitherto cited or with the murals in the Strozzi Chapel. In the Goldman Madonna, in short, Nardo, without abandoning the grace and delicacy of his previous works, begins to draw close to the severe essentiality of form pursued by his brother Andrea until the mid-1350s. Similar developments can be observed in his triptych now in the National Gallery in London, or the frescoes in the Cappella di Sant'Anna in the cloister (Chiostro dei Morti) at Santa Maria Novella [24]—that is, in works probably dating to the early 1360s, but at any rate earlier than the two altarpieces dated 1365.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



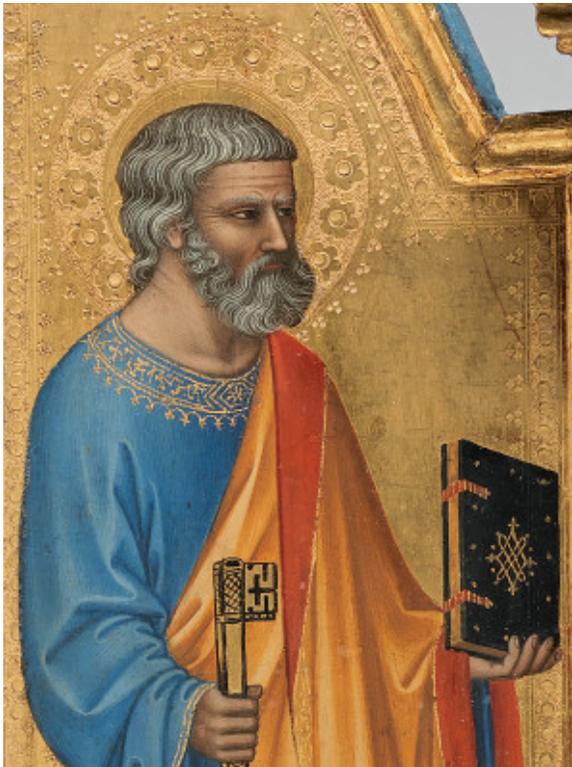
**fig. 2** Detail of Mary, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint John, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 4** Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, Bojnice Castle, Slovakia



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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## NOTES

- [1] Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), figs. 40–41, 68 n. 76, cited several other triptychs similarly decorated.
- [2] The iconographic type of the standing Madonna and Child can be traced back to the Byzantine *Hodegetria*. It began to spread in central Italy only in the late thirteenth century, probably through the influence of French Gothic sculpture, first in the sculpture of Giovanni Pisano and other Siennese and Pisan masters and then in painting. Cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 42; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York,

1954), 119, 147.

- [3] The best known example of the combination of the three-quarter Madonna with full-length saints in the laterals is Duccio's triptych in the National Gallery in London (no. 566), but it is also found in a polyptych by Luca di Tommè in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 586), in which the two saints that flank the Virgin are three-quarter length, whereas the other saints on the outer sides of the polyptych are full length.
- [4] The paintings by Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) in question are the triptych in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence; the other dismantled triptych of identical composition now divided between the Pinacoteca Vaticana (no. 174) and the Kunstmuseum in Bern (no. 880); and a third similar triptych, which entered the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in recent years (no. 93.PB.16). Cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 191–200; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 99–103; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 574–578.
- [5] As Richard Offner noted, this iconographic motif normally appears in the central zone of the predella and not in the gable of altarpieces. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 24.
- [6] The panel, it seems, had entered the Goldman collection as a work of Orcagna; see Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 99. Subsequently, the attribution to Orcagna was reaffirmed in a number of manuscript expertises by leading art historians of the period, of which one was dated 1938 and signed by Adolfo Venturi, while Giuseppe Fiocco proposed an improbable attribution to Jacopo di Cione (Florentine, c. 1340 - c. 1400?) in another of these testimonials; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:342. Copies of the expertises are in NGA curatorial files.
- [7] "The Goldman Virgin," Richard Offner wrote, "stands even closer [than the *Madonna with Child and Saints* now in the Brooklyn Museum] to the female figures in the Strozzi Chapel Paradise. The lurking movement in her easy posture, the slight yielding tilt of her head, its mould, the hair, the flat nose, the dainty budded lips and above them a sharp caret joined by two parallels to the nostrils, will be found again and again there." Richard Offner, "Nardo

di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection,” *Art in America* 12 (1924): 111. In another passage, the same scholar (on page 106) observed that, in spite of their affinities, “even Daddi’s Madonnas, of all Florentine Madonnas most closely related to those of Nardo, seem to live in a far different world.”

- [8] Richard Offner proposed this time frame for such works as *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the polyptych in Bojnice, and the triptych in the National Gallery in London. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), ix–x n. 6. See below notes 9–11.
- [9] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 154, 241; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 138; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 157, 247; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 21; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 95; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 34, fig. 75; Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 75; Serena Skerl Del Conte, *Antonio Veneziano e Taddeo Gaddi nella Toscana della seconda metà del Trecento* (Pisani di Prato, Udine, 1995), 108; John Hand, *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection* (New York, 2004), 13; Federica Baldini, in *L’eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 16, 168, 169.
- [10] Gyorgy Gommosi, “Nardo di Cione és a Szépmvészeti Múzeum somzée-féle Madaonnaja,” *Az Országos Magyar Szépmvészeti Múzeum: Évkönyvei* 5 (1927–1928): 16; Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 86 n. 152, 89; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294, 371; Olga Pujmanová, in *Národní galerie v Praze*, ed. Jiřího Kotalíka (Prague, 1984), 52; Stefano Petrocchi, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:650.
- [11] Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–178; Gert Kreytenberg, “Cione,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 7:336; Angelo Tartuferi, *Dal Duecento agli Orcagna: Il restauro della Madonna col Bambino di ignoto fiorentino del Duecento e del trittico di Santa Maria degli Angeli di Nardo di Cione* (Livorno, 2001), 68, 75 n. 32.

- [12] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105; Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 103, 104.
- [13] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 106.
- [14] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105.
- [15] Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Ionides Collection, no. C.A.I. 104; Alte Pinakothek, Munich, nos. W.A.F. 1027, 1028. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 13–22.
- [16] London, National Gallery, no. 581. Richard Offner considered this panel as "representative of an era...of progressive preparation for the Strozzi cycle," with a dating c. 1345–1350. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), v (for quote), x, 37–40. More recently, Dillian Gordon (1985), developing Offner's hypothesis that Bartolomeo di Lapo Benini was the donor of the altarpiece (which is known to have come from the Florentine church of San Giovanni Battista della Calza), suggested a very late date of execution, c. 1365. She based her proposal also on Erling S. Skaug's (1983) observations on the punch marks used to decorate the halos in the panel. On the basis of its stylistic characteristics, however, the painting would better fit into Nardo's chronology around 1360, in my opinion. Cf. Dillian Gordon, "Nardo di Cione's Altarpiece: Three Saints," *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 9 (1985): 21–23; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–179.
- [17] The polyptych, acquired in the late nineteenth century for the Pálffy Castle in Bojnice (now Slovakia), was transferred to the Prague National Gallery (nos. O 2376–2385) after the Second World War; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 33–35. Subsequently, it passed to the National Gallery in Bratislava and from there was restored to its original seat at Bojnice.
- [18] "Nardo's frescoes," Richard Offner concluded, "were started soon after the tabernacle [Orcagna's monumental work executed for the church of Orsanmichele starting in 1352] was begun, and were very probably brought to an end before Orcagna's polyptych was set upon the altar of the [Strozzi] chapel in 1357"; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 47.

- [19] In all three panels, the floriated motifs incised in the halos stand out against the granulated ground. Analyzing this decoration, Erling S. Skaug observed that in the London–Munich panel “the small four-point punch rosetta has been used not for granulation but as an independent motif. The same effect is to be found in the Washington tabernacle. It remains to be proved,” he added cautiously, “that this rare feature in Nardo’s tooling habits actually connects these works in time, but the possibility deserves attention.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178.
- [20] On the various techniques of gold tooling, see Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:62–66.
- [21] “Re-worked tooling,” explained Erling S. Skaug, “is...in the Stockholm [Nationalmuseum, no. 2259], Prague and New Haven [Yale University Art Gallery, nos. 1971.13–14] panels mainly confined to the addition of a blunt point in the centers of medium-size six-petalled motifs. In halo and frame borders of the Washington and London–Munich panels, however, re-working even of medium-size circle motifs by blunt point inside frequently occurs.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178 n. 18.
- [22] Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294–295, registered the presence of fabrics decorated with motifs very similar to those of the gold-embroidered brocade of the child in the Washington triptych, in the polyptych now at Bojnice, and in the Madonna and Child with Saints in the Brooklyn Museum. For this latter panel—identifiable, according to Millard Meiss’s plausible proposal, with the altarpiece formerly in the office of the Gabella de’ Contratti in Florence and according to a seventeenth-century source signed and dated 1356—see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 67–69; and Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 15 n. 15. See also Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1932), 26:39; and Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 58.
- [23] These characteristics are fully manifest in the two triptychs dated 1365 in the Galleria dell’Accademia and Museo di Santa Croce. See Richard Offner, *A*

*Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 85–96 (as “Following of Nardo di Cione”); Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 182–191; and Angelo Tartuferi, in *Angeli, santi e demoni: Otto capolavori restaurati; Santa Croce quaranta anni dopo (1966–2006)*, Problemi di conservazione e restauro, ed. Marco Ciatti, Cecilia Frosinini, and Chiara Rossi Scarzanella (Florence, 2006), 111–112.

[24] See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 75–78. Giovanni di Bartolo Steccuti, who had patronage of the chapel, is known to have died in 1360 and was buried there. Among the frescoes in question, the figure of Saint John the Evangelist (see Offner 1960, pl. XXIX) offers interesting affinities with the same saint in the Washington triptych.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The triptych including this work, *Madonna and Child, with the Man of Sorrows* [middle panel], and *Saint Peter* [left panel] is one of the few early Italian works in the collection that has not been cradled. The wooden support of the central panel is vertically grained. A knotty section of the left side of the panel was replaced by the insertion from the front side of eleven rectangular blocks of wood, before the application of the cloth interleaf and the gesso layer. The frame and base of the triptych are original. The inscription is on a horizontally grained piece of wood that was set into the base. The wings are formed of single boards with vertical grain; it is unclear whether the spiral colonnettes by which they are joined to the main panel are original—repaired and regilded—or modern. The back of the wings are covered by paint imitating porphyry, with an ornamental decoration at the center that feigns the effect of inlaid work [fig. 1].

The figures and some of the drapery folds were delineated with incised lines. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns reveals underdrawing and hatchmarking, which is more prevalent in the Madonna and Child than in Saint John and Saint Peter.[1] The areas of flesh were prepared with a green underpaint, which was not modeled. Discrete paint strokes are visible in the clothing, but the paint is well blended in the flesh tones. Mordant gilding was used to form the gold decorative borders of the Virgin’s and saints’ robes. The lining of the Madonna’s

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robe was originally brocade, probably with silver gilding and green paint.[2] Punched designs decorate the figures' halos, the border of each panel, the brocade swaddling cloth, the carpet, and the gable.

The central panel has a slight convex warp. Probably in an effort to flatten the wood, the back of the panel was scored from the top right corner approximately to the center, at an angle that follows the wood grain. The back of the panel is covered by a layer of modern reddish brown pigment. The base, including the area around the blue paint of the inscription, has been regilded; the upper frame members retain their original gilding, which has been locally repaired. The painted surface is generally very well preserved. There is inpainting in the bust of the Man of Sorrows, in the gable trefoil, and in Christ's swaddling cloth. The brocade lining of the Madonna's robe has been overpainted. The painting was treated by Stephen Pichetto in 1937 and again by Mario Modestini in 1955.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with J and K astronomy filters.
  - [2] The NGA scientific research department performed x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Silver and elements associated with green and blue pigments were found (see report dated December 22, 2010, in NGA conservation files).
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## PROVENANCE

Gustav Adolf Wilhelm von Ingenheim [1789-1855], who acquired it in the first half of the nineteenth century, probably in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> Ingenheim family, Schloss Reisewitz, Silesia; sold 1922 to (A.S. Drey, Munich); sold 1923 to Henry Goldman [1856-1937], New York;<sup>[2]</sup> sold January 1937 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[3]</sup> sold 1937 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[4]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] According to Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. The Fourteenth Century*, Section IV, Vol. II, Nardo di Cione, New York, 1960: 24), who obtained the information from Dr. Manfred Graf von Ingenheim, a descendant of the collector, Count von Ingenheim “had acquired some of his paintings during his stay in Italy (1820–1840), and had received others as gifts from the king of Prussia.” Indeed, the center panel of the National Gallery’s triptych has a label on the reverse that reads, “Kaiser Friedrich Palais / Zimmer No. 251 / Lfde No. 39,” but the painting has not yet been located in an early catalogue of the Prussian royal collections. According to a contemporary report (Carl August Böttiger, “Gemäldesammlung des Grafen von Ingenheim.” *Artistisches Notizenblatt* [appendix to *Abend Zeitung*] 7 [1927]: 26-28), by 1827 the count had no fewer than seventy-eight select Italian Old Masters (“auserwählte Stücke italienischer Meister”) in his collection, which at that time was housed in Munich but was about to be transferred to Paris. Carl August Böttiger, who quotes the collector’s words, claims these paintings were purchased in Italy in the years 1816-1817 and 1822-1824. [2] Offner 1960, 24. [3] Letter, Henry Goldman to Duveen Brothers, 5 January 1937; copy in NGA curatorial files. Goldman confirms the sale to the company of nine paintings and one sculpture; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 312, box 457, folder 4. [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, National Gallery of Art, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979, 1:342.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

2008 L’eredità di Giotto. Arte a Firenze 1340-1375, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, 2008, no. 36, repro.

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Nardo di Cione  
Florentine, active from c. 1340; died 1365/1366

## *Saint Peter [left panel]*

c. 1360

tempera on panel

painted surface: 45.1 × 12.5 cm (17 3/4 × 4 15/16 in.)

overall: 49 × 16.9 × 1.8 cm (19 5/16 × 6 5/8 × 11/16 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.261.a

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### ENTRY

This panel is part of a portable triptych in the form of a tabernacle with gabled central panel and closing shutters that was clearly intended for private devotion. The external decoration of the lateral panels is purely ornamental, conforming to Tuscan tradition [fig. 1].<sup>[1]</sup> When the shutters are opened, the composition is more unusual, since the central image of the Madonna bearing the child in her arms (*Madonna and Child, with the Man of Sorrows [middle panel]*)<sup>[2]</sup> is presented as a three-quarter-length standing figure, whereas the two saints by whom she is flanked (this panel and *Saint John the Evangelist [right panel]*) are full length. This combination, found in some cases in Sienese Trecento art,<sup>[3]</sup> is rare in Florentine painting. It is seen in some works of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) dating to the years 1335–1340.<sup>[4]</sup> The presence of the Man of Sorrows in the trefoil at the top of the tabernacle is also very uncommon.<sup>[5]</sup>

On publishing the painting with an attribution to Nardo di Cione (which is unanimously accepted),<sup>[6]</sup> Richard Offner (1924) noted its affinities with the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella in Florence. He considered it to have been executed by the mid-1350s, among other reasons because he detected in it vivid reminiscences of Bernardo Daddi, an artist who had died in 1348.<sup>[7]</sup> Later, in the volume of the *Corpus of Florentine Painting* dedicated to Nardo, Offner seems to have preferred an earlier dating, c. 1345–1350.<sup>[8]</sup> In the National Gallery of Art catalogs, without any convincing motivation, the tabernacle was invariably dated to c. 1360, a view accepted by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), Andrew Ladis (1982), Serena Skerl Del Conte (1995), John O. Hand (2004), and Federica Baldini (2008).<sup>[9]</sup> A dating to the 1350s was proposed, in turn, by Gyorgy

Gommosi (1927–1928), Hans Dietrich Gronau (1937), Barbara Klesse (1967), Olga Pujmanova (1984), and Stefano Petrocchi (1997).[10] Erling S. Skaug (1994), Gert Kreytenberg (1996, 2000), and Angelo Tartuferi (2001) have preferred a relatively late dating, placing the small triptych after 1360, in the last years of the artist's life.[11]

In his remarkable analysis of the triptych, then in the Goldman collection, Offner did not disguise his great admiration for this painting: he praised it for the “gemlike solidity” of its colors, the “introspection, greater warmth and simpler humanity” of its protagonists, and in particular the “passionate tenderness” of Mary's face [fig. 2].[12] Offner saw in this triptych an expression of the “lyrical rumination” that distinguished Nardo's work as a whole.[13] He also praised the finished workmanship of its technique, “in which sharpness and honesty of execution become a kind of preciousness.”[14] Indeed, the present-day observer cannot but be enchanted by the extreme accomplishment of its execution, which its exceptionally fine state allows us to appreciate fully. We may observe, for example, such details as the exquisite painting of the child's transparent, almost invisible, close-fitting shirt, revealing the delicacy of the small body below it; or that of the silky beard of Saint John [fig. 3] that overlaps the dense folds of his mantle; or the naturalness with which Mary's hands support the child, their tapering fingers penetrating the folds of the gold-embroidered brocade that envelops the lower limbs of the infant Jesus.

Yet, in spite of its excellent condition and extremely high level of quality, the former Goldman triptych now in the National Gallery of Art does not seem to have particularly drawn the attention of scholars in the half century since Offner wrote his appreciative essay. The reason for this can perhaps be found in its extremely simple and clear composition and its stylistic character so manifestly Nardesque that it cannot leave any doubts about its authorship. If any doubts persist, they concern not the triptych's attribution but its date. Yet the chronology of the apparently rather brief artistic trajectory of Nardo di Cione is a very intricate question and, after Offner, few other scholars have attempted to tackle it. Our only secure points of reference for ordering Nardo's works are the triptychs dated 1365 and the probable date of 1356–1357 for the frescoes in the Strozzi Chapel. On this basis it can be maintained with some confidence that, as Offner astutely observed, the execution of the Gallery painting must be situated closer to the Strozzi frescoes, even though it is difficult to establish whether it should precede or postdate them. In the chronological reconstruction of Nardo's career proposed in

Offner's monograph dedicated to the artist (1960), the triptych was placed in a group of paintings that also included the triptych formed by *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the laterals in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich,[15] another triptych now in the National Gallery in London,[16] and the polyptych in Bojnice Castle (Slovakia).[17] Though none of these paintings are dated, they do seem to anticipate problems that the artist would successfully resolve in the mural cycle in the Strozzi Chapel.[18] Yet some clues perhaps suggest a slightly later date for the painting discussed here.

In the London Coronation, the artist does not appear to be interested in placing his figures in a three-dimensional space: Jesus and his mother sit on a virtually invisible throne, and, both by their position in profile and by the preference shown for wide expanses of color, testify to the artist's wish to reduce the plasticity of forms to the surface plane. In the two groups of five saints of the laterals now in Munich, the regilding of parts of the ground and the retouching of the draperies have altered the paintings' original appearance, but the soft modeling of the faces, the delicate tonal passages that define the strongly simplified forms, and the decoration of the halos [19] seem to confirm the common origin of the three panels and their relatively precocious date.

An aura of grandeur is conferred on the polyptych now in Bojnice by its relatively squat and ponderously solemn figures who yet seem more free in their movements, and who wear mantles constructed of deep and broad folds [fig. 4]. Here, too, the artist dispenses with an architectural throne (Mary's seat is created by a sumptuously embroidered gold cloth, on which the various planes are suggested by nothing more than the shifting intensity of light), but—in contrast to the panels in Munich—he accentuates the plasticity of the bodies in various ways. The saints are mainly presented frontally, but the chiaroscuro is denser and the expressive power of their gestures is heightened by their foreshortened arms, which seem to project outward from the surface plane of the painting towards the spectator. The precious brocaded stuffs of some of the female saints' garments here are no longer surface planes, as in the Saint Julian in the Alte Pinakothek, but instead follow the volumetric substance of the forms: they not only envelop but also model the bodies. In the halos of this polyptych, the incised foliated motifs are largely replaced by punch marks, although these are made to stand out against the granulated ground, as in the halos in the triptych now divided between London and Munich.[20] The same kind of gold tooling recurs in the triptych discussed here, although here the decoration impressed in the gold ground consists exclusively of

punched motifs, in part reworked.[21]

Aspects of the gold tooling and of the ornamental motifs of the gilded stuff that envelops the child underline the Washington triptych's affinity with the Bojnice polyptych and the Madonna and Child in the Brooklyn Museum in New York.[22] Yet several features of our painting reveal a change of direction in Nardo's style. We may note, for instance, the more slender proportions of the figures and the tendency to give an almost geometrical regularity to the drapery folds, which here assume angular forms and at times brusquely interrupt with sudden projections the placid fluidity of the contours. Moreover, the rather frowning seriousness of the faces of the two saints, modeled with more marked chiaroscuro and few but deep wrinkles, or their thick hair and wiry-looking beards [fig. 5],[23] seem more in keeping with the paintings of Nardo's full maturity than with those hitherto cited or with the murals in the Strozzi Chapel. In the Goldman Madonna, in short, Nardo, without abandoning the grace and delicacy of his previous works, begins to draw close to the severe essentiality of form pursued by his brother Andrea until the mid-1350s. Similar developments can be observed in his triptych now in the National Gallery in London, or the frescoes in the Cappella di Sant'Anna in the cloister (Chiostro dei Morti) at Santa Maria Novella [24]—that is, in works probably dating to the early 1360s, but at any rate earlier than the two altarpieces dated 1365.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



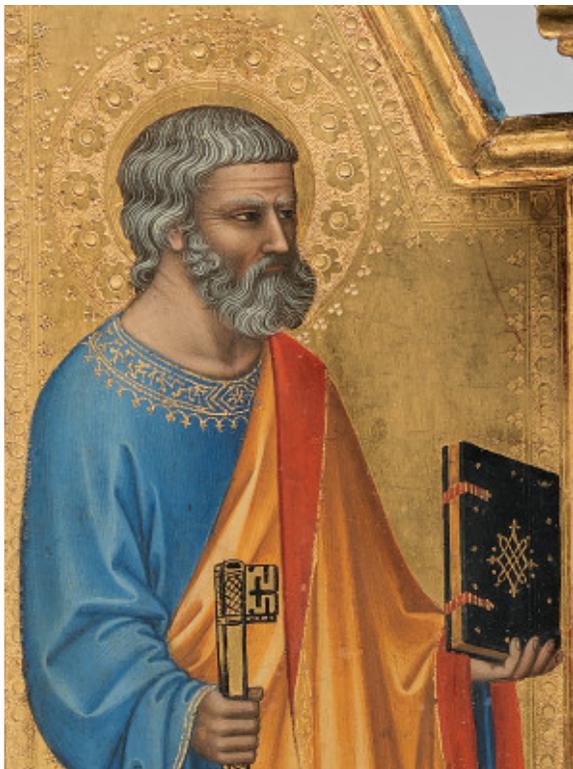
**fig. 2** Detail of Mary, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint John, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 4** Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child*, tempera on panel, Bojnice Castle, Slovakia



**fig. 5** Detail of Saint Peter, Nardo di Cione, *Madonna and Child, with Saints Peter and John the Evangelist, and Man of Sorrows*, c. 1360, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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## NOTES

- [1] Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), figs. 40–41, 68 n. 76, cited several other triptychs similarly decorated.
- [2] The iconographic type of the standing Madonna and Child can be traced back to the Byzantine *Hodegetria*. It began to spread in central Italy only in the late thirteenth century, probably through the influence of French Gothic sculpture, first in the sculpture of Giovanni Pisano and other Siennese and Pisan masters and then in painting. Cf. Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 42; Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York,

1954), 119, 147.

- [3] The best known example of the combination of the three-quarter Madonna with full-length saints in the laterals is Duccio's triptych in the National Gallery in London (no. 566), but it is also found in a polyptych by Luca di Tommè in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (no. 586), in which the two saints that flank the Virgin are three-quarter length, whereas the other saints on the outer sides of the polyptych are full length.
- [4] The paintings by Bernardo Daddi in question are the triptych in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Florence; the other dismantled triptych of identical composition now divided between the Pinacoteca Vaticana (no. 174) and the Kunstmuseum in Bern (no. 880); and a third similar triptych, which entered the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in recent years (no. 93.PB.16). Cf. Richard Offner and Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 4, *Bernardo Daddi, His Shop and Following*, new ed. (Florence, 1991), 191–200; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), 99–103; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 574–578.
- [5] As Richard Offner noted, this iconographic motif normally appears in the central zone of the predella and not in the gable of altarpieces. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 24.
- [6] The panel, it seems, had entered the Goldman collection as a work of Orcagna; see Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 99. Subsequently, the attribution to Orcagna was reaffirmed in a number of manuscript expertises by leading art historians of the period, of which one was dated 1938 and signed by Adolfo Venturi, while Giuseppe Fiocco proposed an improbable attribution to Jacopo di Cione (Florentine, c. 1340 - c. 1400?) in another of these testimonials; see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:342. Copies of the expertises are in NGA curatorial files.
- [7] "The Goldman Virgin," Richard Offner wrote, "stands even closer [than the *Madonna with Child and Saints* now in the Brooklyn Museum] to the female figures in the Strozzi Chapel Paradise. The lurking movement in her easy posture, the slight yielding tilt of her head, its mould, the hair, the flat nose, the dainty budded lips and above them a sharp caret joined by two parallels to the nostrils, will be found again and again there." Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in*

*America* 12 (1924): 111. In another passage, the same scholar (on page 106) observed that, in spite of their affinities, “even Daddi’s Madonnas, of all Florentine Madonnas most closely related to those of Nardo, seem to live in a far different world.”

- [8] Richard Offner proposed this time frame for such works as *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the polyptych in Bojnice, and the triptych in the National Gallery in London. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), ix–x n. 6. See below notes 9–11.
- [9] National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1941), 154, 241; National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 138; National Gallery of Art, *Book of Illustrations* (Washington, DC, 1942), 157, 247; National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1959), 21; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 95; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 34, fig. 75; Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO, 1982), 75; Serena Skerl Del Conte, *Antonio Veneziano e Taddeo Gaddi nella Toscana della seconda metà del Trecento* (Pasian di Prato, Udine, 1995), 108; John Hand, *National Gallery of Art: Master Paintings from the Collection* (New York, 2004), 13; Federica Baldini, in *L’eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 16, 168, 169.
- [10] Gyorgy Gommosi, “Nardo di Cione és a Szépmvészeti Múzeum somzée-féle Madaonnaja,” *Az Országos Magyar Szépmvészeti Múzeum: Évkönyvei* 5 (1927–1928): 16; Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 86 n. 152, 89; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294, 371; Olga Pujmanová, in *Národní galerie v Praze*, ed. Jiřího Kotalíka (Prague, 1984), 52; Stefano Petrocchi, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:650.
- [11] Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–178; Gert Kreytenberg, “Cione,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 7:336; Angelo Tartuferi, *Dal Duecento agli Orcagna: Il restauro della Madonna col Bambino di ignoto fiorentino del Duecento e del trittico di Santa Maria degli Angeli di Nardo di Cione* (Livorno, 2001), 68, 75 n. 32.
- [12] Richard Offner, “Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman

Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105; Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 103, 104.

- [13] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 106.
- [14] Richard Offner, "Nardo di Cione and His Triptych in the Goldman Collection," *Art in America* 12 (1924): 105.
- [15] Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Ionides Collection, no. C.A.I. 104; Alte Pinakothek, Munich, nos. W.A.F. 1027, 1028. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 13–22.
- [16] London, National Gallery, no. 581. Richard Offner considered this panel as "representative of an era...of progressive preparation for the Strozzi cycle," with a dating c. 1345–1350. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), v (for quote), x, 37–40. More recently, Dillian Gordon (1985), developing Offner's hypothesis that Bartolomeo di Lapo Benini was the donor of the altarpiece (which is known to have come from the Florentine church of San Giovanni Battista della Calza), suggested a very late date of execution, c. 1365. She based her proposal also on Erling S. Skaug's (1983) observations on the punch marks used to decorate the halos in the panel. On the basis of its stylistic characteristics, however, the painting would better fit into Nardo's chronology around 1360, in my opinion. Cf. Dillian Gordon, "Nardo di Cione's Altarpiece: Three Saints," *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 9 (1985): 21–23; Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:176–179.
- [17] The polyptych, acquired in the late nineteenth century for the Pálffy Castle in Bojnice (now Slovakia), was transferred to the Prague National Gallery (nos. O 2376–2385) after the Second World War; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 33–35. Subsequently, it passed to the National Gallery in Bratislava and from there was restored to its original seat at Bojnice.
- [18] "Nardo's frescoes," Richard Offner concluded, "were started soon after the tabernacle [Orcagna's monumental work executed for the church of Orsanmichele starting in 1352] was begun, and were very probably brought to an end before Orcagna's polyptych was set upon the altar of the [Strozzi] chapel in 1357"; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 47.
- [19] In all three panels, the floriated motifs incised in the halos stand out against

the granulated ground. Analyzing this decoration, Erling S. Skaug observed that in the London–Munich panel “the small four-point punch rosetta has been used not for granulation but as an independent motif. The same effect is to be found in the Washington tabernacle. It remains to be proved,” he added cautiously, “that this rare feature in Nardo’s tooling habits actually connects these works in time, but the possibility deserves attention.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178.

[20] On the various techniques of gold tooling, see Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:62–66.

[21] “Re-worked tooling,” explained Erling S. Skaug, “is...in the Stockholm [Nationalmuseum, no. 2259], Prague and New Haven [Yale University Art Gallery, nos. 1971.13–14] panels mainly confined to the addition of a blunt point in the centers of medium-size six-petalled motifs. In halo and frame borders of the Washington and London–Munich panels, however, re-working even of medium-size circle motifs by blunt point inside frequently occurs.” Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:178 n. 18.

[22] Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 294–295, registered the presence of fabrics decorated with motifs very similar to those of the gold-embroidered brocade of the child in the Washington triptych, in the polyptych now at Bojnice, and in the Madonna and Child with Saints in the Brooklyn Museum. For this latter panel—identifiable, according to Millard Meiss’s plausible proposal, with the altarpiece formerly in the office of the Gabella de’ Contratti in Florence and according to a seventeenth-century source signed and dated 1356—see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 67–69; and Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 15 n. 15. See also Hans Dietrich Gronau, “Nardo di Cione,” in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1932), 26:39; and Hans Dietrich Gronau, *Andrea Orcagna und Nardo di Cione: Eine stilgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1937), 58.

[23] These characteristics are fully manifest in the two triptychs dated 1365 in the Galleria dell’Accademia and Museo di Santa Croce. See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth*

*Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 85–96 (as “Following of Nardo di Cione”); Angelo Tartuferi, in *Dipinti*, vol. 1, *Dal Duecento a Giovanni da Milano*, Cataloghi della Galleria dell’Accademia di Firenze, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2003), 182–191; and Angelo Tartuferi, in *Angeli, santi e demoni: Otto capolavori restaurati; Santa Croce quaranta anni dopo (1966–2006)*, Problemi di conservazione e restauro, ed. Marco Ciatti, Cecilia Frosinini, and Chiara Rossi Scarzanella (Florence, 2006), 111–112.

[24] See Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 4, vol. 2, *Nardo di Cione* (New York, 1960), 75–78. Giovanni di Bartolo Steccuti, who had patronage of the chapel, is known to have died in 1360 and was buried there. Among the frescoes in question, the figure of Saint John the Evangelist (see Offner 1960, pl. XXIX) offers interesting affinities with the same saint in the Washington triptych.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The triptych including this work, *Madonna and Child, with the Man of Sorrows* [middle panel], and *Saint John the Evangelist* [right panel] is one of the few early Italian panels in the collection that has not been cradled. The wooden support of the central panel is vertically grained. A knotty section of the left side of the panel was replaced by the insertion from the front side of eleven rectangular blocks of wood, before the application of the cloth interleaf and the gesso layer. The frame and base of the triptych are original. The inscription is on a horizontally grained piece of wood that was set into the base. The wings are formed of single boards with vertical grain; it is unclear whether the spiral colonnettes by which they are joined to the main panel are original—repaired and regilded—or modern. The back of the wings are covered by paint imitating porphyry, with an ornamental decoration at the center that feigns the effect of inlaid work [fig. 1].

The figures and some of the drapery folds were delineated with incised lines. Infrared reflectography at 1.1 to 2.5 microns reveals underdrawing and hatchmarking, which is more prevalent in the Madonna and Child than in Saint John and Saint Peter.[1] The areas of flesh were prepared with a green underpaint, which was not modeled. Discrete paint strokes are visible in the clothing, but the paint is well blended in the flesh tones. Mordant gilding was used to form the gold decorative borders of the Virgin’s and saints’ robes. The lining of the Madonna’s robe was originally brocade, probably with silver gilding and green

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paint.[2] Punched designs decorate the figures' halos, the border of each panel, the brocade swaddling cloth, the carpet, and the gable.

The central panel has a slight convex warp. Probably in an effort to flatten the wood, the back of the panel was scored from the top right corner approximately to the center, at an angle that follows the wood grain. The back of the panel is covered by a layer of modern reddish brown pigment. The base, including the area around the blue paint of the inscription, has been regilded; the upper frame members retain their original gilding, which has been locally repaired. The painted surface is generally very well preserved. There is inpainting in the bust of the Man of Sorrows, in the gable trefoil, and in Christ's swaddling cloth. The brocade lining of the Madonna's robe has been overpainted. The painting was treated by Stephen Pichetto in 1937 and again by Mario Modestini in 1955.

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Exterior view of portable triptych with wings closed, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with J and K astronomy filters.
  - [2] The NGA scientific research department performed x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Silver and elements associated with green and blue pigments were found (see report dated December 22, 2010, in NGA conservation files).
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## PROVENANCE

Gustav Adolf Wilhelm von Ingenheim [1789-1855], who acquired it in the first half of the nineteenth century, probably in Italy;<sup>[1]</sup> Ingenheim family, Schloss Reisewitz, Silesia; sold 1922 to (A.S. Drey, Munich); sold 1923 to Henry Goldman [1856-1937], New York;<sup>[2]</sup> sold January 1937 to (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris);<sup>[3]</sup> sold 1937 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[4]</sup> gift 1939 to NGA. [1] According to Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. The Fourteenth Century*, Section IV, Vol. II, Nardo di Cione, New York, 1960: 24), who obtained the information from Dr. Manfred Graf von Ingenheim, a descendant of the collector, Count von Ingenheim “had acquired some of his paintings during his stay in Italy (1820–1840), and had received others as gifts from the king of Prussia.” Indeed, the center panel of the National Gallery’s triptych has a label on the reverse that reads, “Kaiser Friedrich Palais / Zimmer No. 251 / Lfde No. 39,” but the painting has not yet been located in an early catalogue of the Prussian royal collections. According to a contemporary report (Carl August Böttiger, “Gemäldesammlung des Grafen von Ingenheim.” *Artistisches Notizenblatt* [appendix to *Abend Zeitung*] 7 [1927]: 26-28), by 1827 the count had no fewer than seventy-eight select Italian Old Masters (“auserwählte Stücke italienischer Meister”) in his collection, which at that time was housed in Munich but was about to be transferred to Paris. Böttiger, who quotes the collector’s words, claims these paintings were purchased in Italy in the years 1816-1817 and 1822-1824. [2] Offner 1960, 24. [3] Letter, Henry Goldman to Duveen Brothers, 5 January 1937; copy in NGA curatorial files. Goldman confirms the sale to the company of nine paintings and one sculpture; Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 312, box 457, folder 4. [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, National Gallery of Art, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979, 1:342.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

2008 L’eredità di Giotto. Arte a Firenze 1340-1375, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, 2008, no. 36, repro.

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# Paolo Veneziano

Also known as

Martino da Venezia, Paolo di

Venetian, active 1333 - 1358

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Son of Martino and brother of Marco, both painters but whose works are unknown to us, Paolo was the most prominent painter of his native city between the second and third quarter of the fourteenth century. The fame of his workshop is documented by prestigious commissions not only for the most important churches of Venice and of the Venetian mainland territories but also for churches in Bologna and for towns on the Adriatic coast (both Italian and Dalmatian). His style left a lasting influence on painting in these areas, thanks also to the activity of his three sons, Giovanni, Luca, and Marco, who continued to disseminate his style after the master's death. Paolo's date of birth is unknown, but since his sons Giovanni and Luca signed, together with their father, the *Pala feriale* (the painted wooden cover of the *Pala d'oro*) of the high altar of San Marco in Venice in 1345 and must have been adults by then, it may be assumed he was born in the last years of the thirteenth century and that his career as a painter began at least in the second decade of the fourteenth century. However, not all art historians agree with this conclusion, not least because Paolo's earliest securely dated work, the altarpiece with the *Dormitio Virginis* now in the Museo Civici in Vicenza, dates as late as 1333. The problem of the painter's initial phase has thus been the subject of conflicting hypotheses. Nonetheless, it seems plausible to ascribe to his hand the figures of donors painted at the foot of the polychrome wooden altarpiece-relief of Saint Donatus in the church dedicated to him in Murano (Santi Maria e Donato), accompanied by the date 1310. The five stories of the Virgin in the Musei Civici in Pesaro must have been executed a few years later; here the artist faithfully followed the corresponding compositions of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) in the Arena Chapel in Padua, although adjusting his style to local artistic idioms. In particular he follows in the footsteps of the anonymous Master of the Washington Coronation (Italian, active first third 14th century), an artist who some authorities suggest could have been his father.

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The frescoes recently attributed to Paolo in the church of San Fermo in Verona<sup>[1]</sup> probably date to the final years of the second decade of the fourteenth century. The Vicenza triptych of 1333 reveals a considerable advance over these frescoes in the refinement of its expressive means. This circumstance has suggested to some the possibility that the artist had journeyed in the intervening years to Byzantium, but the innovative features of the work reflect not so much the influence of the Palaeologan Renaissance as Paolo's efforts to enrich the traditional figurative formulae of the city of the lagoon with elements derived from the transalpine Gothic.

The following stages of his career are punctuated with only a few securely dated works. They include—apart from the *Pala feriale*—the *Madonna and Child* dated 1340 in the Crespi Collection in Milan; that of 1347, now in the Museo Diocesano at Cesena but with a provenance from Carpineta; the polyptych in the church of San Martino at Chioggia, of 1349; the polyptych in the Louvre, Paris, of 1354; and that of the church of San Giorgio at Pirano d'Istria of the following year, a panel now on deposit at the Museo di Palazzo Venezia in Rome. *The Coronation of the Virgin* in the Frick Collection in New York, signed by Paolo together with his son Giovanni and dated 1358, originally must have formed the centerpiece of a polyptych whose laterals are now in the Museo Civico at San Severino Marche. This imposing multipart altarpiece was probably one of the last works of the master, who was already reported dead in 1362.

[1] See Andrea De Marchi, "La prima decorazione della chiesa francescana," in *I santi Fermo e Rustico: Un culto e una chiesa, per il xvii centenario del loro martirio (304–2004)*, ed. Paolo Golinelli and Caterina Gemma Brenzoni (Verona, 2004), 205–211. De Marchi dated Paolo's intervention in the church to the start of the third decade, but it is possible to push this date back to 1319–1320, i.e., to the years in which his local associate in the Veronese enterprise, the Master of the Redeemer, was at work.

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Paolo Veneziano  
Venetian, active 1333 - 1358

## *The Crucifixion*

c. 1340/1345

tempera on panel

painted surface: 31 x 38 cm (12 3/16 x 14 15/16 in.)

overall: 33.85 x 41.1 cm (13 5/16 x 16 3/16 in.)

framed: 37.2 x 45.4 x 5.7 cm (14 5/8 x 17 7/8 x 2 1/4 in.)

Inscription: upper center: I.N.R.I. (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.143

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### ENTRY

The Crucifixion is enacted in front of the crenellated wall of the city of Jerusalem. The cross is flanked above by four fluttering angels, three of whom collect the blood that flows from the wounds in Christ's hands and side. To the left of the Cross, the Holy Women, a compact group, support the swooning Mary, mother of Jesus. Mary Magdalene kneels at the foot of the Cross, caressing Christ's feet with her hands. To the right of the Cross stand Saint John the Evangelist, in profile, and a group of soldiers with the centurion in the middle, distinguished by a halo, who recognizes the Son of God in Jesus.[1] The painting's small size, arched shape, and composition suggest that it originally belonged to a portable altarpiece, of which it formed the central panel's upper tier [fig. 1].[2] The hypothesis was first advanced by Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà (originally drafted 1939, published 1969), who based it on stylistic, compositional, and iconographic affinities between a small triptych now in the Galleria Nazionale of Parma [fig. 2] and a series of small panels now in the Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts [fig. 3]. Sandberg-Vavalà recognized the latter as fragments of the shutters of a triptych [fig. 4] very similar to the one now in

Parma.[3] Thus, as in the example at Parma, the dismantled triptych would have represented on the exterior Saints Christopher and Blaise ([fig. 1], panels a and e). When opened, the left shutter would have shown Saints Michael Archangel and John the Baptist at the top, and in the lower register Saints George and Francis; the Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene would have appeared at the top of the right shutter, and below it Saints Barbara and Anthony Abbot (in the Parma triptych, the place of Saint Barbara is taken by Saint Ursula). The Washington Crucifixion therefore may be assumed to have formed part of the centerpiece of a triptych, probably placed, as at Parma, above an image of the Madonna and Child. The measurements of the fragments[4] would seem to confirm that the painting in the National Gallery of Art and the fragments in Worcester belonged to the same altarpiece. Other scholars later independently proposed the same conjectural reconstruction of the complex.[5] It was further developed by the suggestion that it could be completed with the triangular gable panels depicting the Angel of the Annunciation and the Virgin Annunciate now in the J. Paul Getty Museum at Los Angeles [fig. 5],[6] and with the Madonna and Child now in the Musée du Petit Palais at Avignon [fig. 6],[7] proposed as the lower register of the central panel of which our Crucifixion formed the upper part. Not all authorities have found these proposals convincing, and some have rejected them,[8] but at least the common origin of the panels now in Avignon, Washington, and Worcester seems quite plausible.[9]

As for the hand that painted the panel in Washington, apart from the first tentative attributions to Nicoletto Semitecolo [10] and to Lorenzo Veneziano (an artist who belonged to a younger generation and was probably a disciple of Paolo Veneziano, but someone to whom early twentieth-century art historians frequently attributed Paolo's paintings) [11] made during the time when it was still on the art market, Paolo's authorship is now almost universally recognized.[12] Uncertainties concern not so much the painting's attribution as its chronological position in Paolo's oeuvre. This is variously assessed depending on the chronological sequence of the master's paintings proposed in the literature. Roberto Longhi, followed by many, argued for an execution toward the middle of the fourteenth century,[13] but other art historians have preferred an earlier dating, proposing the 1340s,[14] the years around 1340,[15] the fourth,[16] or even the third decade.[17] In the absence of secure points of reference, it may be assumed that the panel in the National Gallery of Art should precede the polyptych with the Crucifixion and saints now in the Museum of the Cathedral of Rab, or the painted cross in the church of Saint Dominic at Dubrovnik (both in Croatia), works generally and convincingly

dated after the mid-fourteenth century.[18] In their conspicuous elongation of the figures' proportions, their more realistic treatment of the anatomy of the body of Christ, their measured language of gesture and less dynamic linear rhythms, these works have undeniable affinities with paintings securely dated to the artist's last creative phase. On the other hand, a *terminus post quem* for our painting can be deduced from the Crucifixion in one of the panels of polyptych no. 21 in the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice, a work that the more recent literature tends to place within or not long after the fourth decade of the fourteenth century. With its more animated and crowded composition and its more schematic description of the slender body of Christ, it can undoubtedly be assumed to belong to a phase preceding the Washington version of the subject.[19]

If, as seems to me plausible, we accept that the painting discussed here belongs to the same complex of which the fragments in the Worcester Museum and the Madonna in Avignon formed part, the scope for comparisons and for formulating more precise chronological parameters is widened. The Saint Francis of the Worcester Museum seems more slender than the corresponding image of the saint in the Museo Civico in Vicenza, dated 1333,[20] and should be later in date.

Conversely, a period of some length must have elapsed between the figure of the Baptist in the Worcester Museum and that in the polyptych in the church of San Martino at Chioggia in 1349: there, the Baptist, a very tall, aristocratic personage who turns with timorous discretion to the Christ child on his mother's knee in the central panel, reveals characteristics rather different from those of the Worcester Baptist.[21] The slight hanchement of the Worcester Saint George, holding his lance between his fingers with inimitable nonchalance, seems to repeat in a very similar way, though perhaps with an even more studied quest for elegance, the pose of another warrior saint, the Saint Theodore in the *Pala feriale* of 1343–1345.[22] As for the Madonna in Avignon, the liveliness of the Christ child's gesture, his arms outspread, and the slender figure of Mary, with her wan face and melancholic gaze, invite comparison with the panel dated 1340 in the Crespi collection in Milan and, even more persuasively, with the Madonna now in the Museo Diocesano in Cesena with a provenance from Carpineta, dated 1347.[23]

To these stylistic observations we may add some comments on the iconography and costumes worn by the figures in the panels. Bearing in mind that iconographic changes may depend on the requirements of particular patrons and that their use as criteria for dating a work of art should be evaluated with a great deal of caution, I do not think it accidental that in the Madonna of Carpineta and in Paolo's later

representations of the same subject Mary is always shown with a dress sumptuously decorated with floriated motifs in gold and that the child, instead of wearing the traditional long tunic, is represented nude (even if draped in a mantle) or is shown wearing a transparent chemise that leaves his legs exposed. This motif, of Byzantine origin, soon spread in Tuscan painting,[24] but it apparently enjoyed less success, or made less rapid headway, in northern Italy. Rare in Venetian paintings of the early fourteenth century, it is still not present in Paolo's Crespi Madonna (1340), though it appears in his later works and also in the panel of the Madonna in Avignon. The conclusion that the triptych in question might have been executed within the 1340s seems further corroborated by the costume of Saint Barbara in Worcester. Her dress is characterized by a conspicuous *manicottolo* (a long sleeve whose upper fitted part reaches down to the elbow, where it sharply widens and then hangs down in a loose flap to the mid-thigh).[25] This *dernier cri* of fourteenth-century court dress, a fashion by no means confined to ladies, appears here in a less evolved form than in the dresses that adorn the Saint Ursula of the polyptych of San Severino Marche (1358) [26] or the Dancing Salome in the mosaic of the baptistery of San Marco (c. 1350),[27] but in a far wider (and presumably later) variant than in the elegant dresses of the female saints depicted in the laterals of the triptych of Saint Clare in the Museo Civico of Trieste, executed by Paolo within the third decade.[28] From the sum of these observations, it seems possible to deduce that the triptych of which the Washington Crucifixion formed part should date to the early 1340s, soon after the triptych in the Galleria Nazionale in Parma, which it follows in composition and, in large part, iconography.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reconstruction of a portable triptych by Paolo Veneziano. Panel A: *Saint Christopher* (reverse of panel B). Panel B: a. *Angel of the Annunciation* (fig. 5); b. *Saint Michael Archangel* (fig. 3); c. *Saint John the Baptist* (fig. 3); d. *Saint George* (fig. 3); e. *Saint Francis* (fig. 3). Panel C: a. *The Crucifixion*; b. *Madonna and Child* (fig. 6). Panel D: a. *Virgin Annunciate* (fig. 5); b. *The Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene* (fig. 3); c. *Saint Barbara* (fig. 3); d. *Saint Anthony Abbot* (fig. 3). Panel E: *Saint Blaise* (reverse of panel D)



**fig. 2** Paolo Veneziano, *Portable Triptych*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale, Parma



**fig. 3** Paolo Veneziano, *Panels from the Wings of a Triptych*, c. 1340/1345, tempera on panel, Worcester Art Museum (MA), Museum Purchase, 1927.19. Image © Worcester Art Museum



**fig. 4** Saints Christopher and Blaise on the reverse of the lateral panels of Paolo Veneziano, *Portable Triptych*, c. 1335, tempera on panel, Galleria Nazionale, Parma



**fig. 5** Paolo Veneziano, *The Annunciation*, c. 1340/1345, tempera on panel, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. Image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program



**fig. 6** Paolo Veneziano, *Madonna and Child*, c. 1340/1345, tempera on panel, Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon. Image © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY. Photographer: Rene-Gabrile Ojeda

**RECONSTRUCTION**

Click on any panel in the altarpiece reconstruction below to see an enlarged version of the image. Color reproductions in the reconstruction indicate panels in the National Gallery of Art collection.



Reconstruction of a portable triptych by Paolo Veneziano

Panel A

*Saint Christopher* (reverse of panel B)

Panel B

a. *Angel of the Annunciation* (Entry fig. 5)

b. *Saint Michael Archangel* (Entry fig. 3)

c. *Saint John the Baptist* (Entry fig. 3)

d. *Saint George* (Entry fig. 3)

e. *Saint Francis* (Entry fig. 3)

Panel C

a. *The Crucifixion*

b. *Madonna and Child* (Entry fig. 6)

Panel D

a. *Virgin Annunciate* (Entry fig. 5)

b. *The Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene* (Entry fig. 3)

c. *Saint Barbara* (Entry fig. 3)

d. *Saint Anthony Abbot* (Entry fig. 3)

*The Crucifixion*

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Panel E  
*Saint Blaise* (reverse of panel D)

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## NOTES

- [1] The artist follows the iconography developed after the iconoclastic period in Middle Byzantine art; it is here that such motifs as the mourning angels, the centurion (cf. Matthew 27:54), the walls of Jerusalem in the background, and the skull of Adam hidden in a fissure of the rock of Golgotha below the Cross appear for the first time; cf. Marcus Mross, "Kreuzigung Christi," in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 1995), 5:312–350. Motifs of Western origin, on the other hand, also are present in the painting: Mary Magdalene embracing the Cross, or the swooning Madonna; cf. Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona, 1929), 123–124, 148–151. On the haloed centurion, a widespread motif in Italian fourteenth-century painting, cf. Gertrud Schiller, *Ikongraphie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 2:166–167.
- [2] The relatively small dimensions of the panel and its particular format, favoring width at the expense of height, preclude the hypothesis that it formed the central gable of a polyptych. The alternative suggestion, that it might have been part of the predella of an altarpiece, would seem to be discounted by the vertical graining of the wood. For small portable triptychs in which the Crucifixion appears above the image of the Madonna and Child, cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), fig. 74, 202, 366, 524.
- [3] The article by Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà (in English) was prepared for the Worcester Art Museum Bulletin in 1939 but long remained unpublished. It was finally printed in an Italian translation by Michelangelo Muraro, as Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, "Maestro Paolo Veneziano: Suoi dipinti in America e altrove," in *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 99–101. Sandberg-Vavalà was the first to point out the close resemblances between the panel then in the Kress Collection and the corresponding scene in the small triptych of the Galleria Nazionale in Parma (no. 438), for which see Rosa D'Amico, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall'antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 44–46. More especially, she noted the virtual identity in iconography and composition between this triptych and a very similar altarpiece of which the fragments now in the Worcester Art Museum originally formed part (no. 1927.19); see Martin Davies, "Italian School," in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, vol. 1, *Text*, ed. Worcester Art Museum (Worcester, MA, 1974), 412–417. She concluded that the Crucifixion now in the National

Gallery of Art originally belonged to the same ensemble.

- [4] The dimensions of the panels with figures of saints in the Worcester Museum, cut from the shutters of a triptych, vary between 27.7 and 28.3 × 9 and 9.2 cm, while the *Ecstasy of Saint Mary Magdalene*, the only panel to preserve the entire width of the triptych's right wing, is 27.7 × 18.1 cm. Therefore, the shutters—without the upper gables, which could (on the analogy of the model in Parma) have been some 20–30 cm high—would have measured c. 56 × 18 cm; see Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), pls. 77–78. After various transfers on the Italian art market, where they were recorded at least until 1925, the seven fragments were purchased by the Worcester Museum in 1927 from the dealer Paul Bottenwieser (New York and Berlin). See Martin Davies, "Italian School," in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, vol. 1, *Text*, ed. Worcester Art Museum (Worcester, MA, 1974), 415–416.
- [5] Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 19; Michel Laclotte, "Peintures italiennes des XIVe et XVe siècles à l'Orangerie," *Arte veneta* 10 (1956): 226; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 8, fig. 10; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 156–158. Michelangelo Muraro (1969, 125) accepted the hypothesis but believed the Madonna now in Avignon to be later in date and not part of the complex. Michel Laclotte and Elisabeth Mognetti, *Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais: Peinture italienne*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1976), no. 202; and Robert Gibbs, "Paolo Veneziano," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:32, also accepted the reconstruction.
- [6] No. 87.PB.117; 22.5 × 13.5 each; see David Jaffé, *Paintings: An Illustrated Summary Catalogue of the Collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum* (Malibu, 1997), 129. The two fragments come from the Florentine collection of Charles Loeser (1864–1928). Joanna R. Dunn of the National Gallery of Art's conservation department, who has examined the two panels at my request, thinks they probably were cut down along the diagonal sides as well as on the acute-angle corners. She estimates that their original width might have been as much as 18 cm.
- [7] No. 20194; 44 × 40 cm. See Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), no. 224. The painting, first recorded in the famous Roman collection of Giampiero Campana (1808–1880) in the mid-nineteenth century, was sold in 1862, together with the entire Campana collection, to the Musée Napoléon III in Paris. It was subsequently placed on loan in the museum in Montargis, where it remained on display for almost a century before being transferred to the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon. Since the Madonna was catalogued

as a work of Ottaviano da Faenza in the Campana collection, it may be, or has been, inferred that it was originally intended for a patron in Emilia-Romagna. Cf. Roberto Longhi, *Viatico per cinque secoli di pittura veneziana* (Florence, 1946), 44–45.

- [8] Rodolfo Pallucchini (1956) doubted the reconstruction on chronological grounds, though subsequently (1964) he did not discount the possibility that the Crucifixion discussed here and the Madonna now in Avignon might have belonged to the same complex. Muraro, as we have seen, rejected this hypothesis. According to Martin Davies (1974), the various conjectural reconstructions of the complex “are unproved.” According to Filippo Pedrocco (2003), two circumstances would have precluded the reconstruction: the differences (though minimal) in measurements and the chronological disparities in style. See Rodolfo Pallucchini, “Nota per Paolo Veneziano,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Lionello Venturi*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1956), 1:135; Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 32; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 125; Martin Davies, “Italian School,” in *European Paintings in the Collection of the Worcester Art Museum*, vol. 1, *Text*, ed. Worcester Art Museum (Worcester, MA, 1974), 415; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 126, 131 n. 79.
- [9] For the problems of chronology, see below. With regard to the tiny disparity of 1.1 cm between the present width of the panels in Washington and Avignon, it should be borne in mind that the latter only partially retains its engaged frame; originally it must have been wider. The cropping of the panels now in Worcester is far more considerable, but not even their measurements contradict, in my view, the proposed reconstruction. It is difficult, however, to incorporate the gable panels in Los Angeles in the reconstruction.
- [10] See Roger Fry, “Exhibition of Pictures and the Early Venetian School at the Burlington Fine Arts Club,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 21 (1912): 47, pl. 2, and Provenance note 1.
- [11] In a handwritten expertise on the back of a photograph of the painting, Raimond van Marle declared, “No doubt it is a work of Lorenzo Veneziano.” Other expert opinions supporting an attribution of Paolo Veneziano were sent to Samuel H. Kress by Bernard Berenson, Giuseppe Fiocco, Roberto Longhi, F. Mason Perkins, Wilhelm Suida, and Adolfo Venturi. Presumably written at the same time as van Marle’s, most bear the date 1934; copies in NGA curatorial files.
- [12] The only dissenting voice was that of Edoardo Arslan (1956), who thought that the Crucifixion was a work by an assistant of Paolo’s. Edoardo Arslan, “Una nuova Madonna di Paolo Veneto,” *Commentari* 7 (1956): 21 n. 8.
- [13] Roberto Longhi, *Viatico per cinque secoli di pittura veneziana* (Florence,

1946), 45, based his proposal on the affinities he identified between the work and polyptych no. 21 of the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice—although the more recent literature no longer accepts the late dating of this polyptych—and on presumed reflections in the paintings of Vitale da Bologna in his phase around 1350. Maria Walcher Casotti, *Il Trittico di S. Chiara di Trieste e l'orientamento paleologo nell'arte di Paolo Veneziano* (Trieste, 1961), 19; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 156; Michel Laclotte and Elisabeth Mognetti, *Avignon, Musée du Petit Palais: Peinture italienne*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1976), no. 202; Hanna Kiel, “Das Polyptychon von Paolo und Giovanni Veneziano in Sanseverino Marche,” *Pantheon* 35 (1977): 107, 108 n. 8; Robert Gibbs, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:32; Cristina Guarnieri, “Per la restituzione di due croci perdute di Paolo Veneziano: Il leone marciano del Museo Correr e i dolenti della Galleria Sabauda,” in *Medioevo adriatico: Circolazione di modelli, opere, maestri*, ed. Giovanna Valenzano and Federica Toniolo (Rome, 2010), 140, 152, have all endorsed Longhi's dating.

[14] According to Francesca Flores D'Arcais (1994), the Washington Crucifixion was “forse vicina alla Pala marciana” (perhaps close to the altarpiece in San Marco), i.e., the *Pala feriale* executed in 1343–1345. Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench (2005) suggested the decade c. 1340–1350 as the most plausible period for the execution of the painting. Andrea De Marchi (2005) preferred a slightly later dating, towards the end of the 1340s. See Francesca Flores d'Arcais, “La pittura,” in *Storia di Venezia: Temi; L'Arte*, ed. Rodolfo Pallucchini, 2 vols. (Rome, 1994), 1:259; Michel Laclotte and Esther Moench, *Peinture italienne: Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon* (Paris, 2005), 172; Andrea De Marchi, “Polyptyques vénitiens: Anamnèse d'une identité méconnue,” in *Autour de Lorenzo Veneziano: Fragments de polyptyques vénitiens du XIVe siècle*, ed. Andrea De Marchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2005), 19, 20.

[15] Also supporting the dating c. 1340 given in NGA 1965 and NGA 1985 were Frankfurter 1944, Shapley 1966 and 1979, and Mori 2002. See National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 99; National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 299; Alfred M. Frankfurter, *The Kress Collection in the National Gallery* (New York, 1944), 71, 74; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 8, fig. 10; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:354–355; Francesco Mori, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:676–677.

[16] The work was dated between 1330 and 1340 by Laclotte in his first publication on the painting: Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs*

*italiens dans les musées de France* (Paris, 1956), 19; and by Grgo Gamulin, “Un crocefisso di Maestro Paolo e di altri due del Trecento,” *Arte veneta* 19 (1965): 37; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, “Venezia,” in *La Pittura nel Veneto: Il Trecento*, ed. Mauro Lucco, 2 vols. (Milan, 1992), 1:30; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, “Paolo Veneziano,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1998), 9:158; Francesca Flores d’Arcais, “Paolo Veneziano e la pittura del Trecento in Adriatico,” in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d’Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 22; Giorgio Fossaluzza, ed., *Da Paolo Veneziano a Canova: Capolavori dei musei veneti restaurati dalla Regione del Veneto 1984–2000* (Venice, 2000), 43; Angelo Loda, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d’Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 148; and Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 154. In another publication, even Andrea De Marchi (2005) seemed to accept the proposal. See Andrea De Marchi, in *Splendeurs de la peinture italienne, 1250–1510* (Paris, 2005), 32, 37.

- [17] Clara Santini, “Un episodio della pittura veneziana di primo Trecento: Il ‘Maestro dell’Incoronazione della Vergine di Washington,’” *Il Santo* 37 (1997): 144, but perhaps only by an involuntary lapsus, meaning instead to indicate the 1330s.
- [18] The altarpiece in Rab (Arbe) representing the Crucifixion flanked by six saints was thought to belong to the sixth decade by Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 50, 59; Michelangelo Muraro, *Paolo da Venezia* (Milan, 1969), 103; and Igor Fiskovi, in *Il Trecento adriatico: Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra Oriente e Occidente*, ed. Francesca Flores d’Arcais and Giovanni Gentili (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2002), 164. Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 190–191, on the other hand, proposed a slightly earlier dating, to around 1350. For the crucifix and the figures of mourners in Dubrovnik, cf. Grgo Gamulin, “Alcune proposte per Maestro Paolo,” *Emporium* 139 (1964): 154; Rodolfo Pallucchini, “Considerazioni sulla mostra ‘Paolo Veneziano e la sua cerchia’ di Zagabria,” *Arte veneta* 21 (1967): 261; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 126–127.
- [19] The polyptych, with a provenance from the Venetian church of Santa Chiara, was considered until not many years ago as indicative of Paolo’s presumed return to or reuse of Byzantine figurative models in the final phase of his career. More recently, Andrea De Marchi (1995), followed by Robert Gibbs (1996), proposed its execution, surely more correctly, around 1340. Filippo Pedrocco (2003) went further and pushed back its date to c. 1333–1336. Cf. Andrea De Marchi, “Una tavola nella Narodna Galleria di Ljubljana e una proposta per Marco di Paolo Veneziano,” in *Gotika v Sloveniji: Nastajanje kulturnega prostora med Alpami, Panonijo in Jadranom; Akti*

*mednarodnega simpozija, Ljubljana, Narodna galerija*, ed. Janez Höfler (Ljubljana, 1995), 243; Robert Gibbs, "Paolo Veneziano," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 24:32; Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 150–153.

- [20] Inv. A 157; cf. Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 142–145.
- [21] Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 180–183. The fragmentary inscription, still legible on the panel, also contains a date, usually interpreted as 1349.
- [22] Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 170–173. Commissioned in 1343, the *Pala feriale* bears not only the signatures of Paolo and of his two sons but also the date 1345.
- [23] Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 166–167, 176–177.
- [24] According to Rebecca W. Corrie, the motif alludes to the Crucifixion and to the theme of the Eucharist, but her argument does not seem entirely convincing. Rebecca W. Corrie, "Coppo di Marcovaldo's Madonna del Bordone and the Meaning of the Bare-Legged Christ Child in Siena and the East," *Gesta* 35 (1996): 43–65.
- [25] On the motif of the *manicottolo* and its significance as a clue for dating, see the perceptive remarks of Luciano Bellosi (1974), the first to evaluate its importance in art historical terms. He developed his proposals further in later studies. Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 51–54.
- [26] Cf. Filippo Pedrocco, *Paolo Veneziano* (Milan and Venice, 2003), 202–203.
- [27] Cf. Rodolfo Pallucchini, ed., *La pittura veneziana del Trecento* (Venice, 1964), 75–78, figs. 244, 247.
- [28] Cf. Maria Walcher Casotti, *Il Trittico di S. Chiara di Trieste e l'orientamento paleologo nell'arte di Paolo Veneziano* (Trieste, 1961); Carla Travi, "Il Maestro del trittico di Santa Chiara: Appunti per la pittura veneta di primo Trecento," *Arte cristiana* 80 (1992): 81–96.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The painting, executed on a single piece of wood with vertical grain, has triangular additions of relatively recent date at the upper corners.[1] Narrow strips of wood have been attached to the vertical edges of the panel, which has been thinned and cradled at least twice. The paint is applied on a gesso ground; there is a layer of

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red bole under the gilded areas. The x-radiographs reveal two pieces of fabric under the gesso, which were probably applied to conceal flaws in the panel. An incised line marks the inner periphery of the now lost original frame. The paint was applied thinly with green underpaint beneath the flesh tones. The halos are punched, and the soldiers' armor is embellished with mordant gilding.

The panel has numerous old wormholes and some small cracks along the bottom edge. A light overall abrasion can be observed on the painted surface, which has two significant paint losses: one on Christ's torso, and the other on his left arm. Other, smaller losses are present in Christ's loincloth, Mary Magdalene's nose, and in the face and torso of the lower right-hand angel. The right half of the gold background has been regilded. The dark outer contours have been reinforced in some areas. Stephen Pichetto removed a discolored varnish and inpainted the panel when he cradled it in 1934–1935.[2]

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Already by 1912, Roger Fry reproduced the panel with the upper corners integrated with modern additions and the background regilded. Roger Fry, "Exhibition of Pictures and the Early Venetian School at the Burlington Fine Arts Club," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 21 (1912): pl. 2.
- [2] According to Fern Rusk Shapley, the panel was "cradled, cleaned, restored and varnished by S. Pichetto c. 1934/35." Evidently, it had also been treated before Pichetto's intervention, which presumably occurred after the painting entered the Kress collection. Indeed, according to the examination report of the NGA painting conservation department dated December 5, 1988, x-ray documentation proves that "an earlier, heavier cradle [probably added during the early twentieth century restoration] was replaced by the present one." Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:335 n. 6.
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### PROVENANCE

(Italian art market, probably Venice), by 1902.[1] Achillito Chiesa, Milan, early twentieth century:[2] (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence); sold July 1934 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York:[3] gift 1939 to NGA. [1] In his article of 1912, Roger Fry reproduces the painting together with another, similarly

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attributed to the school of Semitecolo, explaining that it was present “some years ago in the market in Italy” (Roger Fry, “Exhibition of Pictures and the Early Venetian School at the Burlington Fine Arts Club,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 21 [1912]: 47, pl. 2). Fry had probably seen it in October 1902; in fact, in a letter dated 10 October 1902, written to his wife from Venice, he reports, “I’ve had great luck today, managed to get to see some pictures by Semitecolo what I’ve never managed before”; *Letters of Roger Fry*, ed. Denys Sutton, 2 vols., New York, 1972: 1:196. [2] The collection of Achillito Chiesa, which the great art dealer Luigi Bellini calls the “più importante e intelligente collezione di oggetti d’arte italiana fondata in questi ultimi cinquant’anni in Italia” (“the most important, and intelligent, collection of Italian art objects formed in Italy within the last fifty years”) (Luigi Bellini, *Nel mondo degli antiquari*, Florence, 1947: 223–224), was dispersed between 1925 and 1931 because of the collector’s financial difficulties; see Elisabeth E. Gardner, *A Bibliographical Repertory of Italian Private Collections*, 3 vols., ed. Chiara Ceschi and Katharine Baetjer, Vicenza, 1998: 1:227–228. [3] The bill of sale is dated 13 July 1934 (copy in NGA curatorial files).

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# *Puccio di Simone*

Also known as

Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

The artist, who was enrolled in the *Arte dei Medici e Speciali* in Florence between 1346 and 1348, must have been an established artist by this time, not only because a document datable between 1348 and 1349 lists him among the best Florentine painters of the day,[1] but also because various paintings identified as his work seem to date to the 1340s or even earlier. Knowledge of Puccio in the art historical literature was confined for a long time to the signed polyptych in the *Galleria dell'Accademia* in Florence (no. 8569), but the clumsy repainting of its central panel hardly facilitated a reconstruction of the painter's oeuvre. However, in 1947 Richard Offner was able to identify many of the works now assigned to him in a group of paintings that, on the basis of the location of one of them in Fabriano,[2] previously had been attributed to Allegretto Nuzi (Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373). Art historians generally have recognized the congruity of this group assembled by Offner under the conventional name of Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, but Roberto Longhi (1959) reassigned it to Puccio di Simone, having discovered the artist's name in the inscription legible on one of the works in the catalog of the *Fabriano Master*. The painting in question is the *Madonna and Child* formerly in the *Artaud De Montor* collection in Paris and now in the *Alana* collection in New York, which with its date (1360) also indicates the end point of the artist's oeuvre.[3] Indeed, it seems probable that Puccio, recorded for the last time in documents in 1357, died a few years later. Puccio's apparent presence in Fabriano in 1353–1354 and his partnership with the local master Allegretto, testified by the triptych cataloged here, obviously implies stylistic contacts between the two. Apart from that, art historians have long recognized the painter's indebtedness to the art of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348), conjecturing that his career had indeed begun in the shop of this master.[4] According to some more recent hypotheses, Puccio must have served a previous apprenticeship in the atelier of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) or of one of his disciples.[5]

Puccio undoubtedly was a charming and accomplished painter. Offner commented, “at its best his work is shot through with a winsome, sunny lyricism rare in the period.” “Our painter’s color,” Offner continued, “like his humor, is pitched in an upper key,”<sup>[6]</sup> and these characteristics clearly distinguish his paintings from the more composed and solemn manner of Bernardo Daddi. We may cite, as examples of works probably executed in Daddi’s atelier in the 1340s, two polyptychs, one divided between the Galleria Nazionale in Parma and a private collection and the other between the Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Ghent and the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and also the recomposed polyptych in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (nos. 443, 6140). In the early 1350s, however, Puccio distanced himself from Daddi’s manner. He now embraced some of the more naturalistic currents developed by such artists as Stefano Fiorentino and Giotto, but he also succumbed to the influence of the effects of monumentality and strong simplification of form that distinguish paintings produced in the atelier of Andrea Orcagna; it is these aspects that characterize the final phase of Puccio’s career.

[1] An undated document in the Archivio di Stato in Pistoia, probably written shortly after the plague epidemic (the Black Death) that struck Tuscany in 1348, listed Master Puccio among the six reputedly best Florentine painters of the time; Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, Mo, 1982), 56, 257 doc. 49.

[2] The panel in question is *Saint Anthony Abbot and Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano. The local historiography had traditionally attributed it to Allegretto, and Bernard Berenson used it as the basis for his attempted reconstruction of Allegretto’s catalog. See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131.

[3] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 485–488; Ada Labriola, in *The Alana Collection*, vol. 1, *Italian Paintings from the 13th to 15th Century*, ed. Miklós Boskovits (Florence, 2009), 172–176.

[4] “Our painter’s type, forms, style, his store of shapes and motifs bear the stamp of Daddi’s atelier in the latter thirties or early forties, when he was learning his craft,” wrote Offner in 1947; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed.

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(Florence, 2001), 341. For his part, the present writer has identified the hand of Puccio in the series of saints now displayed in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence (no. 6140), which had in the past invariably been considered a product of Daddi's shop. I therefore propose a direct collaboration between Daddi and Puccio in the 1340s. Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 77–78.

[5] The present writer conjectured that Puccio spent an initial apprenticeship in Giotto's *bottega*, while Ada Labriola (2005) saw the painter's exordium instead not in direct contact with Giotto himself but with one of his pupils, such as Maso di Banco or the Master of San Lucchese. See Miklós Boskovits, in *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21; and Ada Labriola, in *Da Bernardo Daddi al Beato Angelico a Botticelli: Dipinti fiorentini del Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Daniela Parenti (Florence, 2005), 192–195. Angelo Tartuferi (2005), on the other hand, revived the hypothesis of the artist's formation at the side of Bernardo Daddi. Angelo Tartuferi, "Puccio di Simone: Osservazioni sulla cronologia e lo svolgimento artistico," in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2005), 13–16.

[6] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 339.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

# *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels [middle panel]*

1354

tempera on panel

painted surface: 108 x 57.8 cm (42 1/2 x 22 3/4 in.)

overall (with cradle): 108.5 x 59.5 x 3.2 cm (42 11/16 x 23 7/16 x 1 1/4 in.)

framed: 150.5 x 66.7 x 8.3 cm (59 1/4 x 26 1/4 x 3 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on the Madonna's halo: .S[AN]C[T]A.MARIA.MATER.DEI.; on the Child's halo: IIS . XRO . M:[1] along the base:  
[MCCC]LIIII.QUESTA TA[VOLA HA F]ATTA F[A]RE. FRATE GIOVANNI DA [...] (1354, this picture was commissioned by Fra Giovanni)

[1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979: 1:383, read HS.XRO. [LUX] M[VNDI]. Presumably the first letters were intended to be IHS, the frequently used traditional abbreviation of the name of Jesus, formed, at least partially, of the letters of the Greek version of the name: . The second group of letters is again an incorrect transcription of the letters of the word Christus in Greek; see Hans Feldbusch, "Christusmonogramm," in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, edited by Otto Schmitt and Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte München, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1937-2003: 3(1954):707-720. The meaning of the final letter M, which might be an abbreviation of various words, is difficult to interpret.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.b

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## ENTRY

The triptych comprised of this panel, *Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*, and *Saint Venantius [right panel]* is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone (Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360) himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom) [9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly

colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as “A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano.” Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto’s hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant’Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle’s doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine

follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the “Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece” and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto’s documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is

unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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#### NOTES

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a

painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, "This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God" (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio's earlier paintings "the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy." See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, "Koralle," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children's toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone's version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this

form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927

excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United

States,” *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, “Review of L’arte nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,” *Rivista d’arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question,

summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21), suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

[26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.

[27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.

[28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other

version of the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto

Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragionieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and*

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*Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that

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treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917 from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.

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### PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant’Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby’s, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as Attributed to Allegretto Nuzi); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this

time the building must already have been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton,

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stating, "The correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

# *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels, and Saints Anthony Abbot and Venantius [entire triptych]*

1354

tempera on panel

Inscription: left panel, on Saint Anthony's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S.ANTONIVS.D[E].VIENA; middle panel, on the Madonna's halo: .S[AN]C[T]A.MARIA.MATER.DEL.; middle panel, on the Child's halo: IIS . XRO . M:[1] middle panel, along the base: [MCCC]LIII.QUESTA TA[VOLA HA F]ATTA F[A]RE. FRATE GIOVANNI DA [...] (1354, this picture was commissioned by Fra Giovanni); right panel, on Saint Venantius's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S . VENANCIVS . M[A]RTIRI (Saint Venantius Martyr)

[1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979: 1:383, read HS.XRO. [LUX] M[VNDI]. Presumably the first letters were intended to be IHS, the frequently used traditional abbreviation of the name of Jesus, formed, at least partially, of the letters of the Greek version of the name: . The second group of letters is again an incorrect transcription of the letters of the word Christus in Greek: ; see Hans Feldbusch, "Christusmonogramm," in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, edited by Otto Schmitt and Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte München, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1937-2003: 3(1954):707-720. The meaning of the final letter M, which might be an abbreviation of various words, is difficult to interpret.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.a-c

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## ENTRY

This triptych is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom)[9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he

raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as “A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano.” Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto’s hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant’Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle’s doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the “Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece” and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all

the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto's documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of

Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L’arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L’arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a

painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, "This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God" (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio's earlier paintings "the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy." See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, "Koralle," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children's toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone's version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this

form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927

excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United

States,” *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, “Review of L’arte nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,” *Rivista d’arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question,

summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21), suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

- [26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.
- [27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.
- [28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other

version of the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto

Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragonieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and*

*Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that

treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917 from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant’Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby’s, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as by Allegretto Nuzi); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this time the building must already have

been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was their number X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton, stating, "The

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correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

## *Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*

1354

tempera on panel

painted surface: 89.3 x 33.6 cm (35 3/16 x 13 1/4 in.)

overall (with cradle): 90 x 35.5 x 2.8 cm (35 7/16 x 14 x 1 1/8 in.)

framed: 123.8 x 45.7 x 8.3 cm (48 3/4 x 18 x 3 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on Saint Anthony's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S.ANTONIVS.D[E].VIENA

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.a

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### ENTRY

The triptych comprised of this panel, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels [middle panel]*, and *Saint Venantius [right panel]* is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named

*Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*

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Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom)[9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as "A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano." Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the

sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto's hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle's doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the "Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece" and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of

such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto's documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court

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dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by

Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs choeurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, “This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God” (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio’s earlier paintings “the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy.” See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, “Koralle,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children’s toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs choeurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone’s version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und*

*Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927 excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be

attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United States," *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, "Review of L'arte

nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,”

*Rivista d'arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question, summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21),

suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

[26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.

[27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.

[28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other version of the *Coronation of the Virgin*, in the Musée du Petit Palais in

Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto Longhi, "Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri," *Paragone* 10, no. 111

(1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragionieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3,

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vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917

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from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.
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### PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant'Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby's, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as by Allegretto Nuzi); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this time the building must already have been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie*

*Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*

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*storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was their number X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton, stating, "The correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses

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the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

## *Saint Venantius [right panel]*

1354

tempera on panel

painted surface: 89.2 x 33 cm (35 1/8 x 13 in.)

overall (with cradle): 91 x 34.2 x 2.5 cm (35 13/16 x 13 7/16 x 1 in.)

framed: 123.8 x 43.2 x 8.3 cm (48 3/4 x 17 x 3 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on Saint Venantius's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S . VENANCIVS . M[A]RTIRI (Saint Venantius Martyr)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.c

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### ENTRY

The triptych comprised of this panel, *Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*, and *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels [middle panel]* is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named

*Saint Venantius [right panel]*

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Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom)[9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as "A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano." Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the

sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto's hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle's doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the "Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece" and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of

such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto's documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court

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dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a

painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs choeurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, "This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God" (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio's earlier paintings "the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy." See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, "Koralle," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children's toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs choeurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone's version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this

form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927

excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United

States,” *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, “Review of L’arte nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,” *Rivista d’arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question,

summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21), suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

[26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.

[27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.

[28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other

version of the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto

Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragionieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and*

*Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that

treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917 from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant’Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;[1] apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.[2] Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.[3] (sale, Sotheby’s, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as Attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell[4] for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;[5] sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;[6] gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this

time the building must already have been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton,

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stating, "The correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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# Allegretto Nuzi

Also known as

Allegretto di Nuzio

Allegretto di Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

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The artist probably was born in Fabriano, in the Marches; indeed, he signed his name on various occasions as Allegritus de Fabriano. The artist is documented for the first time in Florence in 1346, when he enrolled in the Compagnia di San Luca, the lay confraternity of painters. His name, written as “Allegrittus Nuccii de Senis,” also appears in the register of foreign members of the Arte dei Medici e Speciali in Florence, a guild that also comprised painters.[1] The claimed Siennese origin can probably be explained by the supposition that Allegretto had arrived in Florence after a period in Siena. Local sources in Fabriano record the presence of his works, dated respectively 1345 and 1349, in the church of Santa Lucia at Fabriano,[2] but the reliability of this information cannot now be corroborated, since the paintings in question have been lost. Amico Ricci (1834) identified the former with a panel of the *Madonna and Child Enthroned with eight angels* formerly in the collection of the Viscountess D’Abernon in London, a proposal accepted by the editors of the last edition of Bernard Berenson’s *Italian Pictures* (1968),[3] but this claim cannot be verified since the panel’s inscription is now illegible.

The painter’s first securely dated work remains the *left lateral* of the Washington triptych, executed (according to the inscription below the central panel) in 1354. But perhaps a street tabernacle with a fresco of the *Madonna and Child with two saints and two angels*, formerly on the Via di San Filippo in Fabriano and now in the Pinacoteca Civica in that town, also dates to the same year: its inscription is now lost, and the date reported by local sources has been incorrectly transcribed. These works were followed in chronological order by the much-ruined *Madonna* formerly in the Sabatucci collection in Fabriano (1358); the triptych in the Pinacoteca Vaticana (1365); the polyptych in the Palazzo Municipale in Apiro (Macerata) and the *Madonna of Humility* in the Pinacoteca at San Severino Marche, both dated 1366; the triptych in the cathedral of Macerata (1369); and the *Madonna and Child Enthroned* in the Galleria Nazionale in Urbino (1372).

The initial phase of the painter's career can be reconstructed on the basis of some works in which the Florentine stylistic component, essentially derived from Maso di Banco, is fused with elements that reveal the artist's familiarity with the art of the Sienese Lorenzetti brothers, such as the polyptych of the J. G. Johnson collection in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the D'Abernon Madonna, the portable triptych in the Kunstmuseum in Bern, and the Crucifixion in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond. Documented back in Fabriano again in 1348 and 1350,[4] Allegretto probably resumed his contacts with Florence in the 1350s, more particularly with the thriving shop of Andrea Orcagna. But at this time he also seems to have formed a professional association with Puccio di Simone (Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360), with whom he would later work in Fabriano. In the 1350s, Allegretto probably painted the five-part *Madonna and Saints* in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano; the diptych in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and that of the Madonna and Child and *Vir dolorum*, now divided between private collections;[5] as well as a large part of the frescoes in the cathedral and church of Santa Lucia in Fabriano. A gradual stiffening of his compositional schemes, metallic hardness of modeling, and ever more frequent use of sumptuous fabrics with striking decorative motifs in his paintings characterize the final phase of the artist, who died at Fabriano between September and November 1373.

[1] See Ugo Procacci, "Il primo ricordo di Giovanni da Milano a Firenze," *Arte antica e moderna* 13–16 (1961): 65. The name of the painter also appears, but without a date, in a register begun in 1343 of members of a confraternity in Fabriano. See Stefano Felicetti, "Regesti documentari, 1299–1499," in *Il maestro di Campodónico: Rapporti artistici fra Umbria e Marche nel Trecento*, ed. Fabio Marcelli (Fabriano, 1998), 215.

[2] Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:88, 109 n. 49.

[3] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2: fig. 206. I suspect that the dated paintings formerly to be seen in the choir of the church of Santa Lucia, which Ricci said were lost following the transformation of the church, were probably frescoes.

[4] See Stefano Felicetti, "Regesti documentari, 1299–1499," in *Il maestro di Campodónico: Rapporti artistici fra Umbria e Marche nel Trecento*, ed. Fabio Marcelli (Fabriano, 1998), 215.

[5] See Angelo Tartuferi, in *Da Allegretto Nuzi a Pietro Perugino*, ed. Fabrizio Moretti and Gabriele Caioni (Florence, 2005), 26–37.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

# *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels [middle panel]*

1354

tempera on panel

painted surface: 108 x 57.8 cm (42 1/2 x 22 3/4 in.)

overall (with cradle): 108.5 x 59.5 x 3.2 cm (42 11/16 x 23 7/16 x 1 1/4 in.)

framed: 150.5 x 66.7 x 8.3 cm (59 1/4 x 26 1/4 x 3 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on the Madonna's halo: .S[AN]C[T]A.MARIA.MATER.DEI.; on the Child's halo: IIS . XRO . M:[1] along the base:  
[MCCC]LIIII.QUESTA TA[VOLA HA F]ATTA F[A]RE. FRATE GIOVANNI DA [...] (1354, this picture was commissioned by Fra Giovanni)

[1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979: 1:383, read HS.XRO. [LUX] M[VNDI]. Presumably the first letters were intended to be IHS, the frequently used traditional abbreviation of the name of Jesus, formed, at least partially, of the letters of the Greek version of the name: . The second group of letters is again an incorrect transcription of the letters of the word Christus in Greek; see Hans Feldbusch, "Christusmonogramm," in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, edited by Otto Schmitt and Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte München, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1937-2003: 3(1954):707-720. The meaning of the final letter M, which might be an abbreviation of various words, is difficult to interpret.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.b

## ENTRY

The triptych comprised of this panel, *Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*, and *Saint Venantius [right panel]* is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.<sup>[1]</sup> Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.<sup>[2]</sup> It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.<sup>[3]</sup>

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone (Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360) himself.<sup>[4]</sup> Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.<sup>[5]</sup> The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.<sup>[6]</sup> With his left hand he grasps a small bird,<sup>[7]</sup> while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.<sup>[8]</sup> The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom) <sup>[9]</sup> and Saint Benedict.<sup>[10]</sup> On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.<sup>[11]</sup> The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly

colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as “A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano.” Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto’s hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant’Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle’s doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine

follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the “Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece” and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto’s documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is

unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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#### NOTES

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a

painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, "This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God" (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio's earlier paintings "the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy." See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, "Koralle," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children's toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone's version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this

form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927

excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United

States,” *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, “Review of L’arte nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,” *Rivista d’arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question,

summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21), suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

- [26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.
- [27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.
- [28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other

version of the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto

Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragionieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and*

*Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that

treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917 from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant’Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby’s, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as Attributed to Allegretto Nuzi); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA.

[1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this

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time the building must already have been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton,

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stating, "The correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

# *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels, and Saints Anthony Abbot and Venantius [entire triptych]*

1354

tempera on panel

Inscription: left panel, on Saint Anthony's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S.ANTONIVS.D[E].VIENA; middle panel, on the Madonna's halo: .S[AN]C[T]A.MARIA.MATER.DEL.; middle panel, on the Child's halo: IIS . XRO . M:[1] middle panel, along the base: [MCCC]LIIII.QUESTA TA[VOLA HA F]ATTA F[A]RE. FRATE GIOVANNI DA [...] (1354, this picture was commissioned by Fra Giovanni); right panel, on Saint Venantius's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S . VENANCIVS . M[A]RTIRI (Saint Venantius Martyr)

[1] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979: 1:383, read HS.XRO. [LUX] M[VNDI]. Presumably the first letters were intended to be IHS, the frequently used traditional abbreviation of the name of Jesus, formed, at least partially, of the letters of the Greek version of the name: . The second group of letters is again an incorrect transcription of the letters of the word Christus in Greek: ; see Hans Feldbusch, "Christusmonogramm," in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, edited by Otto Schmitt and Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte München, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1937-2003: 3(1954):707-720. The meaning of the final letter M, which might be an abbreviation of various words, is difficult to interpret.

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.a-c

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## ENTRY

This triptych is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom)[9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he

raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as “A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano.” Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto’s hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant’Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle’s doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the “Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece” and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all

the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto's documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of

Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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#### NOTES

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a

painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, "This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God" (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio's earlier paintings "the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy." See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, "Koralle," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children's toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone's version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this

form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927

excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United

States,” *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, “Review of L’arte nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,” *Rivista d’arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question,

summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21), suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

- [26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.
- [27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.
- [28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other

version of the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto

Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragonieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and*

*Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that

treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917 from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant’Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby’s, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as by Allegretto Nuzi); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this time the building must already have

been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was their number X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton, stating, "The

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correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

## *Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*

1354

tempera on panel

painted surface: 89.3 x 33.6 cm (35 3/16 x 13 1/4 in.)

overall (with cradle): 90 x 35.5 x 2.8 cm (35 7/16 x 14 x 1 1/8 in.)

framed: 123.8 x 45.7 x 8.3 cm (48 3/4 x 18 x 3 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on Saint Anthony's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S.ANTONIVS.D[E].VIENA

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.a

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### ENTRY

The triptych comprised of this panel, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels [middle panel]*, and *Saint Venantius [right panel]* is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named

Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom)[9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as "A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano." Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the

sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto's hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle's doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the "Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece" and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of

such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto's documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court

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dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by

Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs choeurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, “This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God” (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio’s earlier paintings “the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy.” See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, “Koralle,” in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children’s toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs choeurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone’s version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und*

*Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927 excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be

attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United States," *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, "Review of L'arte

nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,”

*Rivista d'arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question, summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21),

suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

[26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.

[27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.

[28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other version of the *Coronation of the Virgin*, in the Musée du Petit Palais in

Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto Longhi, "Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri," *Paragone* 10, no. 111

(1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragionieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868.

Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.

- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.

- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3,

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vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917

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from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.
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### PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant'Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby's, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as by Allegretto Nuzi); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this time the building must already have been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie*

*storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was their number X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton, stating, "The correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses

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the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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Puccio di Simone

Florentine, active c. 1330 - 1360

Allegretto Nuzi

Umbrian, active from c. 1340; died 1373

## *Saint Venantius [right panel]*

1354

tempera on panel

painted surface: 89.2 x 33 cm (35 1/8 x 13 in.)

overall (with cradle): 91 x 34.2 x 2.5 cm (35 13/16 x 13 7/16 x 1 in.)

framed: 123.8 x 43.2 x 8.3 cm (48 3/4 x 17 x 3 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on Saint Venantius's halo: .S[AN]C[TU]S . VENANCIVS . M[A]RTIRI (Saint Venantius Martyr)

Andrew W. Mellon Collection 1937.1.6.c

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### ENTRY

The triptych comprised of this panel, *Saint Anthony Abbot [left panel]*, and *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels [middle panel]* is in some respects unusual, even unique, in fourteenth-century painting in central Italy. First, it is unusual for an altarpiece of this kind to be characterized by such a disparity both in the distribution and in the proportions of the figures: numerous and small in the center, large in the laterals—even larger in scale than the Madonna enthroned in the main panel. Second, another very rare feature is that one of the saints, Anthony Abbot, appears twice, once in the central panel and again in the left lateral.[1] Third, and uniquely, a practically identical version (only slightly larger in size) exists in the Duomo of Macerata, though with a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in that town.[2] It is dated 1369, and the fact that, at an interval of fifteen years, both triptychs were commissioned and their iconographic program established by a member of the Antonine order named

*Saint Venantius [right panel]*

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Giovanni (Johannes) makes it likely that both were executed for the same patron.[3]

The composition at the center, with tiered angels and saints flanking the enthroned Madonna, was probably based on a model developed in a portable triptych from the shop of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) or perhaps by the hand of Puccio di Simone himself.[4] Mary holds in her arms the naked child, who is draped from the hips downward in a precious gold-embroidered cloth [fig. 1]. With an apparently playful gesture, she points her index finger at him.[5] The Christ child is wearing a necklace with a small branch of coral as a pendant.[6] With his left hand he grasps a small bird,[7] while with the other hand he holds onto the hem of his mother's mantle. The Madonna and child are flanked on either side by nine angels, probably alluding to the nine choirs of angels.[8] The raised throne is approached by two steps, flanked in the foreground by four saints. To the left we see Saint Catherine of Alexandria (unusually wearing the imperial crown and with a palm branch in her right hand, while her other hand is supported on the toothed wheel, instrument of her martyrdom)[9] and Saint Benedict.[10] On the other side, closest to the throne, is Saint Anthony Abbot, patron saint of the Order of Hospitallers of Saint Anthony, better known as the Antonines, dressed in the dark brown tunic and beige mantle of his order. The saint supports himself on the T-shaped handle of his staff, while at his feet a small black pig, his usual attribute, can be glimpsed.[11] The female saint standing next to him can be recognized as Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, another exemplary figure of Christian charity, who gathers up her dress in front to support a posy of brightly colored flowers.[12] Above the Madonna, Christ Crucified appears in the quatrefoil medallion of the gable.[13] In the left lateral, Saint Anthony Abbot appears once again. He is accompanied by his usual attributes. Directing his gaze at the Virgin and Child, he raises his left hand in a gesture of homage and service,[14] while with his other hand he holds the T-shaped staff. The half-figure Angel of the Annunciation appears in the trefoil medallion in the gable above his head. In the right lateral the martyr Saint Venantius is represented as a young knight dressed in a precious gold-embroidered brocaded tunic.[15] He supports a standard in his right hand. The half-figure of the Virgin Annunciate appears in the trefoil medallion above his head.

It is not known at whose suggestion this triptych, on its appearance in a London sale catalog of July 25, 1916, was cited as "A Triptych...attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano." Presumably, Bernard Berenson had occasion to see it before the

sale and to connect it with the catalog of works he had begun to assemble under the name of this Marchigian master some years earlier.[16] It cannot be excluded, however, that the painting entered the Russell collection already with this attribution in the course of the nineteenth century, given its provenance from a church (and then from a collection) in Allegretto's hometown. In fact, even if the original provenance of the altarpiece from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Fabriano is undocumented, it can be regarded as virtually certain. It is suggested first and foremost by the double presence of the patron saint of the Antonine order, and also by the circumstance that another work by Allegretto, dating to the year before the triptych discussed here, is also known to have a provenance from the church of Sant'Antonio fuori Porta Pisana.[17] In any case, the attribution of the triptych to Allegretto was supported with complete conviction by Berenson (1922, 1930), followed by Osvald Sirén (1924), Luigi Serra (1925, 1927–1928, 1929), Bruno Molajoli (1928), Roger Fry (1931), Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933), Umberto Gnoli (1935), Luigi Coletti (1946), Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca (1951), and Pietro Toesca (1951). Robert Lehman (1928), on the other hand, accepted the attribution with some reservations.[18]

The doubts can be traced back to Raimond van Marle, who in 1924 detected in the triptych the presence of elements of Daddesque culture that he found incompatible with the attribution to Allegretto.[19] Richard Offner (1927), Helen Comstock (1928), and Mario Salmi (1930) endorsed van Marle's doubts.[20] Some years later, Offner recognized that the work is the result of two hands: that of Allegretto, who painted only the left lateral, and that of an anonymous Florentine follower of Daddi whom Offner dubbed the "Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece" and who, he argued, was responsible for the rest of the altarpiece. These conclusions, reported for the first time in the catalog of the National Gallery of Art (NGA 1941) and then explained in detail by Offner himself (1947), were gradually accepted in all the more recent literature on the painting.[21] After more than a decade, Roberto Longhi (1959) succeeded in identifying the anonymous Florentine painter with Puccio di Simone.[22] Offner did not accept the proposal,[23] and the name of the Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece continued to survive for several years in the art historical literature. Since the mid-1970s, however, the triptych in the National Gallery of Art has been generally, and correctly, recognized as the joint work of Puccio (central and right panels) and Allegretto (left panel).

The execution of an altarpiece by two different artists can hardly have been a rarity in the practice of fourteenth-century painters: one of the most famous examples of

such a collaboration is that of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) in the triptych dated 1333 now in the Uffizi, Florence, signed by both artists.[24] What is more rare is the execution of a painting by two unrelated painters of different origin and formation, such as Puccio from Florence and Allegretto from Fabriano. They could have gotten to know each other during Allegretto's documented residence in Florence in 1346, but the style of the earlier works by this painter suggests that while in Florence he probably frequented the shops of Maso di Banco and the young Orcagna (Andrea di Cione) and not that of Bernardo Daddi, who was the mentor of Puccio in those years.[25] It is probable that the Marchigian artist remained in contact with the Florentine scene also around 1350, when perhaps he returned to work there after the devastating outbreak of the Black Death in 1348. Nor can it be excluded that it might have been at the request of the Antonine canons of Fabriano, and not by personal choice, that he sought the collaboration of a Florentine painter for the works that the order had commissioned from him in his hometown.[26]

Though its style and other data suggest that Puccio should be given credit for the overall planning of the triptych, the parts executed by the two masters can be clearly distinguished. The ornamentation of the two lateral panels—a decorative frieze delimiting the gold ground; a series of miniature lunettes around the arches, within each of which an elegant foliated motif is inserted;[27] and the decoration of the carpet that covers the floor—is identical and repeats types of decoration found in other, presumably earlier works by Puccio di Simone.[28] The central panel proposes a composition of tiered angels and saints flanking the Madonna that is unusual in paintings on a monumental scale but recurs in Puccio's smaller panels clearly destined for private devotion. The severe and solemn figure of Saint Anthony Abbot in the left lateral [fig. 2], seen in half-profile while he raises his left hand with a nonchalant gesture of *locutio*, forms part of the figurative repertoire of Puccio di Simone.[29] Yet the hermit saint seems more noble in feature and more youthful in appearance than similar figures painted by Puccio, while his unwrinkled face and the fixed gaze of his almond eyes immediately betray the identity of the master who painted him: Allegretto. Allegretto, in fact, would repeat the image of the saint in a very similar way in later works, such as the lateral of a triptych in the Pinacoteca Civica in Fabriano.[30]

A very different humanity is evident in the image of Saint Venantius [fig. 3], a somewhat effeminate youth with a soft complexion, snub nose, and sharp little eyes, whose long blond locks fall over the shoulders of his sumptuous court

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dress.[31] With a slight smile playing on his thin lips, he complacently surveys the saints gathered around the Virgin's throne; they too have personalities, each with individual features: etiolated and reserved female saints, their gestures expressing timidity; self-assured monks with thick, silky beards and minutely described and shadowed faces; and angels who move and dart glances with the alert grace of college girls, completely filling the available space on both sides of the throne. The naturalistic tendency that distinguishes Puccio's style in this phase has sometimes been related to the presence in Florence of another great non-Florentine painter, Giovanni da Milano,[32] but more likely it depends rather on other artistic developments that began to appear in Florence even earlier than the midcentury. I refer in particular to the activity, undoubtedly important (even if still difficult to quantify), of Stefano di Ricco [33] and of the Master of San Lucchese,[34] pioneers of that minute vision to which Puccio would accede after the death of Bernardo Daddi and that would characterize his output during the last decade of his life.[35] The panel now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and the triptych discussed here testify that in the years c. 1353–1354 Puccio had resolutely embarked on the path of pictorial realism. He is to be considered not a follower of Giovanni da Milano or of Giotto but their fellow traveler, or even perhaps their predecessor.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Madonna and Child (central panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 2** Detail of Saint Anthony (left panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection



**fig. 3** Detail of Saint Venantius (right panel), Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints and Angels*, 1354, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew W. Mellon Collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] It seems possible, however, as Shapley pointed out, that the triptych originally had a rather different iconographic program. “The cut running

round the saint through the gold background,” wrote Shapley with regard to the left lateral with Saint Anthony, “may indicate that Nuzi replaced a damaged or unfinished figure.” Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:384. Another theory is that the “cut” is the incised line for a different figure, but the plan for that figure was abandoned before it was painted and the figure of Saint Anthony was painted instead. Technical examination with x-radiographs and infrared reflectography cannot conclusively determine whether what Shapley referred to as a “cut” is deliberate or might actually be just a somewhat anomalous crack around the figure of Saint Anthony, which could have occurred during the thinning or possible transfer of the panel. If that is the case, then this figure is not a replacement.

- [2] Alberto Rossi, in *Pittura del Marceratese dal Duecento al tardo gotico* (Macerata, 1971), 62–64, gives the measurements of the panel as 152 × 177 cm. The triptych in Macerata bears the inscription ISTAM/TABULAM FECIT FIERI FRA/TER IOHANNES CLERICUS PRECEPTOR/TOLENTINI: ALEGRITTUS DE FABRIANO ME PINXIT [. . .] MCCCCLXVIII. See Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, 296. That painting, which Ricci recorded as having come to the cathedral from the church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Macerata, therefore had been commissioned by another community of the Antonine order and then transferred to its present site following the suppression of the religious orders in the Napoleonic period. Amico Ricci, *Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, 2 vols. (Macerata, 1834), 1:89–90.
- [3] Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 287, conjectured that the same person had commissioned both this altarpiece and its prototype, now in Washington. The various houses of the order were called preceptories, so it may be surmised that, at least in 1369, Johannes clericus—the donor cited in the inscription—was the superior of the house of the Antonine order in Tolentino and, perhaps, the promoter of its daughterhouse in Macerata. For the term preceptor, cf. Charles du Fresne Du Cange, *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis*, 10 vols. (Niort, 1883–1887), 6:451.
- [4] Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 1, already observed that “the grouping of the attendant figures in tiers on either side of the Virgin has been handed down by Bernardo Daddi” in works such as *Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels*. He also drew attention to the anomaly of the portrayal of the Madonna in a smaller scale than the saints in the laterals. This was probably a solution imposed by the need to follow a model specified by the donor, perhaps a

painting similar to Daddi's aforementioned work or a similar composition by Puccio himself. On the works of this type produced in the shops of Bernardo Daddi (active by 1320, died probably 1348) and Puccio di Simone, cf. Offner 2001, 404 n. 2; on the relevant iconography, see Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.

- [5] Dorothy C. Shorr (1954) stated, "This action conceals some peculiar significance and may possibly refer to the sacrificial aspect of the Lamb of God" (cf. Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). On the other hand, as Offner (2001) notes, in Puccio's earlier paintings "the Virgin is almost always engaged in play with the Child.... The painter studiously endows the Child with artlessness and the Mother with appropriate happiness untouched by the shadow of prophecy." See Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy during the XIV Century* (New York, 1954), 168; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 340.
- [6] This iconographic detail reflects a widespread practice in the Middle Ages, when small necklaces with miniature branches of coral as pendants frequently were given to children to wear to protect them from harm, thanks to the apotropaic power attributed to coral. See Wolfgang Brückner, "Koralle," in *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum and Günter Bandmann, 8 vols. (Rome, 1970), 2:556.
- [7] Small birds, mainly fastened to a cord, were widely used as children's toys in the Middle Ages. But symbolic significances were also attributed to them, with reference to the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. Cf. Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (Washington, DC, 1946).
- [8] See Barbara Bruderer Eichberg, *Les neufs chœurs angéliques: Origine et évolution du thème dans l'art du Moyen âge* (Poitiers, 1998), 62–67.
- [9] For the iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 225–234. The peculiar form of her crown, conical with pointed termination, corresponds to that introduced by Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII and appears with some frequency in the central decades of the fourteenth century not only in representations of emperors but also in scenes of the Coronation of the Virgin—for example, in Puccio di Simone's version of the theme in a panel in the Musée de Valence in Valence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 404–408. On the historical circumstances surrounding the realization of this

form of crown, cf. Percy Ernst Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte vom dritten bis zum sechzehnten Jahrhundert*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1954–1956), 3:1015–1019.

- [10] For the iconography of Saint Benedict, cf. George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 145–174. The presence of the saint, founder of Western monasticism, in the place of honor, at the right-hand side of Mary and her son, is probably motivated by the fact that the motherhouse of the Antonine order, St. Antoine-en-Viennois, was originally a Benedictine abbey.
- [11] See Laurence Meiffret, *Saint Antoine ermite en Italie (1340–1540): Programmes picturaux et dévotion* (Rome, 2004). The cult of the fourth-century hermit saint was especially spread in Italy through the hospitals run by the Antonines after the lay confraternity established at La-Motteaux-Bois was transformed into a religious order. La-Motteaux-Bois was the site of the Benedictine abbey, later called St. Antoine-en-Viennois, where the relics of Saint Anthony had been transferred in the eleventh century. The inscription above the saint's halo also alludes to the French origin of the order.
- [12] Saint Elizabeth, the founder of a hospital, was especially venerated in the Middle Ages for her charitable activities; cf. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen, 1981), 101–116 and passim. For her iconography, see George Kaftal, *Saints in Italian Art*, vol. 1, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), 337–343.
- [13] On the unusual motif of the isolated figure of the crucified Christ in the gable medallion of an altarpiece, which recurs in some works of Allegretto Nuzi and also in Florentine paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century, see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 394 n. 3.
- [14] See François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 174.
- [15] On Saint Venantius, martyred under the persecutions of Decius, see C. Boccanera, "Venanzio da Camerino," in *Bibliotheca sanctorum*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1969), 12:969–978. The saint, patron of the city of Camerino in the Marche, was also the titular saint of the Collegiata (cathedral since 1728) of Fabriano.
- [16] See Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 131–132.
- [17] I refer to the panel of Saint Anthony Abbot with a group of devotees mentioned in Provenance note 1 above. The painting, dated 1353, was first attributed to Allegretto Nuzi by Ricci in 1834. Although Offner in 1927

excluded it from the catalog of the Marchigian painter, it continued to be attributed to him for many years to come, as was the triptych in the National Gallery of Art. Ricci's description does not perfectly coincide with the work now displayed in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano, probably because he wrote from memory without checking the characteristics of the image against the painting. In any case, the date 1353 that Ricci read in the painting makes it virtually certain that it is the same painting. The triptych in the Gallery and the panel in Fabriano are the only paintings certainly produced by Puccio outside Tuscany. A period of activity in Perugia has also been surmised, however; Puccio could have stopped there during his journey to or from Fabriano. Cf. Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 378 and n. 2, and a non-Florentine (Umbrian or Marchigian) destination cannot be excluded also for Puccio's triptych now in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Offner 2001, 18 and n. 43).

- [18] Bernard Berenson, "Prime opere di Allegretto Nuzi," *Bollettino d'arte* (1922): 296–309; Bernard Berenson, *Studies in Medieval Painting* (New Haven, 1930), 63–73; Osvald Sirén, "Three Early Florentine Trecento Pictures," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 45 (1924): 285; Luigi Serra, *Le gallerie comunali delle Marche* (Rome, 1925), 132; Luigi Serra, "L'arte nelle Marche: La pittura gotica; La scuola fabrianese," *Rassegna marchigiana* 6 (1927–1928): 128, 130, 136, 138, 146; Luigi Serra, *L'arte nelle Marche*, vol. 1, *Dalle origini cristiane alla fine del gotico* (Pesaro, 1929), 280–281, 286–288, 293; Bruno Molajoli, "La scuola pittorica fabrianese," *Gentile da Fabriano: Bollettino mensile per la quinta commemorazione centenaria a cura della Società Fabrianese per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico ed Archeologico* 1 (1928): 16; Roger Fry, "Mr Berenson on Medieval Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 58, no. 338 (1931): 245; Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 87; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 107; Umberto Gnoli, "Nuzi, Allegretto," in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti*, ed. Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 36 vols. (Milan, 1935), 25:86; Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 2, *I senesi e i giotteschi* (Novara, 1946), xlix; Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 3:1779; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento. Storia dell'arte classica e italiana* 3; *Storia dell'arte italiana* 2 (Turin, 1951), 677; Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York (Paris, 1928), no. 67.
- [19] Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 3, *The Florentine School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 395.
- [20] Richard Offner, *Studies in Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1927), 143; Helen Comstock, "The Bernardo Daddis in the United

States,” *International Studio* 38 (1928): 94; Mario Salmi, “Review of L’arte nelle Marche dalle origini cristiane alla fine del Gotico by Luigi Serra,” *Rivista d’arte* 12 (1930): 303, 308.

- [21] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 128, 142; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle* (New York, 1947), 182–184.
- [22] Roberto Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10.
- [23] In the foreword to the volume in which he discussed Puccio’s oeuvre, Richard Offner reprimanded the error of some art historians who proposed to link polyptych no. 8569 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence (signed by Puccius Simonis) “with a group of paintings like those of the Fabriano Master,” adding, “Affinities between the Fabriano Master and Puccio must be admitted to exist as between two painters from a common stock, but it becomes the less likely that they are the same person as their paintings... would...have to show greater analogies of style than actually appear.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 8, *Workshop of Bernardo Daddi* (New York, 1958), i–ii. Offner’s doubts probably can be explained by the circumstance that the central panel of the altarpiece in question was illegible until a few years ago as a result of a maladroit repainting, from which only the recent restoration has freed it. See Angelo Tartuferi with Roberto Buda and Rosella Lari, in *Da Puccio di Simone a Giotto: Restauri e conferme*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi and Daniella Parenti (Florence, 2005), 42–45.
- [24] Though signed by both artists, the work has been very differently assessed in the art historical literature; cf. in this regard the papers in the volume *Simone Martini e l’Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. A. Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), which tend to circumscribe Lippo’s role in the execution of the triptych; and the more recent article by Andrea De Marchi, “La parte di Simone e la parte di Lippo,” *Nuovi studi* 11 (2006): 5–24, which considers the execution divided substantially into two equal parts.
- [25] In attempting for the first time to reconstruct the career of his Master of the Fabriano Altarpiece, Richard Offner conjectured “that he was born around 1320...[and] he learned his craft under the spell of Daddi, which served...to mold his artistic personality, in the mid-thirties of the century;...he persisted in this state for about ten years...[and] for some years thereafter his native talents seem...to blossom into full flower...about the time of Daddi’s reputed death in 1348.” Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 347–348. Recent reflection on the question,

summarized in my essay in the above-cited volume of Offner (2001, 17–21), suggests to me the probability that during the 1330s, Puccio could have spent some time in Giotto's shop, entering Daddi's only after the death of the great master.

- [26] The church of Sant'Antonio Abate in Florence was built and successively enlarged in the course of the fourteenth century and frescoed, according to Vasari, by a painter he called Lippo (perhaps Lippo di Benivieni?) and by Buonamico Buffalmacco. Cf. Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie istoriche delle chiese fiorentine divise ne' suoi quartieri*, 10 vols. (Florence, 1754–1762), 4:1–10; and Giorgio Vasari, "I Ragionamenti," in *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1882), 8:105–106. By the sixteenth century it already had been demolished. It must have been a complex of imposing dimensions and striking decoration, and it cannot be excluded that other later Antonine communities, such as that of Fabriano, considered it a model to be imitated. The association of Allegretto with Puccio surely was not formed merely to paint the triptych now in Washington. As we have seen (Provenance note 2), Luigi Lanzi recorded frescoes signed by Allegretto still surviving in the cloister adjoining the church in Fabriano, and it does not seem to go too far to assume that Allegretto, before frescoing the cloister, might also have frescoed the interior of the church.
- [27] A small but significant difference between the two laterals should be pointed out, suggesting a change or reconsideration in iconographic program. Although, as Erling S. Skaug (1994) rightly pointed out, "the left wing of the Washington triptych...displays none of Nuzi's punch marks, the execution of the lettered halo to the left...is clearly different from Puccio's manner: the outline of each letter is stippled (with a single point punch), whereas Puccio's letters consistently retain their incised outlines, and the granulation...is confined to the ground. The halo may have been executed by Nuzi." Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:141. The presence of a different system of punch decoration in Saint Anthony's halo, along with the technical anomalies noted in the figure of the saint (see note 1 above), suggest that this aspect of the left panel may have been modified in course of the altarpiece's realization.
- [28] In various panels by Puccio di Simone, the molding of the upper arch is embellished on the inside with a corbel frieze, the lunette-shaped interspaces decorated with a foliate motif incised in the gold ground, just as in the Washington triptych. We may cite *Coronation of the Virgin* no. 16 in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg; the triptych formed by the *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Ghent (no. 1903–A) and the two panels of saints in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (no. III.20); or the other

version of the Coronation of the Virgin, in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. M.I. 414), all datable to the 1340s. The ornamental motif of the carpet on which the saints are standing in the lateral panels recurs, as noted by Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 219, 220, in such works by Puccio di Simone as the former Lehman Madonna now in the Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena and the former Dijon triptych now in the Musée du Petit Palais in Avignon (no. 20155).

- [29] The saint is portrayed by Puccio in an identical pose in the Petrognano polyptych now in the Museo di Arte Sacra at Certaldo and, in reverse, in the small triptych formerly in the collection of Carlo De Carlo in Florence; see Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 476–482, 595–596.
- [30] Allegretto painted the figure of Saint Anthony Abbot with the same pose and facial features as in the Washington triptych not only in the Macerata triptych but also in a panel in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano. The latter presents Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint John the Evangelist and, together with another lateral of the same triptych, depicting the Baptist and Saint Venantius, comes from the abbey of Santa Maria d'Appennino. Cf. Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"* (Fano, 1997), 60.
- [31] The saint's brocaded tunic, embroidered with motifs of flowers, birds, and tortoises, is one of the most lavishly decorated and complex fabrics to be found in paintings executed in the mid-fourteenth century. It is displayed almost ostentatiously by the young Saint Venantius, who throws one side of his mantle behind his right shoulder seemingly with no other purpose than to display his sumptuous dress. The same lavishly brocaded tunic, similarly exhibited, is seen not only in the copy of the Washington triptych now in Macerata but also in the image of Saint Venantius in the triptych cited in the previous note, now in the Pinacoteca Civica of Fabriano, and in various other works. The material, of which the public in Fabriano was clearly fond, also appears in the painted mantle of a statue of the Madonna and Child with a provenance from a church in the environs of Fabriano and now in a private collection in Perugia. Cf. Enrica Neri Lusanna, in *L'eredità di Giotto: Arte a Firenze 1340–1375*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2008), 132. The fabric in question should be understood as Florentine in origin. Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 140–142, pointed out that it appears, with variants, in various paintings produced in the shop of Andrea Orcagna.
- [32] It is Roberto Longhi who proposed that the naturalistic approach exemplified by the figures in the Gallery triptych reflects models disseminated by Giovanni da Milano during his activity in Florence. Roberto

Longhi, “Qualità e industria in Taddeo Gaddi ed altri,” *Paragone* 10, no. 111 (1959): 9–10; Roberto Longhi, “Una ‘riconsiderazione’ dei primitivi italiani a Londra,” *Paragone* 16 (1965): 13. The proposal has been repeated in various more recent contributions: Carlo Volpe, “Il lungo percorso del ‘dipingere dolcissimo e tanto unito,’” in *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 2, *Dal Medioevo al Novecento*, pt. 1, *Dal Medioevo al Quattrocento*, ed. Federico Zeri, Giulio Bollati, and Paolo Fossati (Turin, 1983), 281 n. 30, 299; Silvia Giorgi, in *Galleria Nazionale di Parma*, vol. 1, *Catalogo delle opere dall’antico al Cinquecento*, ed. Lucia Fornari Schianchi (Milan, 1997), 47.

- [33] The Florentine painter Stefano, whose name is cited without patronymic but with great admiration by Trecento sources, is probably to be identified with Stefano di Ricco di Lapo, son-in-law of Giotto and father of the painter Giotto. Cf. Brendan Cassidy, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 29:598–599; Giovanna Ragionieri, “Stefano Fiorentino,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 3:867–868. Reconstructions, in part divergent, of Stefano’s oeuvre have been proposed by Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 19–40; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 173–180. How closely linked Puccio’s painting is with the reformed, gothicizing “Giottoism” of the mid-fourteenth century is shown by the fact that Bellosi (2001, 31–33) attributed to Stefano, though with extreme caution, the great painted cross in the church of San Marco in Florence, which others consider executed by Puccio. Cf. Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1330–1430*, 2 vols. (Oslo, 1994), 1:137–138; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 427; and Miklós Boskovits, in Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21.
- [34] On the still inadequately defined personality of the Master of San Lucchese, cf. Miklós Boskovits, in *Giotto: Bilancio critico di sessant’anni di studi e ricerche*, ed. Angelo Tartuferi (Florence, 2000), 208–211; Miklós Boskovits, “Ancora su Stefano fiorentino (e su qualche fatto pittorico di Firenze verso la metà del Trecento),” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 175–177; Luciano Bellosi, “Giotto e la pittura di filiazione giottesca intorno alla metà del Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 101 (2001): 34–37.
- [35] For the chronology of Puccio’s oeuvre since the mid-fourteenth century, I refer the reader to my own proposals: Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and*

*Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 74–79; Richard Offner, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 5, *Bernardo Daddi and His Circle*, ed. Miklós Boskovits, Ada Labriola, and Martina Ingendaay Rodio, new ed. (Florence, 2001), 17–21, though with the caveat that I erroneously included the polyptych now in the Museo Diocesano in Certaldo and the signed polyptych in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence among the painter's late works.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The altarpiece is constructed of three panels, the central one of which is fabricated of at least two pieces of wood with vertical grain. The original thickness of the panels was reduced to 1.3–1.7 cm, and it has been cradled. These alterations may have been accomplished during an undocumented treatment that possibly occurred in the 1920s.[1] Part of the frame is original, but the ornamental painting of the gables is a later addition.[2] The painted surface is realized on a white gesso preparation applied over a layer of fabric, whereas the gilding is applied over an additional layer of red bole. Despite some worm tunneling and the slight concavity over the join of the planks in the central panel and some resulting paint losses, which have required integrations, the panels are generally in fine condition. There is extensive inpainting in the robe of Saint Anthony and scattered inpainting in the hands of Saint Venantius, in the Virgin's cloak, and in some of the heads of the angels; however, the thick surface coating masks the true degree of inpainting. The gold and the punched decoration at the top of the left panel above the halo of Saint Anthony, as well as in part of the halo itself, are modern.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] No information is available about this treatment, which “was made several years ago,” according to a 1939 letter from David E. Finley to Richard Offner (copy in NGA curatorial files), possibly in the period when the altarpiece was returned from Carl Hamilton to Duveen Brothers (see Provenance note 5). Comparison of the photograph that Bernard Berenson published in 1922 with a photograph dated 1937 in the NGA photo archives indicates that the painting was treated between the dates when these photos were taken. However, it is unclear if the thinning and cradling took place during that

treatment or if it had already occurred. A letter dated December 12, 1917 from Muscat Rougeron Picture Restoration to Duveen Brothers discusses treatment of a “quimptich” by Allegretto di Muzzi, which may refer to the NGA panel. Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 114, box 259, folder 12.

- [2] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the frame using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF), cross-sections, and polarized light microscopy (see report dated April 1, 2002, in NGA conservation files). The analysis showed that the frame was silver leaf, which was toned and decorated with red and green transparent glazes.

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## PROVENANCE

Probably commissioned for the high altar of the demolished church of Sant’Antonio Abate fuori Porta Pisana, Fabriano;<sup>[1]</sup> apparently by the early years of the nineteenth century it was no longer in this church, presumably having passed into a local private collection.<sup>[2]</sup> Joseph Russell Bailey [1840-1906], 1st Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park, Breconshire, Wales; by inheritance to his son, Joseph Henry Russell Bailey [1864-1928], 2nd Baron Glanusk, Glanusk Park; sold in 1915.<sup>[3]</sup> (sale, Sotheby’s, London, 25 July 1916, no. 137, as Attributed to Allegretto Nuzi da Fabriano); purchased by Walter Dowdeswell<sup>[4]</sup> for (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris); Carl W. Hamilton [1886-1967], New York, in the early 1920s; (Duveen Brothers, Inc., London, New York, and Paris), by 1929;<sup>[5]</sup> sold 15 December 1936 to The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh;<sup>[6]</sup> gift 1937 to NGA. [1] The church, recorded for the first time in 1313, was officiated by the regular canons of Saint Augustine of Saint-Antoine de Vienne, a Hospitaler company founded by Gaston de Dauphiné in 1095 and transformed by Pope Boniface VIII into a religious order in 1297. It enjoyed a very rapid diffusion throughout Europe (see Italo Ruffino, “Canonici regolari di S. Agostino di S. Antonio di Vienne,” in *Dizionario degli istituti di Perfezione* 2 [1973]: 134-141; Adalbert Mischlewski, *Grundzüge der Geschichte des Antoniterordens bis zur Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 1976). Romualdo Sassi (*Le chiese di Fabriano. Brevi cenni storico – artistici*, Fabriano, 1961: 11-12) recalls that the church of Sant’Antonio Abate in Fabriano had three altars, of which presumably the high altar was dedicated to the Madonna and one other to the titular saint. In the late eighteenth century, following the decline of the order, the church was transferred to the hospital, which had used it as a mortuary when the city was struck by an epidemic in 1818. By this

time the building must already have been stripped of its movable works of art, even though Amico Ricci (*Memorie storiche delle arti e degli artisti della Marca di Ancona*, Macerata, 1834: 88) records the continuing presence in the sacristy of the panel of *Saint Anthony Abbot with a Group of Devotees* now in the Pinacoteca of Fabriano and unanimously attributed to Puccio di Simone (see Fabio Marcelli, *Pinacoteca Civica "Bruno Molajoli"*, Fano, 1997: 26). The church, as Sassi reports, was demolished in 1834. Richard Offner (*A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting. Sec. III, vol. V, The Fourteenth Century. Bernardo Daddi and his circle*, Brattleboro, 1947; 2nd edition by Miklós Boskovits, assisted by Ada Labriola and Martina Ingedaay Rodio, Florence, 2001: 394-399, n. 5) presents the reasons that suggest the provenance of the Washington triptych from the church in Fabriano. [2] This is suggested by the fact that during the Napoleonic occupation of the Marche (1797-1811) many churches, especially those of religious orders, were expropriated and stripped of their works of art, and by the fact that Luigi Lanzi (*Storia pittorica della Italia dal Risorgimento delle Belle Arti fin presso al fine del XVIII secolo (1808)*, ed. Martino Capucci, Florence, 1968: 266), who records the presence in the church of frescoes signed by Allegretto and dated 136[?], does not mention the presence of the triptych. The same argument *ex silentio* can be adduced from Ricci (1834, 88), who claims that even the frescoes formerly situated in the cloister annexed to the church had been lost and similarly fails to mention the triptych: had it been present, it surely would not have escaped his attention. [3] This information was gleaned by Duveen Brothers, and included in the prospectus they supplied to Andrew Mellon (in NGA curatorial files). [4] Walter Dowdeswell was the agent for Duveen Brothers at this time (see Edward Fowles, *Memories of Duveen Brothers*, London, 1976: 64, and *passim*). The Duveen Brothers "X-Book" entry for the triptych (the painting was X 170) begins with "Purchased from Sotheby's 25/7/1916" (Duveen Brothers Records, accession number 960015, Research Library, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles: reel 422; see also reel 45, box 133, folder 5; copies in NGA curatorial files). A copy of the sale catalogue in the Frick Art Reference Library, New York (copy in NGA curatorial files), is annotated with Dowdeswell's name as the buyer. [5] The "American oil millionaire" Carl W. Hamilton decided in c. 1920 to furnish his New York apartment with works of art furnished by the Duveen Brothers; a few years later, however, he returned most of his collection to Duveen (see Fowles 1976, 98-99, 127-130; Maryle Secrest, *Duveen. A Life in Art*, New York, 2004: 181-184, 368). Joseph Duveen, head of the firm, had the triptych again by at least 19 January 1929, when he responded to a letter originally sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and then on to Hamilton,

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stating, "The correspondence has been sent to me because Mr. Hamilton no longer possesses the Triptych, which is now in my private collection . . ." (Duveen Brothers Records, reel 125, box 270, folder 3). [6] The original bill of sale is in Records of The A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, subject files, box 2, NGA archives; copy in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1926 Sesquicentennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1926.

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# Simone Martini

Also known as

Simone di Martino

Sieneese, active from 1315; died 1344

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Probably born in Siena, perhaps in 1284 according to uncertain information transmitted by Giorgio Vasari (Florentine, 1511 - 1574),<sup>[1]</sup> Simone must already have been a famous artist when he was commissioned to paint the *Maestà* fresco in the Sieneese seat of government, the Palazzo Pubblico. Signed and dated 1315, it is the earliest surviving of his ascertained works. Even then his fame must have spread well beyond the borders of his homeland: the Anjevin court in Naples ordered from him the panel *Saint Louis of Toulouse Crowning His Brother Robert of Anjou, King of Naples* (now in the Museo di Capodimonte in Naples, from the church of San Lorenzo Maggiore in Naples), probably executed immediately after the saint's canonization in 1317. Soon after, the artist was called to Assisi to fresco the chapel of Saint Martin in the basilica of San Francesco. Between 1319 and 1320, he painted the polyptych for the church of Santa Caterina in Pisa (now in the Museo Nazionale in that city). Dating to 1321 or the immediately ensuing years (the date in Roman script is perhaps fragmentary) is the polyptych for San Domenico in Orvieto, now in the Museo Civico of that city, along with other paintings made for Orvieto, including a Madonna in the same museum and a polyptych now in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston.

In 1324, Simone married Giovanna, daughter of the painter Memmo di Filippuccio and sister of Lippo Memmi (Sieneese, active 1317/1347), who had probably already become Simone's partner and with whom he would sign the polyptych of the Annunciation, two saints, and four prophets for the altar of Sant'Ansano in Siena Cathedral in 1333 (now in the Uffizi, Florence). In the intervening years he painted various documented but now lost paintings, while in 1328 or shortly thereafter he produced the famous equestrian portrait in fresco of the condottiere *Guidoriccio da Fogliano* in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena. In 1335, at the height of his fame, Simone was called to the papal court at Avignon, where he produced frescoes, now much ruined, in the church of Notre-Dame des Doms, and also a lost portrait of Laura, Petrarch's love. Also at the poet's request he painted the frontispiece of a

codex of Virgil (now in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan), a work that, like the portrait, would inspire Petrarch's lavish praise of the master on more than one occasion.[2] In 1342, Simone signed and dated the small panel *Christ Returning to His Parents from the Doctors in the Temple* (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool). He made his will on June 30, 1344, and died in Avignon shortly after.

As shown by his fresco of the *Maestà* (which we now know was begun at least one year before 1315, and reworked in 1321)[3] and some other works probably of earlier date,[4] by that time Simone had already emerged as a fully independent and highly innovative artist who had broken away from the prevailing Duccesque manner of painting in Siena. An attentive observer of the courtly refinement of masterpieces of the transalpine Gothic, especially miniatures and goldsmiths' work, and also of the sinuous arabesques of Sienese sculptors such as Lorenzo Maitani,[5] Simone was also influenced by the pictorial realism cultivated by Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337) and his school in Florence and Assisi.[6] After a continuous qualitative growth, testified by his successive works, he arrived at a style charged with sentiment and enriched with acute realistic observations of detail, as exemplified by the signed quadriptych executed for a member of the Orsini family and now divided among the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp, the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, and the Louvre in Paris. In this and other late works Simone created an ideal of style admired and imitated not only by Sienese masters but also by some of the major painters active in the French courts in the second half of the fourteenth century.

[1] Giorgio Vasari concluded his biography of Simone in both editions of his *Vite* by transcribing the epitaph that he claims to have read above the artist's tomb: "SIMONI MEMMIO PICTURUM OMNIS AETATIS CELEBERRIMO VIX AN. LX. MEN. II D. III"; see Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. Rosanna Bettarini and Paola Barocchi, 6 vols. (Florence, 1966–1987), 2(1967):200. The epitaph attests that the painter died at the age of sixty; since the date of his death in 1344 is documented, that would mean he was born in 1284. But the fact that the inscription (as well as Vasari) cites the patronymic derived from the artist's brother-in-law rather than the correct patronymic "Martini" casts doubt on its reliability.

[2] In two of his sonnets (nos. 77 and 78), the great poet praises the art of Simone; Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere*, ed. Marco Santagata (Milan, 1996), 400, 404. Moreover, on the frontispiece of the codex in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana containing works of Virgil with commentary by Servius (also called Servius Honoratus; Ms. A

79 inf.), a manuscript that Petrarch himself had owned, the poet added the following hexameters: “Mantua Virgilium qui talia carmina finxit/Sena tulit Symonem digito qui talia pinxit.”

[3] On the time frame for the execution of the work, cf. Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 47–65.

[4] Of the various, often fanciful proposals made in the attempt to reconstruct the still evanescent profile of the young Simone, the most convincing attributions are the *Madonna and Child* no. 583 in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Siena and the designs for the stained-glass windows in the chapel of Saint Martin in the lower church of the basilica of San Francesco in Assisi. The latter work probably was completed even before the frescoes in the same chapel were begun.

[5] Usually the art of Simone is placed in relation to sculptors like Giovanni Pisano and Agostino di Giovanni or Tino di Camaino; cf. Antje Middeldorf Kosegarten, “Simone Martini e la scultura senese contemporanea,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno, Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 193–202; and Gert Kreytenberg, “Tino di Camaino e Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 203–209. The most exquisitely Gothic of Sienese sculptors and *capomastro* of Orvieto Cathedral, Lorenzo Maitani is mentioned more rarely in the literature on Simone and only in relation to the master’s work in Orvieto; cf. Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 188. However, it is possible that the acquaintance between the painter and the sculptor-architect had been established far earlier than this, both because Maitani too was Sienese and also through the intermediary of Giovanni di Bonino, the glassmaker from Assisi who is documented as having worked on the building site of Orvieto Cathedral and probably had been involved in the execution of the stained glass in the lower church of the basilica of Assisi; cf. Miklós Boskovits, “Da Duccio a Simone Martini,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 577.

[6] The circumstance that the stained-glass windows have been attributed in the past by Ferdinando Bologna, *Novità su Giotto: Giotto al tempo della cappella Peruzzi* (Turin, 1969), 152–153; Giuseppe Marchini, *Corpus vitrearum Medii Aevi*, vol. 1, *Le vetrate dell’Umbria* (Rome, 1973), 118–129; Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della morte* (Turin, 1974), 102 n. 46; and the present writer, Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth*

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Century, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 319–321, to the Master of Figline (alias Master of the Fogg Pietà), one of the most powerfully original disciples of Giotto, suggests the existence of rather close relations between these artists. After some tentative proposals in the past on the role of Simone in the execution of the stained glass in the chapel of Saint Martin, Alessandro Conti directly attributed the work to the great Siennese artist; the more recent literature shares his opinion. See Alessandro Conti, “Le vetrate e il problema di Giovanni di Bonino,” in *Il Maestro di Figline: Un pittore del Trecento*, eds. Luciano Bellosi and Alessandro Conti (Florence, 1980), 24, 25.

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Simone Martini

Sieneese, active from 1315; died 1344

## *The Angel of the Annunciation*

c. 1330

tempera on poplar panel

painted surface (on recto): 29.5 x 20.5 cm (11 5/8 x 8 1/16 in.)

overall: 31 x 21.5 cm (12 3/16 x 8 7/16 in.)

painted surface (gesso ground on verso): 21 x 30.2 cm (8 1/4 x 11 7/8 in.)

framed: 54.6 x 32.9 x 4.1 cm (21 1/2 x 12 15/16 x 1 5/8 in.)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1939.1.216

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### ENTRY

The painting represents the archangel Gabriel, who announces the birth of Jesus to the Virgin Mary.<sup>[1]</sup> It clearly presupposes a complementary image of the Virgin Annunciate in a separate panel, which in fact has always been recognized in the Virgin Annunciate now in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg [fig. 1]. The latter, identical to the Washington panel in format and in its ornamental punched decoration, comes from the Roman collection of Count Gregory Stroganoff (1829–1910) and entered the Hermitage after the collector's death.<sup>[2]</sup> The two halves of the diptych probably were separated in the nineteenth century, given that the very similar state of conservation of the two panels suggests a similar fate: the paint surface of both was ruined by drastic overcleaning, probably at the time of their separation in the mid-nineteenth century, when they appeared on the Italian art market.

In 1901, when it was still in the Stroganoff collection in Rome,<sup>[3]</sup> Giovanni Bernardini recognized the Virgin Annunciate now in Russia, albeit with some uncertainty, as an autograph work by Simone Martini. It was almost unanimously <sup>[4]</sup> recognized as a work by the Sieneese master after its display at *Mostra dell'antica arte senese* in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena in 1904. Lionello Venturi then identified the image of the Angel of the Annunciation as the companion panel of the former Stroganoff Virgin Annunciate in 1935.<sup>[5]</sup> Venturi's opinion was confirmed in manuscript opinions by Adolfo Venturi, F. Mason Perkins (both without date), Giuseppe Fiocco,

and Wilhelm Suida (both dated 1938).[6] The first catalog of the National Gallery of Art (1941) also accepted the attribution to Simone Martini, citing a written expertise by Roberto Longhi, who confirmed Simone's authorship, and the opinion of Bernard Berenson, who rejected the attribution.[7] In the subsequent literature opinions were divided: numerous publications accepted the attribution to Simone,[8] even if many scholars preferred to speak of a product of the artist's shop or at any rate showed some uncertainty about its autograph status.[9] Some even proposed alternative names for its artist.[10]

Rarely, however, has the problem of the diptych now divided between St. Petersburg and Washington been addressed in any systematic or analytic fashion. Art historians have mainly limited themselves to brief and categorical statements, without carefully weighing the evidence. In my view, it is precisely this superficial examination of the two panels, combined with the difficulties of evaluating them because of the marked abrasion of their paint surfaces, which accounts for the uncertainties in their attribution and date.

Almost all those who have cited the small panel in the Gallery and its companion, irrespective of their opinion regarding the attribution of the work, have agreed in assigning the two paintings to the years of Simone's residence in Avignon. But its Avignonese origin has been asserted rather than proved, as if the profusion of gold, elaborate punched ornamental decoration, and refined elegance of poses were in themselves sufficient evidence that the two paintings belonged to the final phase in the art of Simone Martini—that is, to the period of his maximum exposure to the tendencies of the transalpine Gothic in such a flourishing cultural center as Avignon was at the time. Sometimes, however, pertinent observations apparently contradicting such an interpretation have been made. Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), for example, concluded her comment on the Gallery's painting by declaring, "The style is, in any case, very close to that of Simone's *Annunciation* of 1333, in the Uffizi"; and Andrew Martindale (1988), one of the few scholars to dedicate a thorough analysis to the style and form of the panels that concern us here, observed that the immensely elegant and elongated figure of Mary had more in common with the Virgin of the San Ansano altar (that is, the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence) than with that of the Holy Family (*Christ Discovered in the Temple*, dated 1342) in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and that "the images [of the St. Petersburg-Washington diptych]...lack the robustness which spans the differences even between the Avignon frescoes, the Ambrosiana Virgil and the Liverpool Holy Family." [11] Some objective data should also be taken into account: for example, as

Brigitte Klesse (1967) pointed out, the pattern of the brocaded robe of the angel in the panel in the Gallery recurs in that of the corresponding figure in the Uffizi Annunciation.[12] Also, the punches used in the diptych divided between St. Petersburg and Washington frequently recur in the Annunciation now in Florence and in even earlier works, paintings that date to Simone's period in Orvieto, for example, but are seldom found in works that date to his Avignon period.[13]

To these observations, which prompt a reconsideration of the usual dating of the diptych, we can add others that similarly suggest that the two panels are indeed earlier than usually claimed. Let us first consider the St. Petersburg panel of the Virgin Annunciate. Of course, the elimination of the Virgin's throne especially would have been prompted by the need to press the figure of Mary, like the angel she confronts, into the foreground and bring her as close as possible to the spectator. But the swiveled pose of her body clearly echoes that of the Madonna of the Annunciation in the Uffizi (apparently the model that other Sieneese paintings, such as the Virgin Annunciate formerly in the Stoclet collection, imitate)[14] and not that of the small panel in the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp.[15] The same may be said of the motif of the book held half-open by Mary, her finger inserted between its pages as an improvised bookmark, and of the proportions of the Virgin herself. Her figure is characterized by the pronounced elongation of the bust and a smooth and placid contour formed of a succession of long, slightly crescent lines, carefully avoiding any disturbing agitation of the hem of her dress. A restless jagged cadence, by contrast, is a typical aspect of the panels now divided among the museums in Antwerp, Berlin, and Paris; of the illuminated frontispiece of the Virgil codex in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana;[16] and of *Christ Discovered in the Temple*, a panel signed and dated 1342, in the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool.[17]

Rather similar observations can be made about the Washington panel of the archangel Gabriel. In particular, the emphasis placed on the magnificent gold embroidered robe, as on the proud pose of the heavenly messenger, kneeling but only slightly bending forward as he proffers the olive branch with the tips of his fingers to the Virgin, underlines the resemblance of the image to its counterpart in the Uffizi. The face, with its mysterious expression accentuated by delicate slit eyes that create the impression that the archangel is looking furtively and yet probingly at Mary, and with his firmly clenched lips, may recall the face of the child Jesus in the Liverpool panel; however, the fluid cadence of the draperies, their large and sweeping folds animated only by the fluttering hem, seem to me to betray rather

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different intentions than those that inspired the artist during his period in Avignon. In the Angel of the Annunciation in Antwerp, for example, the artist no longer seeks to dazzle the spectator with the glitter of the exotic oriental silk brocade worn by Gabriel but prefers instead to play with the matching of delicate tones of pink and pale purple, highlighting the mantle with the archaic medium of chrysography, which articulates the folds and underlines the forms more distinctly than the transparent lacquers painted on gold. These aspects, together with the extraordinary elegance of the drawing, seem to me to confirm that the Gallery panel and its companion panel in St. Petersburg (which, as far as it is possible to judge from their existing state, were painted by the same hand) [18] belong to the catalog of Simone's autograph works, though to a phase preceding his journey to Avignon. That phase can be placed between the works executed in the early 1320s for Orvieto and the dated Uffizi Annunciation of 1333.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Simone Martini, *Virgin of the Annunciation*, c. 1330, tempera on panel, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. © The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg/Vladimir Terebinen, Leonard Kheifets, Yuri Molodkovets

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**NOTES**

- [1] Luke 1:26–38. For the iconography of the scene, cf. David M. Robb, “The Iconography of the Annunciation in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,” *The Art Bulletin* 18 (1936): 480–526; Giacomo Prampolini, *L’annunciazione nei pittori primitivi italiani* (Milan, 1939); and the more recent studies by Julia Liebrich, *Die Verkündigung an Maria: Die Ikonographie der italienischen Darstellungen von den Anfängen bis 1500* (Cologne, 1997); and Daniel Arasse, *L’Annonciation italienne: Une histoire de perspective* (Paris, 1999). Marco Pierini’s comment (2000) describing the archangel’s mode of

presenting himself to the Virgin, with his left hand placed on his breast, as a “posa quasi indolente” (almost indolent pose), is a misinterpretation of the image. This gesture is in fact far from rare (cf. Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s *Angel of the Annunciation* in the church of Montesiepi) and should be interpreted as an expression of sincerity and inwardness. Cf. Marco Pierini, *Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2000), 207; Daniel Arasse, *L’Annonciation italienne: Une histoire de perspective* (Paris, 1999), 80–81; and François Garnier, *Le langage de l’image au Moyen Age*, vol. 1, *Signification et symbolique* (Paris, 1982), 184–185.

- [2] No. GE 284; 30.5 × 21.5 cm.
- [3] Giovanni Bernardini (1901) wrote that the small panel was “forse da attribuire al grande artista senese” (perhaps to be attributed to the great Siennese artist), presumably echoing Stroganoff’s own attribution. Giovanni Bernardini, “Alcuni dipinti della collezione del conte Stroganoff in Roma,” *Rassegna d’arte* 1 (1901): 119. The painting was then exhibited in Siena in 1904 as no. 38 in Room XXVII, under the name of Simone. *Mostra dell’antica arte senese: Catalogo generale* (Siena, 1904), no. 38. The attribution was accepted by F. Mason Perkins (1904), Adolfo Venturi (1907), Robert Langton Douglas (1908), Bernard Berenson (1909), and others. See F. Mason Perkins, “La pittura alla mostra d’arte antica a Siena,” *Rassegna d’arte* 4 (1904): 146; Adolfo Venturi, *Storia dell’arte italiana*, vol. 5, *La pittura del Trecento e le sue origini* (Milan, 1907), 629; Robert Langton Douglas, in *A History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, vol. 3, *The Siennese, Umbrian, and North Italian Schools*, by Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle (London, 1908), 69 n. 2; Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1909), 252.
- [4] George Martin Richter (1929) at first proposed the name of Paolo di Giovanni Fei for the panel now in St. Petersburg but later changed his mind (1941), attributing the painting instead to a “close follower” of Simone, perhaps to be identified with Donato Martini. Thereafter the two leaves of the diptych were mainly discussed together. Cf. George Martin Richter, “Simone Martini Problems,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 54 (1929): 171–173; George Martin Richter, “The New National Gallery in Washington,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177.
- [5] Manuscript expertise dated July 2, 1935 (copy in NGA curatorial files).
- [6] Copies of the opinions of Fiocco, Perkins, Suida, and Adolfo Venturi are in NGA curatorial files.
- [7] National Gallery of Art, *Preliminary Catalogue of Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1941), 184–185. Copies of the opinions of Bernard Berenson and Roberto Longhi are in NGA curatorial files.
- [8] Michel Laclotte, *De Giotto à Bellini: Les primitifs italiens dans les musées de*

France (Paris, 1956), 28; Michel Laclotte, *L'École d'Avignon: La peinture en Provence aux XIVe et XVe siècles* (Paris, 1960), 32; Michel Laclotte and Dominique Thiébaud, *L'École d'Avignon* (Paris, 1983), 118 n. 10; François Enaud, "Les fresques de Simone Martini à Avignon," *Les monuments historiques de la France* 9 (1963): 163, 177 n. 161; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 2:405 (but since this is a posthumous edition of *Italian Pictures*, the opinion might be that of the editors and not of Berenson); Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Hendrik W. van Os and Marjan Rinkleff-Reinders, "De reconstructie van Simone Martini's zgn. Polyptiek van de Passie," *Nederlands kunsthistorisch jaarboek* 23 (1972): 9; "Simone Martini o di Martino," in *Dizionario enciclopedico Bolaffi dei pittori e degli incisori italiani: Dall' XI al XX secolo*, ed. Alberto Bolaffi and Umberto Allemandi, 11 vols. (Turin, 1975), 10:325; Antonio Caleca, "Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un'ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 2," *Critica d'arte* 42 (1977): 73; Dillian Gordon, "A Sienese verre eglomisé and Its Setting," *The Burlington Magazine* 123 (1981): 150; Svetlana Nikolaevna Vsevolozskaja, *Ermitage: Italienische Malerei, 13. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, trans. N. Gerassimowa (Leningrad, 1982), 264; Boris Piotrovsky and Irene Linnik, *Western European Painting in the Hermitage* (Leningrad, 1984), no. 1; Colin T. Eisler, *I dipinti dell'Ermitage* (Udine, 1991), 163; "Martini, Simone," in *Dizionario della pittura e dei pittori*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo and Bruno Toscano, 6 vols. (Turin, 1992), 3:526; Tatiana K. Kustodieva, *Italian Painting: Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries, Catalogue of Western European Painting/The Hermitage* (Florence, 1994), 265; Andrew Martindale, "Martini, Simone," in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (New York, 1996), 20:509; Marco Pierini, "Martini, Simone," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:250; Marco Pierini, *Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2000) 206–208, 242 nn. 30, 32; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 332, 333; Michela Becchis, "Martini, Simone," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome, 2008), 71:259; and of course the various Gallery catalogs.

- [9] Giovanni Paccagnini, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 1955), 168–169; Enrico Castelnuovo, *Un pittore italiano alla corte di Avignone: Matteo Giovannetti e la pittura in Provenza nel secolo XIV* (Turin, 1962), 85–96; Wolfgang Kermer, *Studien zum Diptychon in der sakralen Malerei: Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts* (PhD diss., Eberhardt-Karls-Universität, Tübingen, 1967), 2:30; Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 244; Hendrik W. van Os, *Marias Demut und Verherrlichung in der sienesischen Malerei: 1300–1450* (The Hague, 1969), 47 n. 39; Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera*

*completa di Simone Martini*, by Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 106; Miklós Boskovits, “A Dismembered Polyptych, Lippo Vanni and Simone Martini,” *The Burlington Magazine* 116 (1974): 367 n. 9; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, “Unsettling Evidence in Some Panel Paintings of Simone Martini,” in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo, il contributo dell’analisi tecnica alla storia dell’arte*, ed. Hendrik W. van Os and J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 216, 236; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 118, 247, 261, 298, 324, 333, 355, 377, 388, 446, 464; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Problemi martiniani avignonesi: Il ‘Maestro degli angeli ribelli,’ i due Ceccarelli ed altro,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 225–226; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini: Catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Florence, 1989), 130–131; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 60–61, 214–215; Piero Torriti, *Simone Martini* (Florence, 1991), 47; Ada Labriola, *Simone Martini e la pittura gotica a Siena: Duccio di Buoninsegna, Memmo di Filippuccio, Pietro Lorenzetti, Ugolino di Nerio, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Lippo Memmi, Matteo Giovanetti, Naddo Ceccarelli, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, Niccolò di ser Sozzo* (Florence, 2008), 82.

- [10] George Martin Richter (1941) proposed an attribution to Donato Martini, brother of Simone (a virtually unknown artist, from whom no works have survived). Carlo Volpe (1955) wondered whether the painting, which he called a “documento mirabile,” might not have been an early work by the young Matteo Giovannetti, the painter who seems to have become the leading master at the papal court in Avignon following Simone Martini’s death. Subsequently, Cristina De Benedictis (1976, 1979) revived Richter’s thesis and once again attributed the Washington Archangel to Donato, the author, in her view, of works hitherto grouped under the conventional name of Master of the Straus Madonna; cf. Monica Leoncini, “Maestro della Madonna Straus–Donato Martini,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:609–610. Enzo Carli (1981) and Grazia Neri (1997) accepted this proposal, and it was not excluded by Pierluigi Leone de Castris (1988, 1989), who in more recent years (2003) seems indeed to have wholly embraced it. See George Martin Richter, “The New National Gallery in Washington,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 78 (1941): 177; Carlo Volpe, “Un libro su Simone Martini, Review of Simone Martini by Giovanni Paccagnini,” *Paragone* 6, no. 63 (1955): 52; Cristina De Benedictis, “Il Polittico della Passione di Simone Martini e una proposta per Donato,” *Antichità viva* 15, no. 6 (1976): 5, 11 n. 20; Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 29; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 125; Grazia Neri, “Maestro della Madonna Straus,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:101; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Problemi martiniani avignonesi: Il ‘Maestro degli angeli ribelli,’ i due Ceccarelli ed

altro,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 225–226; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini: Catalogo completo dei dipinti* (Florence, 1989), 130–131; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 332–333.

- [11] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 214.
- [12] Brigitte Klesse, *Seidenstoffe in der italienischen Malerei des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1967), 244.
- [13] According to the important (though unfortunately not always sufficiently precise) repertoire of Mojmir Svatoopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), the punches that decorate the panels of the Annunciation now divided between the Hermitage and the National Gallery of Art (namely, the motifs Frinta classified as “Da 10 a,” “J 26 b,” and “Jb 59”) seldom recur in the Orsini quadriptych, a work often assigned to the artist’s final phase. On the other hand, the same punches used in the Annunciation appear with some frequency in works executed by Simone for Orvieto (“Da 10 a,” “Fea 19,” “Gh 8,” “I 86 c,” “I 129a,” “J26 b,” and “Jb 59”) presumably during the third decade; and often also in such paintings as the altarpiece of the Blessed Agostino Novello, now in the Pinacoteca in Siena, usually dated to the second half of the 1320s or after, or the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence, of 1333 (“Da 10 a,” “Fea 19,” “Gh 8,” “I 86 c,” “I 129 a,” “J 26 b,” and “Ka 30 b”). Erling Skaug, who at my request very kindly examined the punch marks of the Saint Petersburg-Washington diptych, wrote in a letter of September 16, 2006, “Most likely the many punches in the diptych that were not used in the Orvieto polyptych means that the diptych is later—perhaps only a little later,” adding, “your suggestion of dating the diptych around 1330 seems just fine from the sphragiographical point of view.”
- [14] George Martin Richter, “Simone Martini Problems,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 54 (1929): 166–173, published the small former Stoclet painting (25 × 17 cm), now in a private collection in the United States, as a work by Simone, but art historians generally rejected the proposal, restated in more recent years in the album *Collection Adolphe Stoclet*, vol. 1, *Choix d’oeuvres appartenant à Madame Feron-Stoclet: Préface de Georges A. Salles, ... Avant-propos de Daisy Lion-Goldschmidt* (Brussels, 1956), 86–88. In my view, the small panel, rarely cited in monographs on Simone (although cf. Contini and Gozzoli 1970, where it is considered as belonging “alla cerchia di Simone in senso lato” [in the circle of Simone in the broadest sense]), and sometimes referred to Naddo Ceccarelli (De Benedictis 1974), could be a product of the shop of Andrea di Vanni (Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413); in any case, it suggests that Sienese artists were familiar with the Hermitage-Gallery diptych. See Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina

Gozzoli, *L'opera completa di Simone Martini* (Milan, 1970), 106; Cristina De Benedictis, "Naddo Ceccarelli," *Commentari* 25 (1974): 139–140.

- [15] The panel in question is one of six small panels now divided among the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp (*Angel of the Annunciation* and *The Descent from the Cross*, originally on the back of the same panel; *Virgin Annunciate* and *Crucifixion*, originally on the back of the same panel); the Louvre, Paris (*The Carrying of the Cross to Calvary*); and the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin (*The Entombment*). They were components of a folding altarpiece that bore the signature of Simone and the coats of arms of the Orsini family; cf. Hendrik W. van Os and Marjan Rinkleff-Reinders, "De reconstructie van Simone Martini's zgn. Polyptiek van de Passie," *Nederlands kunsthistorisch jaarboek* 23 (1972): 13–26. Most scholars have considered this quadriptych a late work, executed c. 1335–1340, even though some have proposed a dating to the third decade or even earlier, such as Marco Pierini, *Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2000), 206–208, 242 nn. 30, 32, and others; see Joseph Polzer, "Simone Martini's Orsini Folding Polyptych: Place of Origin and Date and Its Relation to the 1333 Uffizi Annunciation, 1," *Arte cristiana* 98, no. 860 (2010): 321–330; and Joseph Polzer, "Simone Martini's Orsini Folding Polyptych: Place of Origin and Date and Its Relation to the 1333 Uffizi Annunciation, 2," *Arte cristiana* 98, no. 861 (2010): 401–408. As far as I am able to see, however, stylistic evidence decisively contradicts this hypothesis.
- [16] The title page of ms. A 79 inf. in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan was commissioned by Petrarch, as attested by an autograph note on the back, following the recovery in 1338 of the manuscript that had been stolen from him. Cf. Bernhard Degenhart and Annegrit Schmitt, *Corpus der italienischen Zeichnungen 1300–1450*, 8 vols. (Berlin, 1980–1990), 2, pt. 2:319–331; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 364.
- [17] No. 2787. Cf. Julian Gardner, "The Back of the Panel of Christ Discovered in the Temple by Simone Martini," *Arte cristiana* 78 (1990): 389–398; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 364–365.
- [18] On the occasion of the opening of the National Gallery of Art, Richard Offner expressed a withering judgment of the painting in a review he wrote for *Art News*, but the magazine preferred not to publish it (copy of the proofs in NGA curatorial files). Offner described "a superannuated pigment streaked over the outlines...[which] disfigures the fourteenth century original. The remaining surface seems to have been subjected to successive abrasions.... Hence, partly through modern additions, partly because they never were there, the shapes and the rhythms of Simone are nowhere in evidence." Of course, these lines reflect the panel's state in 1941, and we don't know what Offner thought after its cleaning in 1955 or whether his reservations about the *Angel of the Annunciation* also applied to the *Virgin Annunciate* in the Hermitage. Some art historians in more recent years have tried to identify

stylistic differences between these two panels, such as Maria Cristina Gozzoli in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, by Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 106, who placed the Russian panel in Simone's catalog but believed the Washington panel a workshop product, detecting in it "un notevole scarto di qualità rispetto alle opere certe di Simone...tale da far pensare a un'esecuzione integralmente di bottega" (a notable drop in quality with respect to the certain works of Simone, sufficient to suggest its complete execution by the workshop). Subsequently, however, it seems that no other author has been able to identify—and the present writer decidedly rejects—any such disparity in quality between the two leaves of the diptych. Moreover, recent attempts to discriminate between autograph and workshop parts of the execution are disqualified from the start by the heavily abraded state of the surface of both panels. Cf. Grazia Neri, "Maestro della Madonna Straus," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1997), 8:101; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 332–333, 365. Such a discrimination or division of hands is in any case implausible in the case of these small paintings for private devotion, which, to judge from their sumptuous execution—lavish in gold leaf—must have been destined for high-ranking patrons.

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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support is a single, vertically grained poplar panel [1] on which fine fabric has been applied on both sides. Both the obverse and the reverse were prepared with a gesso ground on which a thin layer of red bole was laid; this in turn was overlaid on the obverse by gold leaf. The main lines of the figure were incised in the gesso preparation. The designs of the brocade were realized with sgraffito technique; the halo and the decorative borders were punched. The paint, with the exception of the flesh, was laid over the gold leaf.[2] The feathers of the angel's wings were articulated with incised lines. The flesh tones were applied over a green underlayer. The reverse, also decorated by punch marks [fig. 1], was originally gilded with silver.[3] The panel exhibits a very slight convex warp and is damaged by a crack running downward from the center of the top edge for approximately 10 cm. The engaged frame of the panel is lost, and the part of the wooden support it covered is exposed on all sides. There are small losses in the gold ground and in the painted surface along the edges. The paint and glazes are generally very abraded. Inpainting can be noted in the angel's right hand, in his face, and in the red floor. The painting is said to have been "cleaned, restored slightly and

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varnished” by Stephen Pichetto in 1936.[4] Photographs made between 1937 and 1955 show it, however, in heavily repainted state [fig. 2]. Mario Modestini removed the overpaint and restored the panel again in 1955.[5]

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**TECHNICAL COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Reverse, Simone Martini, *The Angel of the Annunciation*, c. 1330, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 2** Archival photograph, 1945, old state, Simone Martini, *The Angel of the Annunciation*, c. 1330, tempera on poplar, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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**TECHNICAL NOTES**

- [1] The NGA scientific research department identified the wood as poplar (see report dated September 16, 1988, in NGA conservation files).
- [2] The restorer of the Uffizi Annunciation, executed in 1333 for Siena Cathedral in collaboration with Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347), observed a similar technical procedure; see Alfio Del Serra, "Il restauro," in *Simone Martini e l'Annunciazione degli Uffizi*, ed. Alessandro Cecchi (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 2001), 77–114, in particular 81 and fig. 5. On the use of

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sgraffito technique in Sienese Trecento painting, see Norman E. Muller, “The Development of Sgraffito in Sienese Painting in Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, 27–29 marzo 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 147–150, according to whom this technique became common only in the second half of the century.

- [3] The NGA scientific research department analyzed the reverse of the painting using x-ray fluorescence spectrometry (XRF). Strong peaks for silver were found (see report dated February 29, 2012, in NGA conservation files).
- [4] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:431 n. 6.
- [5] The information on Pichetto’s treatment seems to have been confirmed by Lionello Venturi’s letter to the restorer, dated February 1936 (copy in NGA curatorial files), reporting the discovery of the panel discussed here. Evidently, soon afterward it was handed over to Pichetto for “putting in order.” The “Condition and Restoration Records” of the Samuel H. Kress Collection (copy in NGA curatorial files) also mention “some restoration” carried out by Pichetto, adding, “1955 . . . M. Modestini removed the varnish and all of the overpaints. . . . The cleaning disclosed that considerable original paint had been overcleaned several centuries ago.” For the testimony of such an acute observer as Richard Offner on the painting’s state at the time of its arrival in the National Gallery of Art, see Entry note 18.
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## PROVENANCE

Charles John Canning, 2nd Viscount Canning and later 1st Earl Canning [1812-1862]; by bequest to his sister, Harriet Canning de Burgh [1804-1876], Marchioness of Clanricarde; by inheritance to her daughter, Margaret Anne de Burgh Beaumont [1831-1888]; probably by inheritance to her son, Wentworth Canning Blackett Beaumont, 1st Viscount Allendale [1860-1923];<sup>[1]</sup> said to have been in the collection of Henry George Charles Lascelles, 6th earl of Harewood [1882-1947], Harewood House, Leeds, Yorkshire;<sup>[2]</sup> Lionello Venturi [1895-1961], New York;<sup>[3]</sup> sold 1936 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; gift 1939 to NGA. <sup>[1]</sup> The back of the painting bears a paper label printed with a coat of arms with three Moors’ heads in profile and the coronet of a viscount above. Underneath is painted the name CANNING. As Ellis Waterhouse’s note of 1980 (in NGA curatorial files) informed the Gallery, this can only refer to Charles John Canning; on Canning see also Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage of the British Empire*, 24th ed., London, 1862: 171. The paper label also is inscribed

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with the handwritten name of Lady Margaret Beaumont and the number 32. According to Waterhouse's note, this can only be Margaret Anne de Burgh, daughter of Ulick John de Burgh, 1st Marquess of Clanricarde, and of Harriet Canning, sister and heir of Charles John Canning. Margaret Anne married Wentworth Blackett Beaumont (1829-1907) in 1856. The painting probably was inherited by their son, Wentworth Canning Blackett Beaumont. [2] Lascelles is named in Lionello Venturi's February 1936 letter to the restorer Stephen Pichetto (copy in NGA curatorial files) as the person from whom "about two years ago," i.e., in c. 1934, the painting was acquired by the unnamed person (Venturi) who owned it in February 1936. Lascelles was a grandson of Lady Elizabeth Joanna de Burgh (a sister of Margaret Anne de Burgh Beaumont), who had married Henry Thynne Lascelles, 4th earl Harewood, who became the heir of Elizabeth's and Margaret's unmarried brother, Herbert George de Burgh-Canning, 2nd (and last) marquess of Clanricarde. However, according to Ellis Waterhouse (see note 1) the Washington panel "didn't belong ever to the Earl of Harewood (it was one of the few Clanricarde pictures which didn't)." Indeed, the panel is not included in Tancred Borenius' catalogue of the Harewood collection; the introduction indicates that the 2nd marquess of Clanricarde bequeathed to Lascelles mainly pictures by English eighteenth-century masters; see Tancred Borenius, *Catalogue of the pictures and drawings at Harewood House and elsewhere in the collection of the Earl of Harewood*, Oxford, 1936: vii. [3] Fern Rusk Shapley (*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979: 1:431) states that Venturi sold the panel to Samuel H. Kress in 1936.

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Simone Martini  
Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344

## *Saint James Major*

c. 1315/1320

tempera on panel

painted surface: 26 x 20 cm (10 1/4 x 7 7/8 in.)

overall: 30.7 x 23 cm (12 1/16 x 9 1/16 in.)

framed: 44.4 x 60 cm (17 1/2 x 23 5/8 in.)

Inscription: on the left side of the Saint: .SA[NC]TVS.; on the right side of the Saint: YACOBVS.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.25

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### ENTRY

This panel and its three companions at the Gallery—*Saint Matthew*, *Saint Simon*, and *Saint Judas Thaddeus*—together with six other busts of apostles [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4] [fig. 5] [fig. 6] [fig. 7] [fig. 8] [fig. 9] [fig. 10],[1] originally formed part of a polyptych. The ten panels, acquired as a group by Johann Anton Ramboux in the early nineteenth century, remained together until the 1920s, when they were deaccessioned by the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne and dispersed.

The horizontal graining of the wood of the support in all ten panels suggests they are fragments of a predella.[2] The type of predella formed of busts of saints placed below round arches is rather archaic: in fact, it appears in Sienese painting no later than the years around 1320. Subsequently, preference was given instead to the insertion of narrative scenes in the predella; if busts of saints were included in the program, they were usually inserted in circular or mixtilinear medallions surrounded by painted ornamental motifs.[3] The absence from this series of busts of two of the most venerated apostles, Peter and John, may suggest that these panels were already lost at the time of Ramboux's acquisition of the panels, together with a bust of Christ (or Christ on the Cross) that normally formed the central image of predellas decorated with busts of saints.[4] But it is more likely that the series of apostles in the predella was originally incomplete and that the images of Peter and John were separated from the rest and incorporated in the main register of the altarpiece, as was the case, for example, in *Duccio's Maestà* .[5] As for the sequence of the individual figures, it seems probable that the

apostles Andrew and James Major would have been placed closer to the center (and hence in a position of particular emphasis), and that the images of Matthew, Thomas, Simon, and Thaddeus would have been placed closer to the two ends.[6]

As for the painter of these busts of apostles, an attribution to the Sienese master Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) was supported by Ramboux in the catalog of his collection (1862).[7] This was endorsed by the older studies, beginning with Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle (1864) and ending with Louis Gielly (1926).[8] It was only when the ten panels reentered the art market that the more prestigious name of Simone Martini was proposed by Robert Lehman (1928) and then by others.[9] Art historians generally accepted the attribution to Simone, though more often than not with the qualifier “shop of” or “school of” Simone.[10] The catalog of the National Gallery of Art also cited the four panels presented by the Kress Collection as works of “Simone Martini and assistants.” The attribution to Lippo Memmi, however, was never wholly discarded and has more recently been revived.[11] Proposed dates vary between c. 1320 and 1333.[12]

The attempts in recent decades to unite the catalogs of paintings previously assembled respectively under the names of Lippo Memmi and Barna da Siena, as well as under the nebulous formulae “Companions of Simone,” “Lippo and Tederico Memmi,” or “shop of Memmi” have complicated the matter of distinguishing among the paintings executed within the orbits of Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi and have made Lippo’s artistic development difficult to understand.[13] Inextricably linked to this issue, the chronology of the series of apostles discussed here remains equally problematic. To judge from the works signed and dated[14] by Lippo in the years between c. 1323 and 1333, the insertion in his oeuvre of the four busts of apostles in the Gallery seems far from convincing. The softness of the modeling and the spontaneous naturalness of the saints’ gestures recall more readily the manner of his brother-in-law (Simone Martini) than the solemn poses, polished forms, and metallic sheen that often distinguish the works of Lippo himself.

Of the series of apostles of which the four panels in the Gallery form part, the Saint Andrew now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York [fig. 11] has close affinities, both in physiognomic type and in his rather surly expression, with the apostle, presumably Saint Andrew as well, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, unanimously recognized as Simone’s work.[15] The Saint Judas Thaddeus [fig. 12] in the Gallery similarly invites comparison with the image of the same saint in Simone’s polyptych in the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo in Pisa.[16] In both

images the apostle is presented as a beardless youth who turns towards the arch of the frame with a slight Gothic bend, his head bowed to one side in an attitude of meditation. It cannot be said categorically, however, that the version painted for the polyptych of Pisa around 1319–1320 was the model for the painting in the Gallery, given that the contours of the figure and the drapery folds in the latter are far less agitated, following the stylistic models of previous works by Simone that still fall into the second decade of the century.[17] Comparison with the corresponding figures in the Pisa polyptych remains telling, however, and can also be extended to the representations of Saints Matthew and Simon. Simon is represented as still a young man, with a short, dark beard, while Matthew is a man of middle age in frontal position, with a long, forked beard. Matthew is shown in both paintings in the process of writing his Gospel. Less closely resembling his counterpart in the Washington panel is the Saint James Major of the Pisa polyptych, where we may observe the tendency, absent in the panels discussed here, to present the apostles in movement, to envelop their bodies in voluminous mantles that cast deep folds, and to place sharply foreshortened books in their hands. In the Pisa polyptych the books are in general more voluminous and open, and represented in such a way that some lines of calligraphy are visible. The saints, moreover, often seem to be conversing with one another, accompanying or enforcing their remarks with raised hand or exhibiting an object that not infrequently interrupts the outer contour of the figure, set against the gold ground, as if backlit.

Might the reduced emphasis on agitated rhythms and elegant gestures in the busts of apostles in the Gallery and in their companion panels imply a dating for them prior to the Pisa polyptych? Unfortunately, “objective data” deriving from the use of punch marks help us little in this case, since according to Mojmir S. Frinta’s survey (1998), the punched motifs present in the panels now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art [fig. 11] [fig. 13] [fig. 14] [fig. 15] and the Gallery recur virtually throughout the entire oeuvre of Simone Martini, from the San Gimignano polyptych to the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence (1333), and beyond.[18] It might be more fruitful to concentrate attention instead on another aspect, namely the fact that Simone, as far as we are able to judge today, generally avoided the use of the round arch in his altarpieces. This motif appears for the last time in the youthful polyptych from San Gimignano, while in later works the arch, if it is not Gothic, is enriched with small trefoil arches on the inside, as in the Pisa polyptych. Not only is the framing of the National Gallery of Art panels very similar to that of the components of the predella of the Saint Louis of Toulouse in Naples (painted in

c. 1317, the year of the saint's canonization), but also their stylistic character is consistent with that of the works realized in the years of rapid development between the *Maestà* in the Palazzo Pubblico (1315) and the Pisan polyptych of 1319–1320.

These considerations raise the question of identifying the altarpiece of which the ten busts of apostles formed part. Michael Mallory (1974) argued that the four Washington panels, together with their six companion panels in other collections, were in origin the predella of the polyptych by Lippo Memmi of which *Saint John the Baptist* in the Gallery also formed part.[19] The proposal has not met with acceptance in the art historical literature, but no alternative hypotheses have yet been formulated. A possible candidate for the lost central panel of the polyptych of which the series of busts of apostles formed part could be, in the present writer's opinion, the Madonna and Child from the church of Santa Maria Maddalena at Castiglion d'Orcia, now in the Museo Civico e Diocesano at Montalcino (80 × 61 cm).[20] The width of the panel is not very different from that of the images placed at the center of Simone's polyptychs executed for churches in Pisa, Orvieto, or San Gimignano, and its height is also close to that from San Gimignano, now deprived of its original frame. So there is nothing to prevent us from imagining the Montalcino Madonna at the center of a similar polyptych and with a series of apostles in its predella. Our panels share with it not only a similar date but also the external profile terminating in a round arch.

In conclusion, the ten panels of the apostles can, I believe, be firmly attributed to Simone Martini. In the past scholars have generally undervalued these panels, not as a consequence of any intrinsic mediocrity but because of the loss of the pictorial finishes in some of them, flattening the modeling of the figures, and the unhappy result of successive restorations that have obscured many of the more exquisite touches of the pictorial technique, especially in the busts of Saints Bartholomew, Matthias, and Thomas now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, the better-preserved passages in our panels, in particular in the faces of Saints Thaddeus and James Major, still retain qualities that, in the view of the present writer, seem fully worthy of the hand of Simone.

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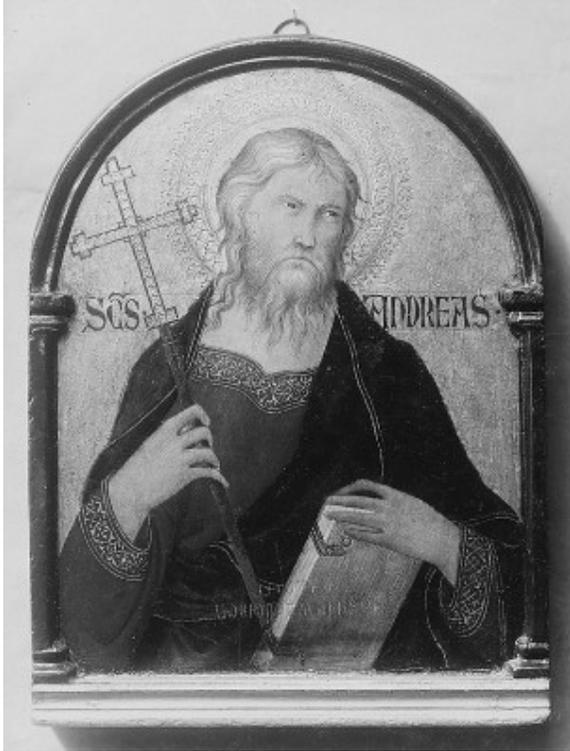
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



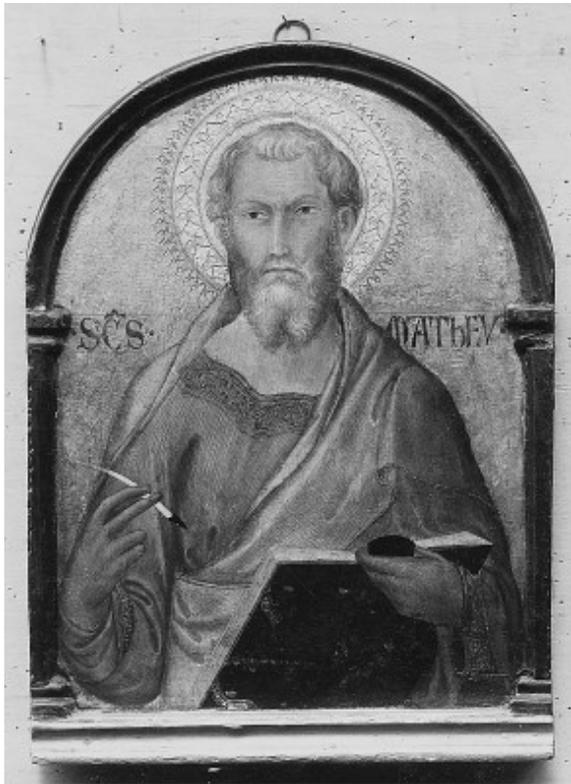
**fig. 2** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Simon*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



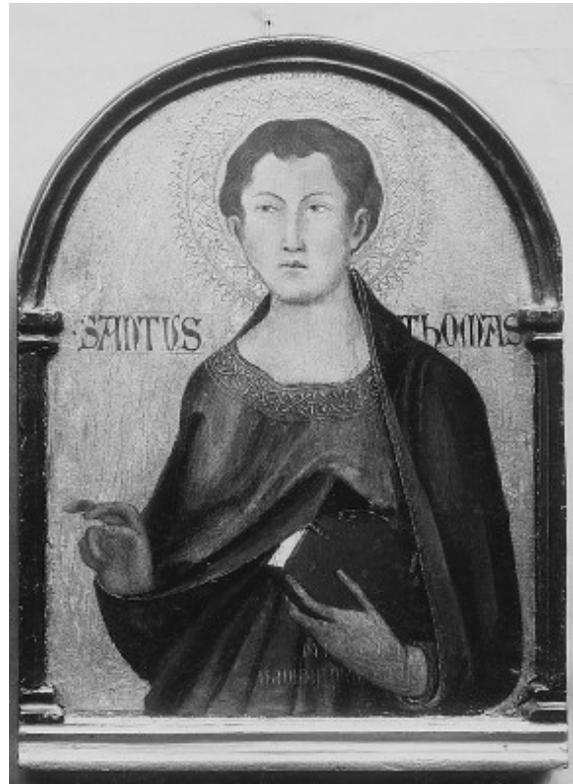
**fig. 3** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 4** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 5** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 6** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 7** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Major*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 8** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Philip*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, location unknown. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



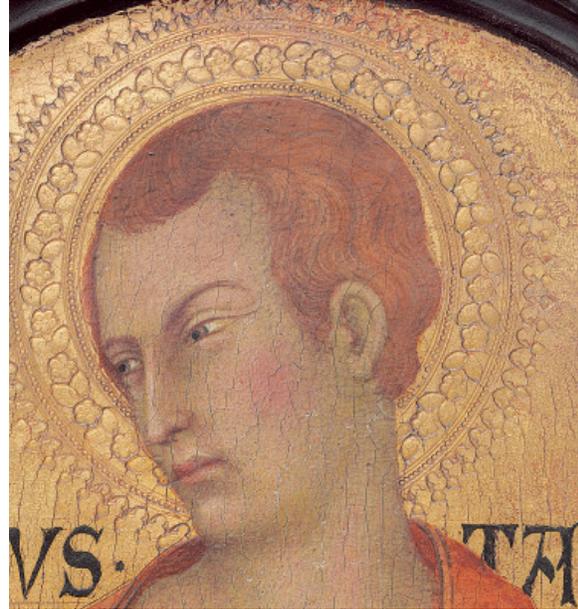
**fig. 9** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Minor*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, Salini collection, Castello di Gallico, Asciano, Siena. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 10** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



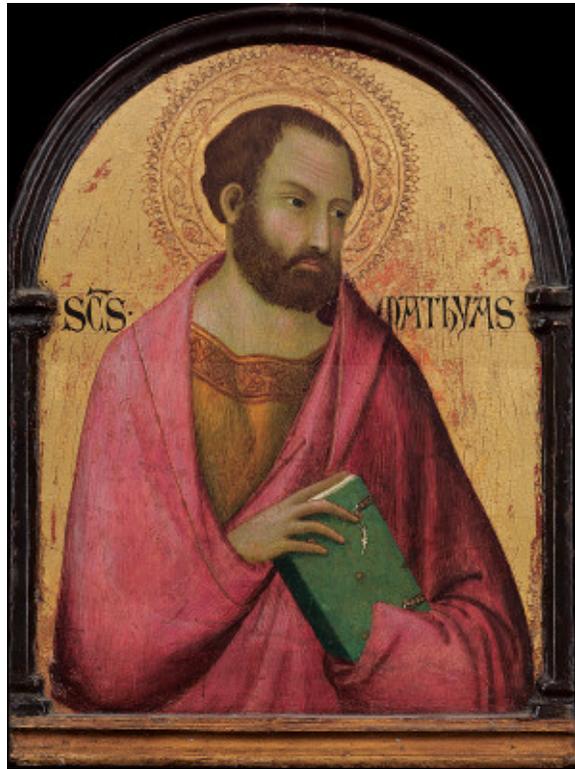
**fig. 11** Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



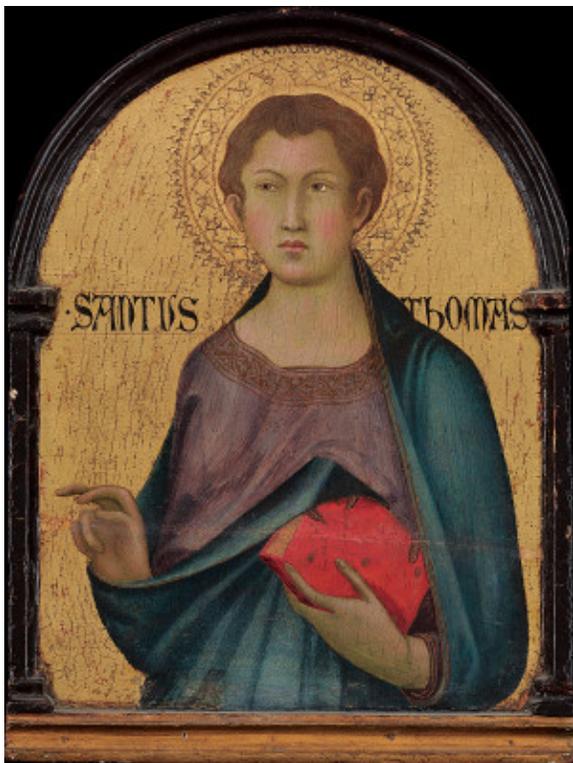
**fig. 12** Detail, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 13** Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 14** Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 15** Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943

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## NOTES

- [1] In 1924, Maitland Fuller Griggs, acquired four panels of the series—Saints Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthias, and Andrew—through Edward Hutton, and these entered the Metropolitan Museum, New York, in 1943. The bust of Saint James Minor (fig. 9) belonged to the Stoclet Collection in Brussels at least since 1927, and since 2005 it has belonged to the Salini collection at Castello di Gallico (Asciano). Philip Lehman purchased the image of Saint Philip (fig. 8) along with the four panels discussed here before 1928. The Saint Philip was sold at auction at Christie's in New York on January 11, 1991 (lot 12). It was purchased by Carlo de Carlo (Florence), in whose collection it remained until 1999; its present whereabouts are unknown.

- [2] The predella, especially in large-size altarpieces in Tuscany, was almost always painted on a single timber with grain running horizontally, separated from the wooden support of the main panels. The top tier of images above the main register, on the other hand, was frequently painted on the same vertically grained panel as the main register itself. See John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 89–91; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55. The following scholars maintained that the panels formed part of the predella of a polyptych: Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 60; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 76; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117; Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Cristina De Benedictis, *Lippo Memmi in Encyclopaedia dell’arte medievale*, Rome, 1996, 7:732. De Benedictis (1974) initially argued, as Federico Zeri (1980) did, that they belonged instead to the upper register of a polyptych. Gertrude Coor (1956) thought that both solutions were possible, as did Sabina Spannocchi (2009). See Cristina De Benedictis, “A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco,” *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Gertrude Coor, “Trecento–Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux,” *Wallraf–Richartz–Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:135.
- [3] Examples of the predella type with busts of saints set in round-arched frames are Simone Martini’s polyptych now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (1319–1320); that of Ugolino di Nerio in the Museo Nazionale in Lucca, datable to c. 1320; and that of Meo da Siena, also dating to around 1315–1320, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Perugia. Cf. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: fig. 375; and Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 58–59. Predellas with medallions surrounded by floriated motifs, by contrast, were used by Giotto in his polyptychs in the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce in Florence and in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna in the years 1325–1335, and, among Sieneese artists, by Ugolino di Nerio in the

predella now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts at Besançon (see Stubblebine 1979, fig. 465), and by *Bartolomeo Bulgarini* in the predella of his polyptych formerly in Santa Croce, now in the storerooms of the Gallerie Fiorentine; see Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 72. Sometimes, as in Simone Martini's altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse in the Museo di Capodimonte at Naples (1317), the round arches of the predella contain not the busts of saints but small narrative scenes. Perhaps the practice of adding a predella containing busts of saints to small devotional paintings originated in the shops of Simone and Lippo (cf. the Madonna in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, no. P. 30 w 8, or the Crucifixion no. 156 of the Pinacoteca Vaticana). It seems to reflect a type of altarpiece similar to that of Simone in Naples: paintings, that is, with a single scene (instead of several panels with figures of saints) in the main register.

- [4] However, sometimes, as in the above-cited predella of Meo da Siena's polyptych, Christ does not appear among the apostles, and the center of the sequence of busts of apostles is occupied instead by Saints Peter and Paul.
- [5] In Duccio's masterpiece, the large scene representing the Madonna and Child flanked by saints and angels is surmounted by a horizontal second register of half-length saints (from left to right): the busts of Saints Thaddeus, Simon, Philip, James Major, Andrew, Matthew, James Minor, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthias. The apostles Peter and Paul, and John the Evangelist, on the other hand, are represented, together with the Baptist, as full-length figures flanking the throne of the Madonna.
- [6] In his analysis of the problem of the sequence of busts, Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the following order, from left to right: Matthias, Thomas, Bartholomew, James (Minor or Major), Matthew, Andrew, James[?], Philip, Simon, and Thaddeus, observing that this would be the exact reverse of the order followed by Duccio in representing the ten apostles in the *Maestà* and by Simone Martini in the predella of the Pisa polyptych, in which Peter and Paul are naturally added to the ten, in a central position (John the Evangelist appears here among the saints in the main register). See Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts 7* (1987): 83–84. But the sequence represented in the works of Duccio and Simone Martini is not the only possible one. For example, Simone represented the apostles in the *Maestà* he frescoed in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena in the order of: Bartholomew, Philip, Matthew, Thomas, James Minor, James Major, Matthias, Andrew, Thaddeus, and Simon (with Paul, John the Evangelist, John the Baptist, and Peter placed in the foreground); for the identification of the apostles, cf. Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 155–157. Different again is the sequence of apostles adopted by Giotto in the Last Judgment of the

Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, and in the Stefaneschi polyptych in the Pinacoteca Vaticana; cf. Margrit Lisner, “Die Gewandfarben der Apostel in Giotto’s Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbikonographie mit Notizen zu älteren Aposteldarstellungen in Florenz, Assisi und Rom,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53 (1990): 309–375; and Margrit Lisner, “Giotto und die Aufträge des Kardinals Jacopo Stefaneschi für Alt-St. Peter: 2; der Stefaneschi-Altar; Giotto und seine Werkstatt in Rom; das Altarwerk und der verlorene Christuszyklus in der Petersapsis,” *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 30 (1995): 59–133. Only the central position of Peter, Paul, and John (if they form part of the series), as well as James Major and Andrew, holds good as a general rule.

- [7] *Katalog der Gemälde Alter italienischer Meister (1221–1640) in der Sammlung des Conservator J.A. Ramboux* (Cologne, 1862), 15, no. 75.
- [8] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1864–1866), 2:105; Louis Gielly, *Les primitifs siennois* (Paris, 1926), 111.
- [9] At least as regards the panels that entered the Griggs collection in New York through Edward Hutton, the attribution to Simone presumably had been made by the dealer/amateur Hutton himself. The Saint James Minor also seems to have entered the Stoclet collection in Brussels with an attribution to Simone; cf. Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315. August L. Mayer (1930) further accepted Simone Martini’s authorship for the panels then in the Lehman collection, as did George McCall and William Valentiner. August L. Mayer, “Die Sammlung Philip Lehman,” *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 113; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117.
- [10] Perhaps having been asked by Maitland Fuller Griggs in 1926 for his expertise, Richard Offner orally ascribed the four panels acquired for that collection as “school of Simone Martini,” while in 1926 Raimond van Marle, in a manuscript opinion, attributed the paintings to an “immediate follower of Simone Martini.” See Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 96. Intervening in 1932 and then in 1936, and in the posthumous edition of 1968, Bernard Berenson (who in 1925 had conjectured the authorship of the young Lippo Vanni; for his expertise, see Zeri and Gardner 1980, 96) defined the image of Saint Matthew as at least in part by Simone, but classified the other four panels of the series in the Lehman collection as works of the artist’s shop. F. Mason Perkins (1937) thought the Lehman panels in large part executed by Simone’s assistants. The participation of the artist’s assistants was also detected in the paintings by Gertrude Coor

(1956), in *Exposition de la collection Lehman 1957*, by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), by Joseph Polzer (1971), by Burton B. Fredericksen and Zeri (1972), by Zeri and Gardner (1980), by Giovanni Previtali (1987), by Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder (1998), and by Alessandro Bagnoli (1999). Even the recent catalog entry by Sabina Spannocchi (in Bellosi 2009), although citing the series of apostles under Simone's name, considered it executed in part by assistants "under the surveillance" of the master. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 534; Bernard Berenson, *Pittura italiana del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 459; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:404; F. Mason Perkins, "Simone di Martino (Simone Martini)," in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1937), 31:67; Gertrude Coor, "Trecento-Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 43; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Joseph Polzer, "Observations on Known Paintings and a New Altarpiece by Francesco Traini," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 386; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Federico Zeri, in *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner (New York, 1980), 95; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 118, 189, 205, 311, 321, 400, 444, 453; Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, ed., *Lust und Verlust*, vol. 2, *Corpus-Band zu Kölner Gemäldesammlungen 1800–1860* (Cologne, 1998), 551–552; Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999) 156 n. 24, 179; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:132–141.

- [11] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) revived the attribution to Lippo Memmi, followed by Pietro Toesca (1951), Maria Cristina Gozzoli (in Contini and Gozzoli 1970), Cristina De Benedictis (1974, 1979, 1996), Michael Mallory (1974), Michel Laclotte (1978), and Andrew Martindale (1988). The present writer (1988) limited himself to rejecting the ascription of the panels to Lippo Memmi, without offering any alternative attribution. See Lionello

Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), nos. 60–61; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: nos. 76–77; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte classica e italiana 3; Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 551 n. 75; Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 105 n. 53; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 93; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201, n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 75.

- [12] Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979) and Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the date c. 1320; Cristina De Benedictis (1974), 1325—i.e., the date of the lost polyptych by Lippo Memmi for San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa—or, more cautiously (De Benedictis 1996), after 1323, the presumable date of the *Triumph of Saint Thomas* in San Domenico at Pisa. Michael Mallory (1974) dated the series c. 1330; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth Gardner (1980), to the period between c. 1320 and 1333. Sabina Spannocchi (2009) suggested the date of execution as c. 1317. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:139.
- [13] After the publications by Gordon Moran (1976), who was the first to cast doubt on whether a painter called Barna da Siena had ever existed—according to him, the name was an erroneous transcription of Bartolo di

Fredi—and that of Antonino Caleca (1976, 1977), who argued that the works formerly attributed to “Barna” should be reassigned to the catalog of Lippo Memmi, art historians have gone their separate ways in trying to identify the masters of the paintings left orphans after Barna’s “demise.” Luciano Bellosi (1977) wrote of the “Famiglia Memmi” as a kind of family concern, while Carlo Volpe (1982) considered probable Moran’s hypothesis attributing the paintings to Federico Memmi, brother of Lippo. Giovanna Damiani (1985) maintained that “la firma di Lippo Memmi corrisponda...ad una sorta di etichetta che indica anziché l’attività di una personalità artistica, quella di una bottega comprendente Lippo e Federico Memmi e che doveva avere al suo attivo anche personalità minori” (Lippo Memmi’s signature corresponds to a kind of label that indicates not the activity of an artistic personality but the activity of a workshop comprising Lippo and Federico Memmi and that must have included minor figures as well). Returning to the question, Bellosi (1985) thought it right to “riconsiderare unitariamente tutta la produzione che fa capo al prestigioso atelier familiare di Simone Martini, ivi comprese le opere attribuite a Lippo e a Barna” (reconsider integrally the entire production of the prestigious family workshop headed by Simone Martini, including the works attributed to Lippo and Barna). Previtali (1988) went further, affirming that “lo stile che siamo soliti chiamare ‘Barna’...sta a Simone un po’ come lo stile dei manieristi sta a quello di Michelangiolo” (the style that we are accustomed to calling Barna is to Simone a bit as the style of the mannerists is to Michelangelo). Previtali also proposed, albeit with caution, that some works usually attributed to Lippo be reassigned to Simone himself. To Leone de Castris (1988), a “distinzione puntuale fra le opere di ‘Barna’” (precise distinction between the works of “Barna”)—in his view probably executed by a presumed Federico Memmi—and those of the “Maestro della Madonna Straus,” another anonymous Simonese painter, seemed to be “operazione assai difficoltosa” (a rather difficult task). Miklós Boskovits (2008) and Ada Labriola (2008) insisted on the necessity of restoring to Lippo Memmi the paintings attributed to Barna, but Sabina Spannocchi (2009) still preferred to speak of the “cosidetto Barna” (the so-called Barna). See Gordan Moran, “Is the Name Barna an Incorrect Transcription of the Name Bartolo?” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 76–80; Antonio Caleca, “Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1,” *Critica d’arte* 41 (1976): 49–59; Antonio Caleca, “Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 2,” *Critica d’arte* 42 (1977): 55–80; Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 21; Carlo Volpe, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d’art* (Florence, 1982), 186–187; Giovanna Damiani, in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 82–85; Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 94–102; Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai

problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 160–161; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Problemi martiniani avignonesi: Il ‘Maestro degli angeli ribelli,’ i due Ceccarelli ed altro,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 230 n. 10; Miklós Boskovits, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 26; Ada Labriola, *Simone Martini e la pittura gotica a Siena: Duccio di Buoninsegna, Memmo di Filippuccio, Pietro Lorenzetti, Ugolino di Nerio, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Lippo Memmi, Matteo Giovanetti, Naddo Ceccarelli, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, Niccolò di ser Sozzo* (Florence, 2008), 56–58; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:141.

- [14] The *Madonna della Misericordia* in Orvieto Cathedral, signed “Lippus de Sena natus nos pinxit amena,” is not dated but in general is thought to have been executed around 1320. Cf. Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 156; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lippo Memmi,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; and Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 176–177. The *Madonna and Child* in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg is usually dated slightly later; see Joseph Polzer, “Symon Martini et Lippus Memmi me pinxerunt,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 168; De Benedictis (1996, 7:732); Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 217 n. 41; and Johannes Tripps, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 49. For the diptych divided between the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and a private collection that bears the date 1333, see Millard Meiss, “Notes on a Dated Diptych by Lippo Memmi,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto and Paolo Dal Poggetto, 2 vols. (Milan, 1977), 1:137–139; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 76.
- [15] No. 51.2397; Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. 1, *13th–15th Century* (Boston, 1994), 84, accepted the dating of the work shared by most art historians, to the early 1320s. Boskovits had already proposed in 1990 a comparison between the two images of the saint. Miklós Boskovits, “Review of Simone Martini by Andrew Martindale,” *Kunstchronik* 43 (1990): 595–601.
- [16] The date of the altarpiece is variously indicated as 1319 or 1320. Both dates are derived from the same source: the sixteenth-century *Annali* of the Dominican convent in Pisa, which record the placing of the polyptych over

the high altar of the church of Santa Caterina in 1320. But this date, if calculated according to the Pisan style in use at the time the polyptych was painted, could be equivalent to 1319 in the modern calendar. Cf. Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 352.

- [17] Art historians in recent decades generally have agreed on dating the frescoes with half-length figures of saints in the northern transept of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi to the years 1315–1320. Cf. Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 94–95; Luciano Bellosi, “La barba di San Francesco: Nuove proposte per il ‘problema di Assisi,’” *Prospettiva* 22 (1980): 13–14; and Carlo Volpe, in *Il Gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 179. A similar dating is proposed for the polyptych formerly in Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano; cf. Cristina De Benedictis, “Pittura e miniatura del Duecento e del Trecento in terra di Siena,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:337–339; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 200–202 n. 23; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 349. The polyptych now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (no. 41.100.23, Lehman Collection, no. 1975.1.12 and 13), the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (no. 82.PB.72) is usually dated to the 1320s, but the present writer prefers an earlier dating, towards the mid-1310s; cf. Miklós Boskovits, “Da Duccio a Simone Martini,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 577.
- [18] The punch marks in the four Washington panels are registered as follows by Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998): “Da10a” (present in works by Simone Martini from the San Gimignano polyptych to the late Orsini quadriptych and in various works of Lippo Memmi), 117–119; “Ea1” (present in paintings by Simone with a presumable provenance from Orvieto, in the Orsini quadriptych, and in works by Lippo), 189; “Fd14a” (used in a similar way as the preceding punches); “I16a” (used in Simone’s polyptych divided among the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in the Uffizi Annunciation, and in panels attributed to Lippo), 205; “I70” (present in paintings between the Orvieto phase and the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 321; “Jb59” (present in works of Simone’s Orvieto phase and in the Orsini quadriptych, but not found in authenticated paintings by Lippo), 388; “Jc15” (present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 400–401; “Ka27a” (again present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in various works by Lippo), 444; and

“Ka63” (used in a similar way as the previous punch), 453–454.

- [19] Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19.
- [20] The Madonna formerly at Castiglione d’Orcia was not necessarily painted for that town and was variously attributed in the past. Serena Padovani (1979) attributed it to Simone, and Alessandro Bagnoli (1997) accepted the attribution, whereas Leone de Castris (2003) thought it was painted “in buona parte” by studio assistants of Simone and dated it to the early 1320s. With regard to the dating of the painting, it should be borne in mind that Frinta (1998) found in it a punch mark present in various works by Simone executed during his period in Orvieto, as well as in the Pisa polyptych of 1319–1320, and in the San Gimignano polyptych. See Serena Padovani, “Una tavola di Castiglione d’Orcia restaurata di recente,” *Prospettiva* 17 (1979): 82–88; Alessandro Bagnoli, *Museo civico e diocesano d’arte sacra di Montalcino* (Siena, 1997), 33, 35; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 209, 354; Mojmír Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 428.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting and its three companions, *Saint Matthew*, *Saint Simon*, and *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, were executed on panels apparently made of a single piece of wood with horizontal grain, which has been thinned to 2.5 cm thick, backed, and cradled. Stephen Pichetto applied the backings and cradles in 1944, at which time he may also have thinned the panels and added the wooden strips that are currently affixed to all sides of each. The inner molding of the arch as well as the capitals and bases of the engaged frame surrounding the painted surface of each panel are original. Before the painting process, the panels were covered with a fabric interleaf, on which a layer of gesso ground was applied. The areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole and the halos decorated with punch marks—those in *Saint Matthew* and *Saint Simon* extend onto the top arches of the engaged frames. Incised lines were used to demarcate the figures; a green underpainting was laid in beneath the flesh tones; and the paint was applied with fine, unblended brushstrokes. Infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 5 microns shows a linear underdrawing in the figures’ hands but not in their clothing, except in *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, in which all the folds in the saint’s cloak were delineated in a liquid medium.[1] Mordant gilding was used for embellishing the borders of the

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saints' robes and the bosses and clasps of their books. The books are further decorated with punch marks, and a black material, which might have been silver, has been applied over the gilded clasps and bosses.

The painted surfaces of all four panels are slightly worn but in fair state apart from a number of small, scattered losses largely associated with the damages to the supports and the removal of parts of the original engaged frames and moldings along the borders. Two small repairs are visible in the gold ground in *Saint Matthew*, and retouchings around the saint's throat, chest, and shoulders have discolored. Retouching in *Saint Simon* mostly affects the saint's right cheek and left shoulder. Vertical and diagonal cracks, with attendant minor paint loss, are more prominent along the bottom edge of *Saint James Major*, while retouching in *Saint Judas Thaddeus* is largely confined to the saint's face and book. The lettering of the inscriptions in all four panels has been reinforced. When he applied the cradles in 1944, Stephen Pichetto also "cleaned, restored, and varnished" the paintings. Robert Lehman (1928) mentioned an earlier cleaning, probably in the early 1920s.[2]

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 focal plane array PtSi camera.
- [2] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), n.p., stated that the panels "were covered by an old varnish which has lately been removed." For the intervention in 1944, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:433.
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### PROVENANCE

Acquired between 1832 and 1842 by Johann Anton Ramboux [1790-1866], Cologne, together with six other components of the same series, presumably in Siena:[1] (his estate sale, J.M. Heberle, Cologne, 23 May 1867, no. 75 [all ten panels], as by Lippo Memmi);[2] the whole series purchased by the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, which deaccessioned it in 1922-1923;[3] the four NGA panels, 1952.5.23-.26, purchased together with a fifth panel of the same series, by

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Philip Lehman [1861-1947], New York, by 1928; [4] the four NGA panels sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; [5] gift 1952 to the NGA. [1] Ramboux built up his huge collection of early Italian pictures essentially in the above-mentioned years of his second period of residence in Italy; see Christoph Merzenich, "Di dilettanza per un artista - Der Sammler Antonio Giovanni Ramboux in der Toskana," in *Lust und Verlust*, edited by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, 2 vols., Cologne, 1995-1998: 1(1995): 303-314. [2] Without quoting their provenance, the sale catalogue entry states only that the ten busts " . . . stimmen im Ausdruck wie in der übrigen Technik mit den Wandmalereien im Stadthause zu Sangemignano überein." [3] See Kier and Zehnder 1995-1998, 2(1998): 550-552. [4] The four panels in Washington and a fifth, representing *Saint Philip*, are included in the catalogue of the Lehman collection (Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York, Paris, 1928*: nos. xix-xxiii). Possibly, Philip Lehman acquired them through Edward Hutton in London, who also handled the panels of the series now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. [5] The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.23-.26, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892-1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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Simone Martini  
Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344

## *Saint Judas Thaddeus*

c. 1315/1320

tempera on panel

painted surface: 26 x 19.7 cm (10 1/4 x 7 3/4 in.)

overall: 30.7 x 23.3 cm (12 1/16 x 9 3/16 in.)

framed: 44.4 x 60 cm (17 1/2 x 23 5/8 in.)

Inscription: on the left of the Saint: .SAN[C]TVS.; on the right of the Saint:  
TAD[D]EVs.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.26

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### ENTRY

This panel and its three companions at the Gallery—*Saint Matthew*, *Saint Simon*, and *Saint James Major*—together with six other busts of apostles [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4] [fig. 5] [fig. 6] [fig. 7] [fig. 8] [fig. 9] [fig. 10],[1] originally formed part of a polyptych. The ten panels, acquired as a group by Johann Anton Ramboux in the early nineteenth century, remained together until the 1920s, when they were deaccessioned by the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne and dispersed.

The horizontal graining of the wood of the support in all ten panels suggests they are fragments of a predella.[2] The type of predella formed of busts of saints placed below round arches is rather archaic: in fact, it appears in Sienese painting no later than the years around 1320. Subsequently, preference was given instead to the insertion of narrative scenes in the predella; if busts of saints were included in the program, they were usually inserted in circular or mixtilinear medallions surrounded by painted ornamental motifs.[3] The absence from this series of busts of two of the most venerated apostles, Peter and John, may suggest that these panels were already lost at the time of Ramboux's acquisition of the panels, together with a bust of Christ (or Christ on the Cross) that normally formed the central image of predellas decorated with busts of saints.[4] But it is more likely that the series of apostles in the predella was originally incomplete and that the images of Peter and John were separated from the rest and incorporated in the main register of the altarpiece, as was the case, for example, in *Duccio's Maestà* .[5] As for the sequence of the individual figures, it seems probable that the

apostles Andrew and James Major would have been placed closer to the center (and hence in a position of particular emphasis), and that the images of Matthew, Thomas, Simon, and Thaddeus would have been placed closer to the two ends.[6]

As for the painter of these busts of apostles, an attribution to the Sienese master Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) was supported by Ramboux in the catalog of his collection (1862).[7] This was endorsed by the older studies, beginning with Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle (1864) and ending with Louis Gielly (1926).[8] It was only when the ten panels reentered the art market that the more prestigious name of Simone Martini was proposed by Robert Lehman (1928) and then by others.[9] Art historians generally accepted the attribution to Simone, though more often than not with the qualifier “shop of” or “school of” Simone.[10] The catalog of the National Gallery of Art also cited the four panels presented by the Kress Collection as works of “Simone Martini and assistants.” The attribution to Lippo Memmi, however, was never wholly discarded and has more recently been revived.[11] Proposed dates vary between c. 1320 and 1333.[12]

The attempts in recent decades to unite the catalogs of paintings previously assembled respectively under the names of Lippo Memmi and Barna da Siena, as well as under the nebulous formulae “Companions of Simone,” “Lippo and Tederico Memmi,” or “shop of Memmi” have complicated the matter of distinguishing among the paintings executed within the orbits of Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi and have made Lippo’s artistic development difficult to understand.[13] Inextricably linked to this issue, the chronology of the series of apostles discussed here remains equally problematic. To judge from the works signed and dated[14] by Lippo in the years between c. 1323 and 1333, the insertion in his oeuvre of the four busts of apostles in the Gallery seems far from convincing. The softness of the modeling and the spontaneous naturalness of the saints’ gestures recall more readily the manner of his brother-in-law (Simone Martini) than the solemn poses, polished forms, and metallic sheen that often distinguish the works of Lippo himself.

Of the series of apostles of which the four panels in the Gallery form part, the Saint Andrew now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York [fig. 11] has close affinities, both in physiognomic type and in his rather surly expression, with the apostle, presumably Saint Andrew as well, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, unanimously recognized as Simone’s work.[15] The Saint Judas Thaddeus [fig. 12] in the Gallery similarly invites comparison with the image of the same saint in Simone’s polyptych in the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo in Pisa.[16] In both

images the apostle is presented as a beardless youth who turns towards the arch of the frame with a slight Gothic bend, his head bowed to one side in an attitude of meditation. It cannot be said categorically, however, that the version painted for the polyptych of Pisa around 1319–1320 was the model for the painting in the Gallery, given that the contours of the figure and the drapery folds in the latter are far less agitated, following the stylistic models of previous works by Simone that still fall into the second decade of the century.[17] Comparison with the corresponding figures in the Pisa polyptych remains telling, however, and can also be extended to the representations of Saints Matthew and Simon. Simon is represented as still a young man, with a short, dark beard, while Matthew is a man of middle age in frontal position, with a long, forked beard. Matthew is shown in both paintings in the process of writing his Gospel. Less closely resembling his counterpart in the Washington panel is the Saint James Major of the Pisa polyptych, where we may observe the tendency, absent in the panels discussed here, to present the apostles in movement, to envelop their bodies in voluminous mantles that cast deep folds, and to place sharply foreshortened books in their hands. In the Pisa polyptych the books are in general more voluminous and open, and represented in such a way that some lines of calligraphy are visible. The saints, moreover, often seem to be conversing with one another, accompanying or enforcing their remarks with raised hand or exhibiting an object that not infrequently interrupts the outer contour of the figure, set against the gold ground, as if backlit.

Might the reduced emphasis on agitated rhythms and elegant gestures in the busts of apostles in the Gallery and in their companion panels imply a dating for them prior to the Pisa polyptych? Unfortunately, “objective data” deriving from the use of punch marks help us little in this case, since according to Mojmir S. Frinta’s survey (1998), the punched motifs present in the panels now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art [fig. 11] [fig. 13] [fig. 14] [fig. 15] and the Gallery recur virtually throughout the entire oeuvre of Simone Martini, from the San Gimignano polyptych to the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence (1333), and beyond.[18] It might be more fruitful to concentrate attention instead on another aspect, namely the fact that Simone, as far as we are able to judge today, generally avoided the use of the round arch in his altarpieces. This motif appears for the last time in the youthful polyptych from San Gimignano, while in later works the arch, if it is not Gothic, is enriched with small trefoil arches on the inside, as in the Pisa polyptych. Not only is the framing of the National Gallery of Art panels very similar to that of the components of the predella of the Saint Louis of Toulouse in Naples (painted in

c. 1317, the year of the saint's canonization), but also their stylistic character is consistent with that of the works realized in the years of rapid development between the *Maestà* in the Palazzo Pubblico (1315) and the Pisan polyptych of 1319–1320.

These considerations raise the question of identifying the altarpiece of which the ten busts of apostles formed part. Michael Mallory (1974) argued that the four Washington panels, together with their six companion panels in other collections, were in origin the predella of the polyptych by Lippo Memmi of which *Saint John the Baptist* in the Gallery also formed part.[19] The proposal has not met with acceptance in the art historical literature, but no alternative hypotheses have yet been formulated. A possible candidate for the lost central panel of the polyptych of which the series of busts of apostles formed part could be, in the present writer's opinion, the Madonna and Child from the church of Santa Maria Maddalena at Castiglion d'Orcia, now in the Museo Civico e Diocesano at Montalcino (80 × 61 cm).[20] The width of the panel is not very different from that of the images placed at the center of Simone's polyptychs executed for churches in Pisa, Orvieto, or San Gimignano, and its height is also close to that from San Gimignano, now deprived of its original frame. So there is nothing to prevent us from imagining the Montalcino Madonna at the center of a similar polyptych and with a series of apostles in its predella. Our panels share with it not only a similar date but also the external profile terminating in a round arch.

In conclusion, the ten panels of the apostles can, I believe, be firmly attributed to Simone Martini. In the past scholars have generally undervalued these panels, not as a consequence of any intrinsic mediocrity but because of the loss of the pictorial finishes in some of them, flattening the modeling of the figures, and the unhappy result of successive restorations that have obscured many of the more exquisite touches of the pictorial technique, especially in the busts of Saints Bartholomew, Matthias, and Thomas now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, the better-preserved passages in our panels, in particular in the faces of Saints Thaddeus and James Major, still retain qualities that, in the view of the present writer, seem fully worthy of the hand of Simone.

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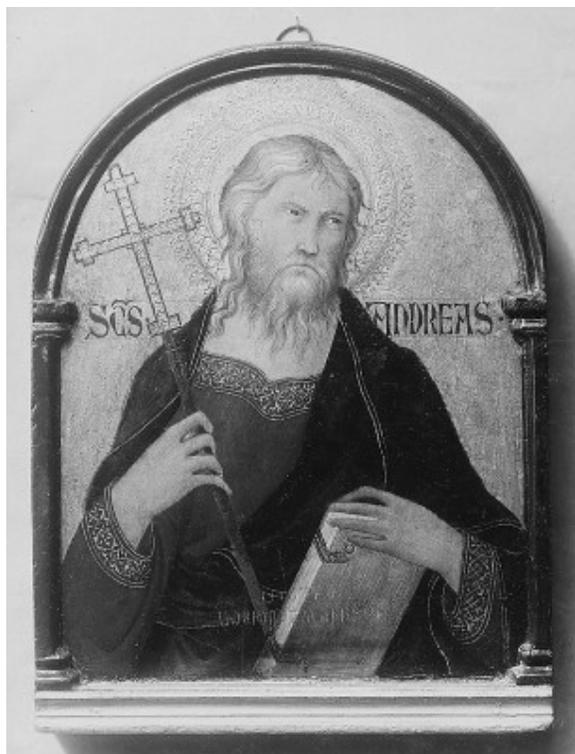
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



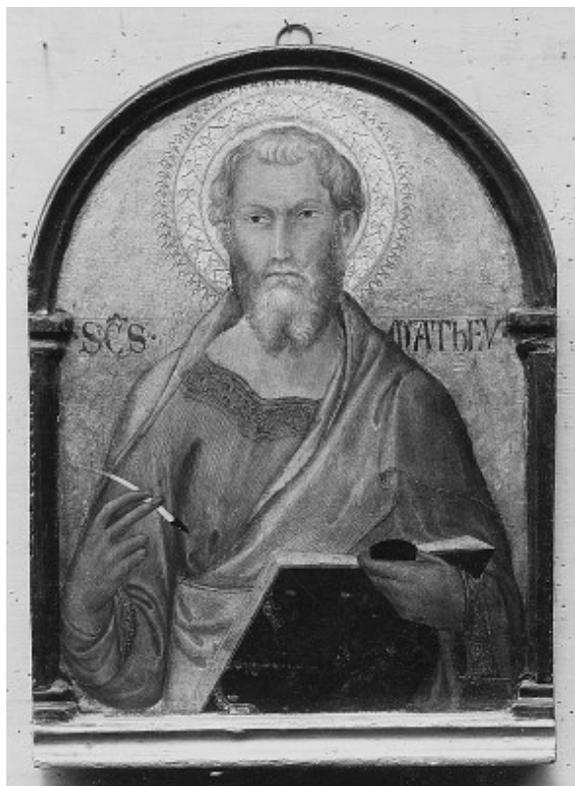
**fig. 2** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Simon*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



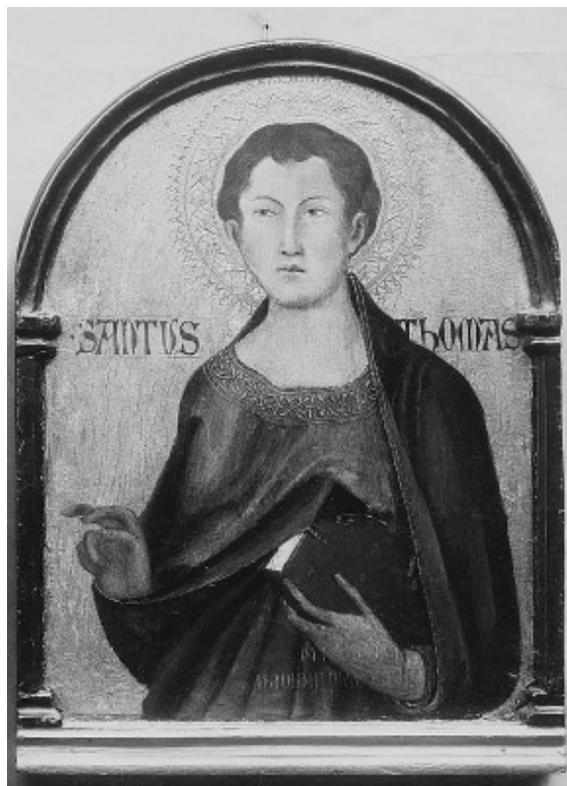
**fig. 3** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



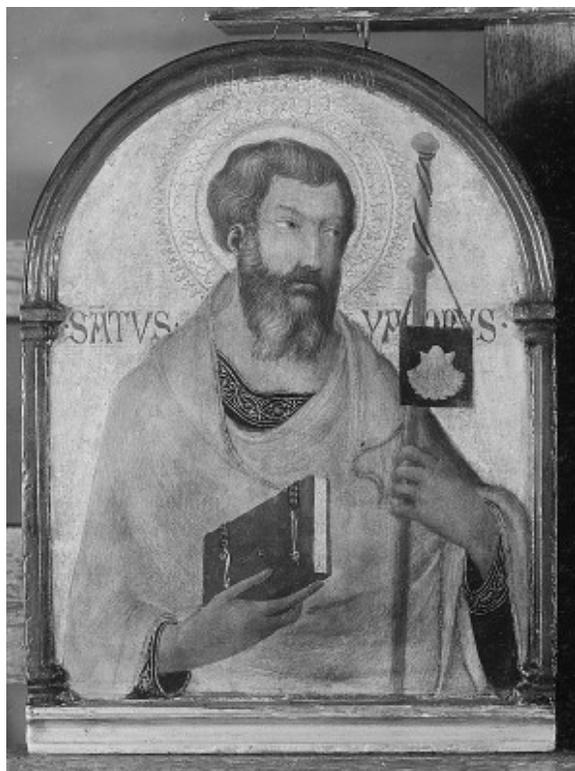
**fig. 4** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 5** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 6** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 7** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Major*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



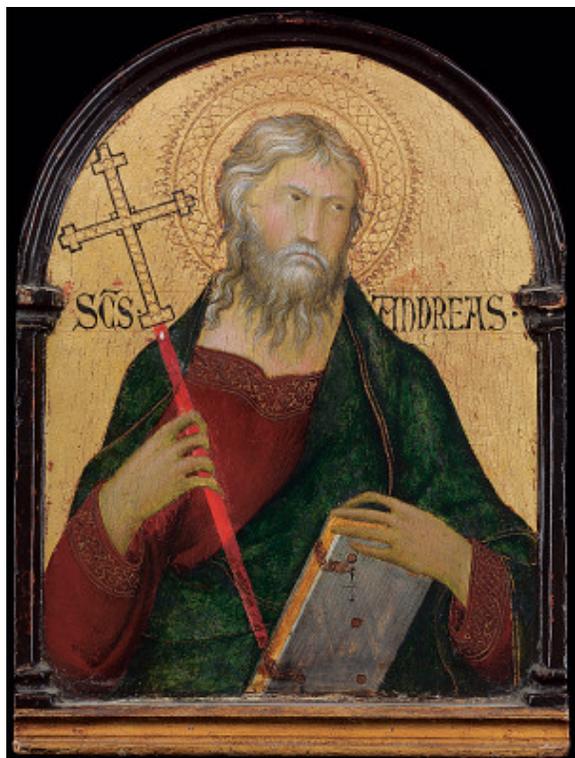
**fig. 8** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Philip*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, location unknown. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



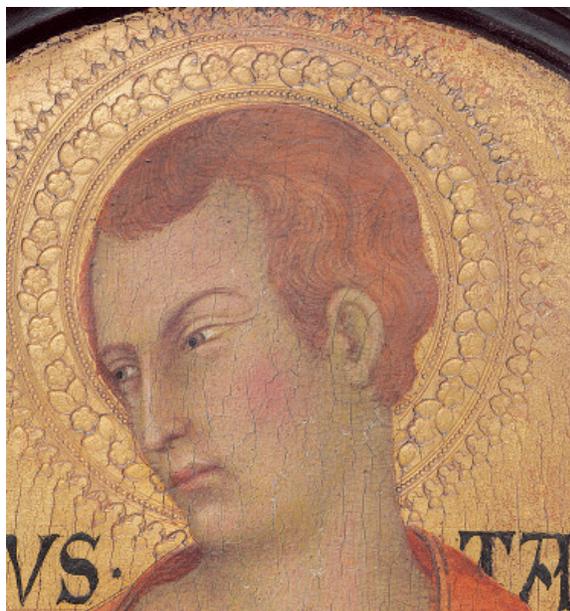
**fig. 9** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Minor*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, Salini collection, Castello di Gallico, Asciano, Siena. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



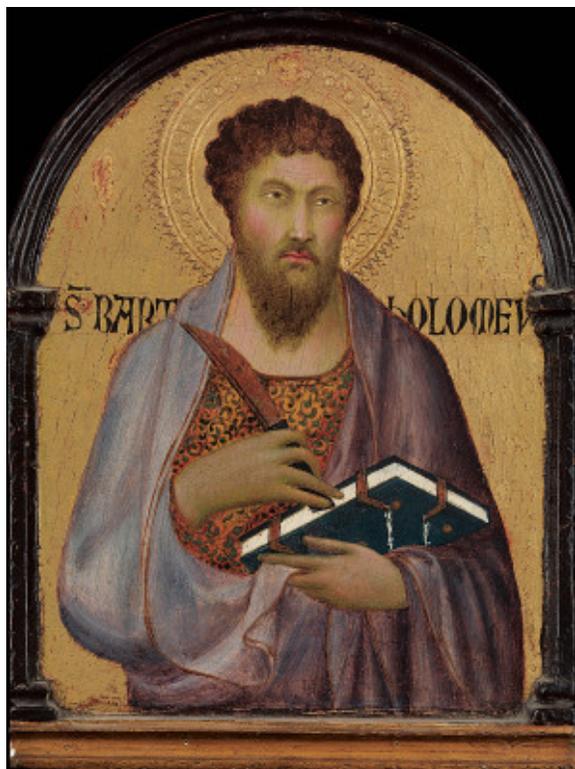
**fig. 10** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



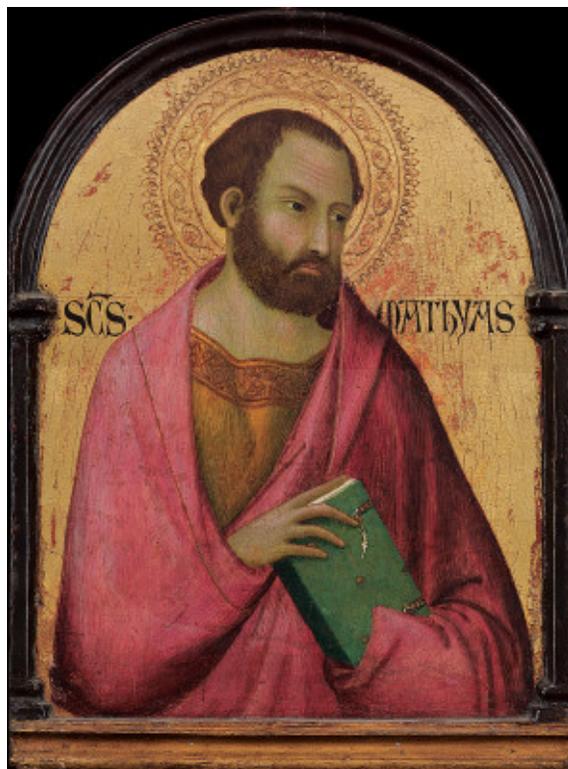
**fig. 11** Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 12** Detail, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 13** Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 14** Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 15** Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943

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#### NOTES

- [1] In 1924, Maitland Fuller Griggs, acquired four panels of the series—Saints Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthias, and Andrew—through Edward Hutton, and these entered the Metropolitan Museum, New York, in 1943. The bust of Saint James Minor (fig. 9) belonged to the Stoclet Collection in Brussels at least since 1927, and since 2005 it has belonged to the Salini collection at Castello di Gallico (Asciano). Philip Lehman purchased the image of Saint Philip (fig. 8) along with the four panels discussed here before 1928. The Saint Philip was sold at auction at Christie's in New York on January 11, 1991 (lot 12). It was purchased by Carlo de Carlo (Florence), in whose collection it remained until 1999; its present whereabouts are unknown.

- [2] The predella, especially in large-size altarpieces in Tuscany, was almost always painted on a single timber with grain running horizontally, separated from the wooden support of the main panels. The top tier of images above the main register, on the other hand, was frequently painted on the same vertically grained panel as the main register itself. See John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 89–91; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55. The following scholars maintained that the panels formed part of the predella of a polyptych: Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 60; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 76; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117; Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Cristina De Benedictis, *Lippo Memmi in Encyclopaedia dell’arte medievale*, Rome, 1996, 7:732. De Benedictis (1974) initially argued, as Federico Zeri (1980) did, that they belonged instead to the upper register of a polyptych. Gertrude Coor (1956) thought that both solutions were possible, as did Sabina Spannocchi (2009). See Cristina De Benedictis, “A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco,” *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Gertrude Coor, “Trecento–Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux,” *Wallraf–Richartz–Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:135.
- [3] Examples of the predella type with busts of saints set in round-arched frames are Simone Martini’s polyptych now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (1319–1320); that of Ugolino di Nerio in the Museo Nazionale in Lucca, datable to c. 1320; and that of Meo da Siena, also dating to around 1315–1320, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Perugia. Cf. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: fig. 375; and Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 58–59. Predellas with medallions surrounded by floriated motifs, by contrast, were used by Giotto in his polyptychs in the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce in Florence and in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna in the years 1325–1335, and, among Sieneese artists, by Ugolino di Nerio in the

predella now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts at Besançon (see Stubblebine 1979, fig. 465), and by *Bartolomeo Bulgarini* in the predella of his polyptych formerly in Santa Croce, now in the storerooms of the Gallerie Fiorentine; see Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 72. Sometimes, as in Simone Martini's altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse in the Museo di Capodimonte at Naples (1317), the round arches of the predella contain not the busts of saints but small narrative scenes. Perhaps the practice of adding a predella containing busts of saints to small devotional paintings originated in the shops of Simone and Lippo (cf. the Madonna in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, no. P. 30 w 8, or the Crucifixion no. 156 of the Pinacoteca Vaticana). It seems to reflect a type of altarpiece similar to that of Simone in Naples: paintings, that is, with a single scene (instead of several panels with figures of saints) in the main register.

- [4] However, sometimes, as in the above-cited predella of Meo da Siena's polyptych, Christ does not appear among the apostles, and the center of the sequence of busts of apostles is occupied instead by Saints Peter and Paul.
- [5] In Duccio's masterpiece, the large scene representing the Madonna and Child flanked by saints and angels is surmounted by a horizontal second register of half-length saints (from left to right): the busts of Saints Thaddeus, Simon, Philip, James Major, Andrew, Matthew, James Minor, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthias. The apostles Peter and Paul, and John the Evangelist, on the other hand, are represented, together with the Baptist, as full-length figures flanking the throne of the Madonna.
- [6] In his analysis of the problem of the sequence of busts, Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the following order, from left to right: Matthias, Thomas, Bartholomew, James (Minor or Major), Matthew, Andrew, James[?], Philip, Simon, and Thaddeus, observing that this would be the exact reverse of the order followed by Duccio in representing the ten apostles in the *Maestà* and by Simone Martini in the predella of the Pisa polyptych, in which Peter and Paul are naturally added to the ten, in a central position (John the Evangelist appears here among the saints in the main register). See Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts 7* (1987): 83–84. But the sequence represented in the works of Duccio and Simone Martini is not the only possible one. For example, Simone represented the apostles in the *Maestà* he frescoed in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena in the order of: Bartholomew, Philip, Matthew, Thomas, James Minor, James Major, Matthias, Andrew, Thaddeus, and Simon (with Paul, John the Evangelist, John the Baptist, and Peter placed in the foreground); for the identification of the apostles, cf. Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 155–157. Different again is the sequence of apostles adopted by Giotto in the Last Judgment of the

Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, and in the Stefaneschi polyptych in the Pinacoteca Vaticana; cf. Margrit Lisner, “Die Gewandfarben der Apostel in Giotto’s Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbikonographie mit Notizen zu älteren Aposteldarstellungen in Florenz, Assisi und Rom,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53 (1990): 309–375; and Margrit Lisner, “Giotto und die Aufträge des Kardinals Jacopo Stefaneschi für Alt-St. Peter: 2; der Stefaneschi-Altar; Giotto und seine Werkstatt in Rom; das Altarwerk und der verlorene Christuszyklus in der Petersapsis,” *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 30 (1995): 59–133. Only the central position of Peter, Paul, and John (if they form part of the series), as well as James Major and Andrew, holds good as a general rule.

- [7] *Katalog der Gemälde Alter italienischer Meister (1221–1640) in der Sammlung des Conservator J.A. Ramboux* (Cologne, 1862), 15, no. 75.
- [8] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1864–1866), 2:105; Louis Gielly, *Les primitifs siennois* (Paris, 1926), 111.
- [9] At least as regards the panels that entered the Griggs collection in New York through Edward Hutton, the attribution to Simone presumably had been made by the dealer/amateur Hutton himself. The Saint James Minor also seems to have entered the Stoclet collection in Brussels with an attribution to Simone; cf. Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315. August L. Mayer (1930) further accepted Simone Martini’s authorship for the panels then in the Lehman collection, as did George McCall and William Valentiner. August L. Mayer, “Die Sammlung Philip Lehman,” *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 113; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117.
- [10] Perhaps having been asked by Maitland Fuller Griggs in 1926 for his expertise, Richard Offner orally ascribed the four panels acquired for that collection as “school of Simone Martini,” while in 1926 Raimond van Marle, in a manuscript opinion, attributed the paintings to an “immediate follower of Simone Martini.” See Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 96. Intervening in 1932 and then in 1936, and in the posthumous edition of 1968, Bernard Berenson (who in 1925 had conjectured the authorship of the young Lippo Vanni; for his expertise, see Zeri and Gardner 1980, 96) defined the image of Saint Matthew as at least in part by Simone, but classified the other four panels of the series in the Lehman collection as works of the artist’s shop. F. Mason Perkins (1937) thought the Lehman panels in large part executed by Simone’s assistants. The participation of the artist’s assistants was also detected in the paintings by Gertrude Coor

(1956), in *Exposition de la collection Lehman 1957*, by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), by Joseph Polzer (1971), by Burton B. Fredericksen and Zeri (1972), by Zeri and Gardner (1980), by Giovanni Previtali (1987), by Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder (1998), and by Alessandro Bagnoli (1999). Even the recent catalog entry by Sabina Spannocchi (in Bellosi 2009), although citing the series of apostles under Simone's name, considered it executed in part by assistants "under the surveillance" of the master. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 534; Bernard Berenson, *Pittura italiana del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 459; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:404; F. Mason Perkins, "Simone di Martino (Simone Martini)," in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1937), 31:67; Gertrude Coor, "Trecento-Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 43; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Joseph Polzer, "Observations on Known Paintings and a New Altarpiece by Francesco Traini," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 386; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Federico Zeri, in *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner (New York, 1980), 95; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 118, 189, 205, 311, 321, 400, 444, 453; Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, ed., *Lust und Verlust*, vol. 2, *Corpus-Band zu Kölner Gemäldesammlungen 1800–1860* (Cologne, 1998), 551–552; Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999) 156 n. 24, 179; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:132–141.

- [11] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) revived the attribution to Lippo Memmi, followed by Pietro Toesca (1951), Maria Cristina Gozzoli (in Contini and Gozzoli 1970), Cristina De Benedictis (1974, 1979, 1996), Michael Mallory (1974), Michel Laclotte (1978), and Andrew Martindale (1988). The present writer (1988) limited himself to rejecting the ascription of the panels to Lippo Memmi, without offering any alternative attribution. See Lionello

Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), nos. 60–61; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: nos. 76–77; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte classica e italiana 3; Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 551 n. 75; Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 105 n. 53; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 93; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201, n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 75.

[12] Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979) and Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the date c. 1320; Cristina De Benedictis (1974), 1325—i.e., the date of the lost polyptych by Lippo Memmi for San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa—or, more cautiously (De Benedictis 1996), after 1323, the presumable date of the *Triumph of Saint Thomas* in San Domenico at Pisa. Michael Mallory (1974) dated the series c. 1330; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth Gardner (1980), to the period between c. 1320 and 1333. Sabina Spannocchi (2009) suggested the date of execution as c. 1317. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:139.

[13] After the publications by Gordon Moran (1976), who was the first to cast doubt on whether a painter called Barna da Siena had ever existed—according to him, the name was an erroneous transcription of Bartolo di

Fredi—and that of Antonino Caleca (1976, 1977), who argued that the works formerly attributed to “Barna” should be reassigned to the catalog of Lippo Memmi, art historians have gone their separate ways in trying to identify the masters of the paintings left orphans after Barna’s “demise.” Luciano Bellosi (1977) wrote of the “Famiglia Memmi” as a kind of family concern, while Carlo Volpe (1982) considered probable Moran’s hypothesis attributing the paintings to Federico Memmi, brother of Lippo. Giovanna Damiani (1985) maintained that “la firma di Lippo Memmi corrisponda...ad una sorta di etichetta che indica anziché l’attività di una personalità artistica, quella di una bottega comprendente Lippo e Federico Memmi e che doveva avere al suo attivo anche personalità minori” (Lippo Memmi’s signature corresponds to a kind of label that indicates not the activity of an artistic personality but the activity of a workshop comprising Lippo and Federico Memmi and that must have included minor figures as well). Returning to the question, Bellosi (1985) thought it right to “riconsiderare unitariamente tutta la produzione che fa capo al prestigioso atelier familiare di Simone Martini, ivi comprese le opere attribuite a Lippo e a Barna” (reconsider integrally the entire production of the prestigious family workshop headed by Simone Martini, including the works attributed to Lippo and Barna). Previtali (1988) went further, affirming that “lo stile che siamo soliti chiamare ‘Barna’...sta a Simone un po’ come lo stile dei manieristi sta a quello di Michelangiolo” (the style that we are accustomed to calling Barna is to Simone a bit as the style of the mannerists is to Michelangelo). Previtali also proposed, albeit with caution, that some works usually attributed to Lippo be reassigned to Simone himself. To Leone de Castris (1988), a “distinzione puntuale fra le opere di ‘Barna’” (precise distinction between the works of “Barna”)—in his view probably executed by a presumed Federico Memmi—and those of the “Maestro della Madonna Straus,” another anonymous Simonese painter, seemed to be “operazione assai difficoltosa” (a rather difficult task). Miklós Boskovits (2008) and Ada Labriola (2008) insisted on the necessity of restoring to Lippo Memmi the paintings attributed to Barna, but Sabina Spannocchi (2009) still preferred to speak of the “cosidetto Barna” (the so-called Barna). See Gordan Moran, “Is the Name Barna an Incorrect Transcription of the Name Bartolo?” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 76–80; Antonio Caleca, “Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1,” *Critica d’arte* 41 (1976): 49–59; Antonio Caleca, “Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 2,” *Critica d’arte* 42 (1977): 55–80; Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 21; Carlo Volpe, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d’art* (Florence, 1982), 186–187; Giovanna Damiani, in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 82–85; Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 94–102; Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai

problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 160–161; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Problemi martiniani avignonesi: Il ‘Maestro degli angeli ribelli,’ i due Ceccarelli ed altro,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 230 n. 10; Miklós Boskovits, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 26; Ada Labriola, *Simone Martini e la pittura gotica a Siena: Duccio di Buoninsegna, Memmo di Filippuccio, Pietro Lorenzetti, Ugolino di Nerio, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Lippo Memmi, Matteo Giovanetti, Naddo Ceccarelli, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, Niccolò di ser Sozzo* (Florence, 2008), 56–58; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:141.

- [14] The *Madonna della Misericordia* in Orvieto Cathedral, signed “Lippus de Sena natus nos pinxit amena,” is not dated but in general is thought to have been executed around 1320. Cf. Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 156; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lippo Memmi,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; and Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 176–177. The *Madonna and Child* in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg is usually dated slightly later; see Joseph Polzer, “Symon Martini et Lippus Memmi me pinxerunt,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 168; De Benedictis (1996, 7:732); Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 217 n. 41; and Johannes Tripps, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 49. For the diptych divided between the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and a private collection that bears the date 1333, see Millard Meiss, “Notes on a Dated Diptych by Lippo Memmi,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto and Paolo Dal Poggetto, 2 vols. (Milan, 1977), 1:137–139; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 76.
- [15] No. 51.2397; Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. 1, *13th–15th Century* (Boston, 1994), 84, accepted the dating of the work shared by most art historians, to the early 1320s. Boskovits had already proposed in 1990 a comparison between the two images of the saint. Miklós Boskovits, “Review of Simone Martini by Andrew Martindale,” *Kunstchronik* 43 (1990): 595–601.
- [16] The date of the altarpiece is variously indicated as 1319 or 1320. Both dates are derived from the same source: the sixteenth-century *Annali* of the Dominican convent in Pisa, which record the placing of the polyptych over

the high altar of the church of Santa Caterina in 1320. But this date, if calculated according to the Pisan style in use at the time the polyptych was painted, could be equivalent to 1319 in the modern calendar. Cf. Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 352.

- [17] Art historians in recent decades generally have agreed on dating the frescoes with half-length figures of saints in the northern transept of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi to the years 1315–1320. Cf. Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 94–95; Luciano Bellosi, “La barba di San Francesco: Nuove proposte per il ‘problema di Assisi,’” *Prospettiva* 22 (1980): 13–14; and Carlo Volpe, in *Il Gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 179. A similar dating is proposed for the polyptych formerly in Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano; cf. Cristina De Benedictis, “Pittura e miniatura del Duecento e del Trecento in terra di Siena,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:337–339; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 200–202 n. 23; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 349. The polyptych now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (no. 41.100.23, Lehman Collection, no. 1975.1.12 and 13), the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (no. 82.PB.72) is usually dated to the 1320s, but the present writer prefers an earlier dating, towards the mid-1310s; cf. Miklós Boskovits, “Da Duccio a Simone Martini,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 577.
- [18] The punch marks in the four Washington panels are registered as follows by Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998): “Da10a” (present in works by Simone Martini from the San Gimignano polyptych to the late Orsini quadriptych and in various works of Lippo Memmi), 117–119; “Ea1” (present in paintings by Simone with a presumable provenance from Orvieto, in the Orsini quadriptych, and in works by Lippo), 189; “Fd14a” (used in a similar way as the preceding punches); “I16a” (used in Simone’s polyptych divided among the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in the Uffizi Annunciation, and in panels attributed to Lippo), 205; “I70” (present in paintings between the Orvieto phase and the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 321; “Jb59” (present in works of Simone’s Orvieto phase and in the Orsini quadriptych, but not found in authenticated paintings by Lippo), 388; “Jc15” (present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 400–401; “Ka27a” (again present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in various works by Lippo), 444; and

“Ka63” (used in a similar way as the previous punch), 453–454.

- [19] Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19.
- [20] The Madonna formerly at Castiglione d’Orcia was not necessarily painted for that town and was variously attributed in the past. Serena Padovani (1979) attributed it to Simone, and Alessandro Bagnoli (1997) accepted the attribution, whereas Leone de Castris (2003) thought it was painted “in buona parte” by studio assistants of Simone and dated it to the early 1320s. With regard to the dating of the painting, it should be borne in mind that Frinta (1998) found in it a punch mark present in various works by Simone executed during his period in Orvieto, as well as in the Pisa polyptych of 1319–1320, and in the San Gimignano polyptych. See Serena Padovani, “Una tavola di Castiglione d’Orcia restaurata di recente,” *Prospettiva* 17 (1979): 82–88; Alessandro Bagnoli, *Museo civico e diocesano d’arte sacra di Montalcino* (Siena, 1997), 33, 35; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 209, 354; Mojmír Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 428.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting and its three companions, *Saint Matthew*, *Saint Simon*, and *Saint James Major*, were executed on panels apparently made of a single piece of wood with horizontal grain, which has been thinned to 2.5 cm thick, backed, and cradled. Stephen Pichetto applied the backings and cradles in 1944, at which time he may also have thinned the panels and added the wooden strips that are currently affixed to all sides of each. The inner molding of the arch as well as the capitals and bases of the engaged frame surrounding the painted surface of each panel are original. Before the painting process, the panels were covered with a fabric interleaf, on which a layer of gesso ground was applied. The areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole and the halos decorated with punch marks—those in *Saint Matthew* and *Saint Simon* extend onto the top arches of the engaged frames. Incised lines were used to demarcate the figures; a green underpainting was laid in beneath the flesh tones; and the paint was applied with fine, unblended brushstrokes. Infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 5 microns shows a linear underdrawing in the figures’ hands but not in their clothing, except in *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, in which all the folds in the saint’s cloak were delineated in a liquid medium.[1] Mordant gilding was used for embellishing the borders of the saints’

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robes and the bosses and clasps of their books. The books are further decorated with punch marks, and a black material, which might have been silver, has been applied over the gilded clasps and bosses.

The painted surfaces of all four panels are slightly worn but in fair state apart from a number of small, scattered losses largely associated with the damages to the supports and the removal of parts of the original engaged frames and moldings along the borders. Two small repairs are visible in the gold ground in *Saint Matthew*, and retouchings around the saint's throat, chest, and shoulders have discolored. Retouching in *Saint Simon* mostly affects the saint's right cheek and left shoulder. Vertical and diagonal cracks, with attendant minor paint loss, are more prominent along the bottom edge of *Saint James Major*, while retouching in *Saint Judas Thaddeus* is largely confined to the saint's face and book. The lettering of the inscriptions in all four panels has been reinforced. When he applied the cradles in 1944, Stephen Pichetto also "cleaned, restored, and varnished" the paintings. Robert Lehman (1928) mentioned an earlier cleaning, probably in the early 1920s.[2]

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 focal plane array PtSi camera.
- [2] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), n.p., stated that the panels "were covered by an old varnish which has lately been removed." For the intervention in 1944, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:433.

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### PROVENANCE

Acquired between 1832 and 1842 by Johann Anton Ramboux [1790-1866], Cologne, together with six other components of the same series, presumably in Siena:[1] (his estate sale, J.M. Heberle, Cologne, 23 May 1867, no. 75 [all ten panels], as by Lippo Memmi);[2] the whole series purchased by the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, which deaccessioned it in 1922-1923;[3] the four NGA panels, 1952.5.23-.26, purchased together with a fifth panel of the same series, by

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Philip Lehman [1861-1947], New York, by 1928;[4] the four NGA panels sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[5] gift 1952 to the NGA. [1] Ramboux built up his huge collection of early Italian pictures essentially in the above-mentioned years of his second period of residence in Italy; see Christoph Merzenich, "*Di dilettanza per un artista - Der Sammler Antonio Giovanni Ramboux in der Toskana*," in *Lust und Verlust*, edited by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, 2 vols., Cologne, 1995-1998: 1(1995): 303–314. [2] Without quoting their provenance, the sale catalogue entry states only that the ten busts “. . . stimmen im Ausdruck wie in der übrigen Technik mit den Wandmalereien im Stadthause zu Sangemignano überein.” [3] See Kier and Zehnder 1995-1998, 2(1998): 550-552. [4] The four panels in Washington and a fifth, representing *Saint Philip*, are included in the catalogue of the Lehman collection (Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York, Paris, 1928*: nos. xix-xxiii). Possibly, Philip Lehman acquired them through Edward Hutton in London, who also handled the panels of the series now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. [5] The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.23-.26, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892-1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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Simone Martini

Sieneese, active from 1315; died 1344

## *Saint Matthew*

c. 1315/1320

tempera on panel

painted surface: 26.4 x 19.6 cm (10 3/8 x 7 11/16 in.)

overall: 30.8 x 23.2 cm (12 1/8 x 9 1/8 in.)

framed: 44.4 x 60 cm (17 1/2 x 23 5/8 in.)

Inscription: on the left side of the Saint: .SCS.; on the right side of the Saint: MATHEV.

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.23

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### ENTRY

This panel and its three companions at the Gallery—*Saint Simon*, *Saint James Major*, and *Saint Judas Thaddeus*—together with six other busts of apostles [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4] [fig. 5] [fig. 6] [fig. 7] [fig. 8] [fig. 9] [fig. 10],[1] originally formed part of a polyptych. The ten panels, acquired as a group by Johann Anton Ramboux in the early nineteenth century, remained together until the 1920s, when they were deaccessioned by the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne and dispersed.

The horizontal graining of the wood of the support in all ten panels suggests they are fragments of a predella.[2] The type of predella formed of busts of saints placed below round arches is rather archaic: in fact, it appears in Sieneese painting no later than the years around 1320. Subsequently, preference was given instead to the insertion of narrative scenes in the predella; if busts of saints were included in the program, they were usually inserted in circular or mixtilinear medallions surrounded by painted ornamental motifs.[3] The absence from this series of busts of two of the most venerated apostles, Peter and John, may suggest that these panels were already lost at the time of Ramboux's acquisition of the panels, together with a bust of Christ (or Christ on the Cross) that normally formed the central image of predellas decorated with busts of saints.[4] But it is more likely that the series of apostles in the predella was originally incomplete and that the images of Peter and John were separated from the rest and incorporated in the main register of the altarpiece, as was the case, for example, in *Duccio's Maestà*

[5] As for the sequence of the individual figures, it seems probable that the apostles Andrew and James Major would have been placed closer to the center (and hence in a position of particular emphasis), and that the images of Matthew, Thomas, Simon, and Thaddeus would have been placed closer to the two ends.[6]

As for the painter of these busts of apostles, an attribution to the Sienese master Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) was supported by Ramboux in the catalog of his collection (1862).[7] This was endorsed by the older studies, beginning with Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle (1864) and ending with Louis Gielly (1926).[8] It was only when the ten panels reentered the art market that the more prestigious name of Simone Martini was proposed by Robert Lehman (1928) and then by others.[9] Art historians generally accepted the attribution to Simone, though more often than not with the qualifier “shop of” or “school of” Simone.[10] The catalog of the National Gallery of Art also cited the four panels presented by the Kress Collection as works of “Simone Martini and assistants.” The attribution to Lippo Memmi, however, was never wholly discarded and has more recently been revived.[11] Proposed dates vary between c. 1320 and 1333.[12]

The attempts in recent decades to unite the catalogs of paintings previously assembled respectively under the names of Lippo Memmi and Barna da Siena, as well as under the nebulous formulae “Companions of Simone,” “Lippo and Tederico Memmi,” or “shop of Memmi” have complicated the matter of distinguishing among the paintings executed within the orbits of Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi and have made Lippo’s artistic development difficult to understand.[13] Inextricably linked to this issue, the chronology of the series of apostles discussed here remains equally problematic. To judge from the works signed and dated [14] by Lippo in the years between c. 1323 and 1333, the insertion in his oeuvre of the four busts of apostles in the Gallery seems far from convincing. The softness of the modeling and the spontaneous naturalness of the saints’ gestures recall more readily the manner of his brother-in-law (Simone Martini) than the solemn poses, polished forms, and metallic sheen that often distinguish the works of Lippo himself.

Of the series of apostles of which the four panels in the Gallery form part, the Saint Andrew now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York [fig. 11] has close affinities, both in physiognomic type and in his rather surly expression, with the apostle, presumably Saint Andrew as well, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, unanimously recognized as Simone’s work.[15] The Saint Judas Thaddeus [fig. 12] in the Gallery similarly invites comparison with the image of the same saint in

Simone's polyptych in the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo in Pisa.[16] In both images the apostle is presented as a beardless youth who turns towards the arch of the frame with a slight Gothic bend, his head bowed to one side in an attitude of meditation. It cannot be said categorically, however, that the version painted for the polyptych of Pisa around 1319–1320 was the model for the painting in the Gallery, given that the contours of the figure and the drapery folds in the latter are far less agitated, following the stylistic models of previous works by Simone that still fall into the second decade of the century.[17] Comparison with the corresponding figures in the Pisa polyptych remains telling, however, and can also be extended to the representations of Saints Matthew and Simon. Simon is represented as still a young man, with a short, dark beard, while Matthew is a man of middle age in frontal position, with a long, forked beard. Matthew is shown in both paintings in the process of writing his Gospel. Less closely resembling his counterpart in the Washington panel is the Saint James Major of the Pisa polyptych, where we may observe the tendency, absent in the panels discussed here, to present the apostles in movement, to envelop their bodies in voluminous mantles that cast deep folds, and to place sharply foreshortened books in their hands. In the Pisa polyptych the books are in general more voluminous and open, and represented in such a way that some lines of calligraphy are visible. The saints, moreover, often seem to be conversing with one another, accompanying or enforcing their remarks with raised hand or exhibiting an object that not infrequently interrupts the outer contour of the figure, set against the gold ground, as if backlit.

Might the reduced emphasis on agitated rhythms and elegant gestures in the busts of apostles in the Gallery and in their companion panels imply a dating for them prior to the Pisa polyptych? Unfortunately, "objective data" deriving from the use of punch marks help us little in this case, since according to Mojmir S. Frinta's survey (1998), the punched motifs present in the panels now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art [fig. 11] [fig. 13] [fig. 14] [fig. 15] and the Gallery recur virtually throughout the entire oeuvre of Simone Martini, from the San Gimignano polyptych to the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence (1333), and beyond.[18] It might be more fruitful to concentrate attention instead on another aspect, namely the fact that Simone, as far as we are able to judge today, generally avoided the use of the round arch in his altarpieces. This motif appears for the last time in the youthful polyptych from San Gimignano, while in later works the arch, if it is not Gothic, is enriched with small trefoil arches on the inside, as in the Pisa polyptych. Not only is the framing of the National Gallery of Art panels very similar to that of the

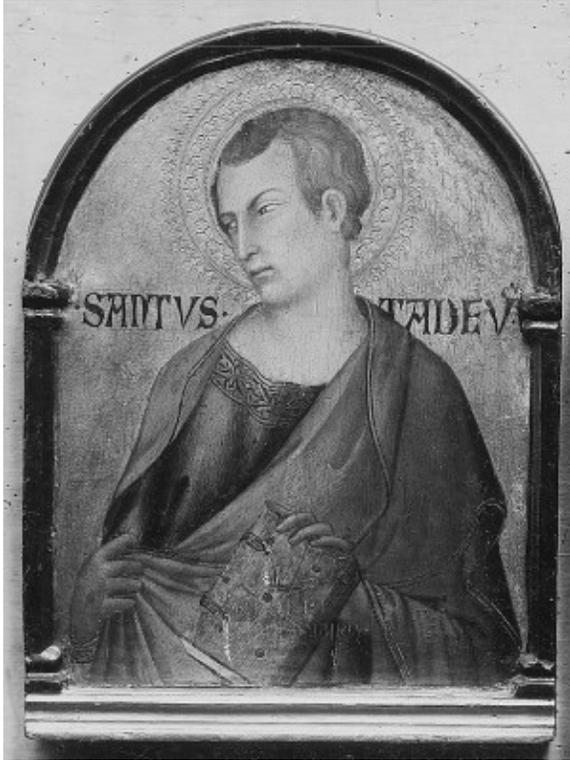
components of the predella of the Saint Louis of Toulouse in Naples (painted in c. 1317, the year of the saint's canonization), but also their stylistic character is consistent with that of the works realized in the years of rapid development between the Maestà in the Palazzo Pubblico (1315) and the Pisan polyptych of 1319–1320.

These considerations raise the question of identifying the altarpiece of which the ten busts of apostles formed part. Michael Mallory (1974) argued that the four Washington panels, together with their six companion panels in other collections, were in origin the predella of the polyptych by Lippo Memmi of which *Saint John the Baptist* in the Gallery also formed part.[19] The proposal has not met with acceptance in the art historical literature, but no alternative hypotheses have yet been formulated. A possible candidate for the lost central panel of the polyptych of which the series of busts of apostles formed part could be, in the present writer's opinion, the Madonna and Child from the church of Santa Maria Maddalena at Castiglion d'Orcia, now in the Museo Civico e Diocesano at Montalcino (80 × 61 cm).[20] The width of the panel is not very different from that of the images placed at the center of Simone's polyptychs executed for churches in Pisa, Orvieto, or San Gimignano, and its height is also close to that from San Gimignano, now deprived of its original frame. So there is nothing to prevent us from imagining the Montalcino Madonna at the center of a similar polyptych and with a series of apostles in its predella. Our panels share with it not only a similar date but also the external profile terminating in a round arch.

In conclusion, the ten panels of the apostles can, I believe, be firmly attributed to Simone Martini. In the past scholars have generally undervalued these panels, not as a consequence of any intrinsic mediocrity but because of the loss of the pictorial finishes in some of them, flattening the modeling of the figures, and the unhappy result of successive restorations that have obscured many of the more exquisite touches of the pictorial technique, especially in the busts of Saints Bartholomew, Matthias, and Thomas now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, the better-preserved passages in our panels, in particular in the faces of Saints Thaddeus and James Major, still retain qualities that, in the view of the present writer, seem fully worthy of the hand of Simone.

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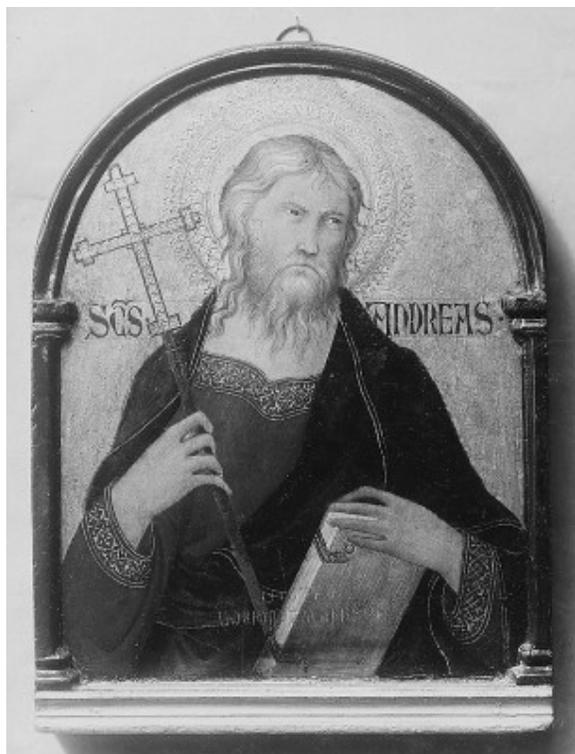
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



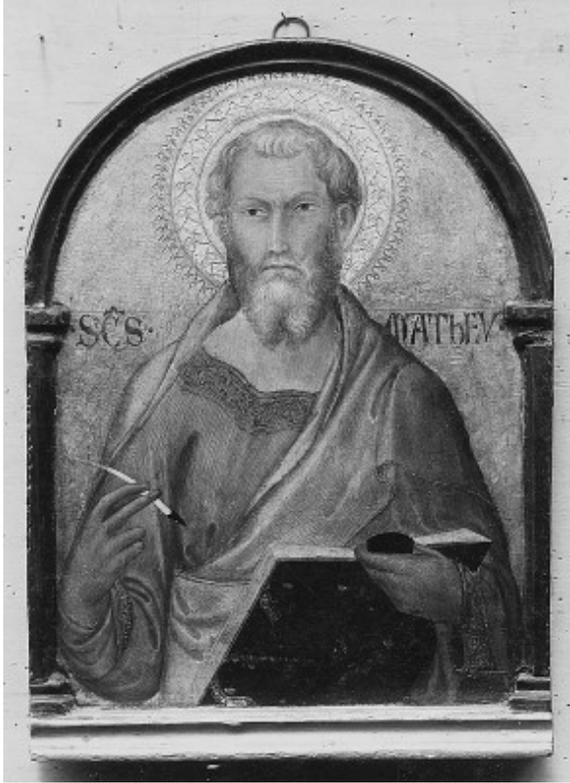
**fig. 2** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Simon*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



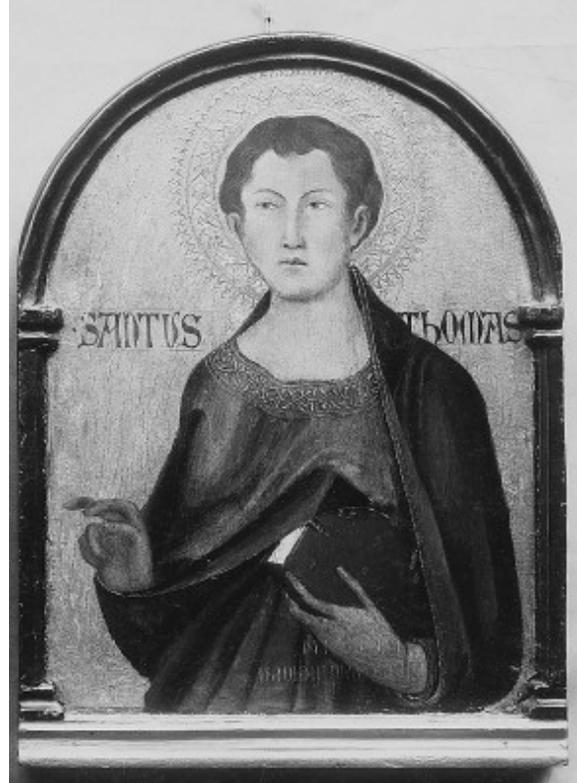
**fig. 3** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 4** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 5** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 6** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 7** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Major*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



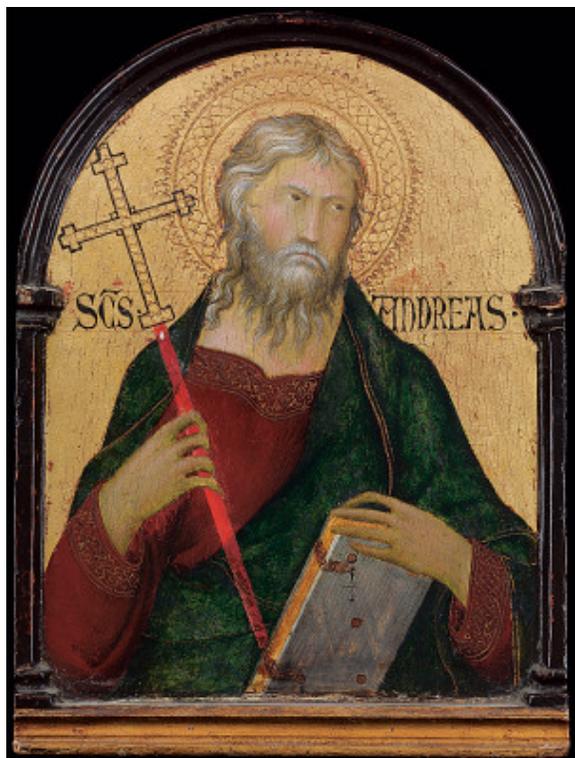
**fig. 8** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Philip*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, location unknown. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



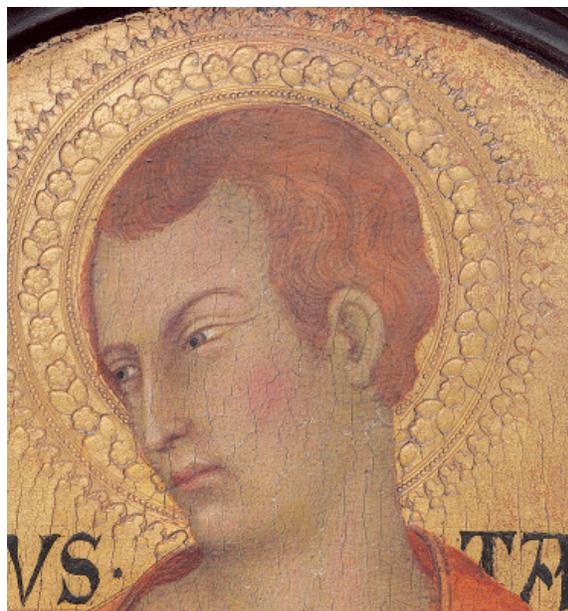
**fig. 9** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Minor*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, Salini collection, Castello di Gallico, Asciano, Siena. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



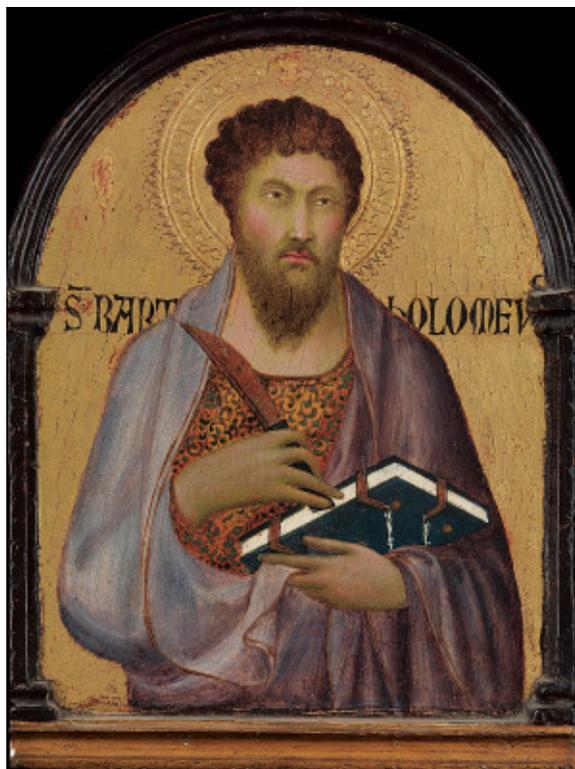
**fig. 10** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



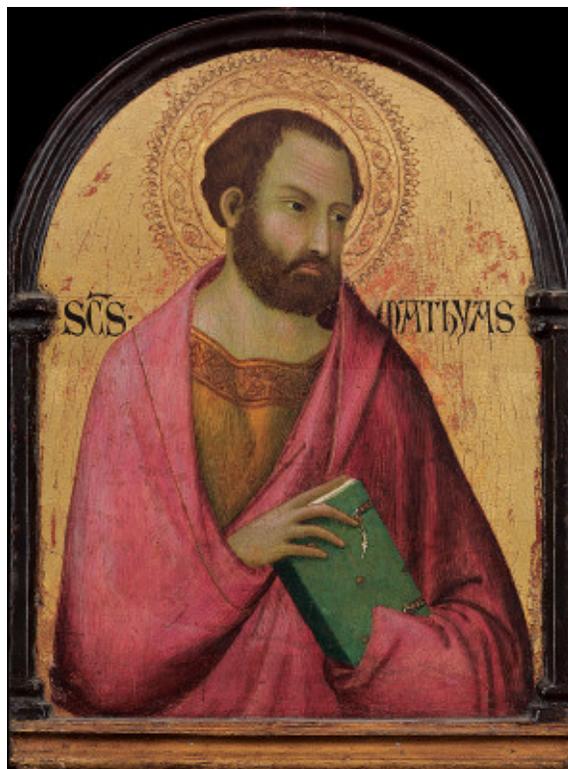
**fig. 11** Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



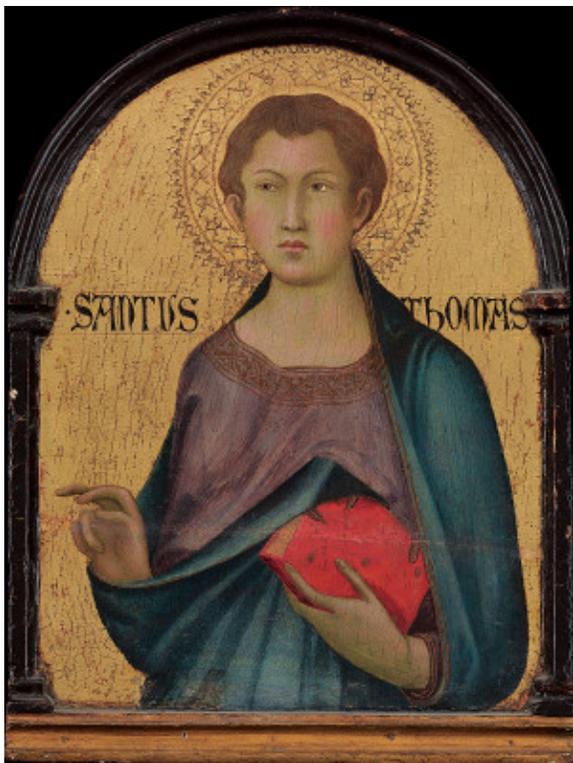
**fig. 12** Detail, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 13** Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 14** Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 15** Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943

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#### NOTES

- [1] In 1924, Maitland Fuller Griggs, acquired four panels of the series—Saints Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthias, and Andrew—through Edward Hutton, and these entered the Metropolitan Museum, New York, in 1943. The bust of Saint James Minor (fig. 9) belonged to the Stoclet Collection in Brussels at least since 1927, and since 2005 it has belonged to the Salini collection at Castello di Gallico (Asciano). Philip Lehman purchased the image of Saint Philip (fig. 8) along with the four panels discussed here before 1928. The Saint Philip was sold at auction at Christie's in New York on January 11, 1991 (lot 12). It was purchased by Carlo de Carlo (Florence), in whose collection it remained until 1999; its present whereabouts are unknown.

- [2] The predella, especially in large-size altarpieces in Tuscany, was almost always painted on a single timber with grain running horizontally, separated from the wooden support of the main panels. The top tier of images above the main register, on the other hand, was frequently painted on the same vertically grained panel as the main register itself. See John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 89–91; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55. The following scholars maintained that the panels formed part of the predella of a polyptych: Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 60; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 76; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117; Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressayre, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Cristina De Benedictis, *Lippo Memmi in Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, Rome, 1996, 7:732. De Benedictis (1974) initially argued, as Federico Zeri (1980) did, that they belonged instead to the upper register of a polyptych. Gertrude Coor (1956) thought that both solutions were possible, as did Sabina Spannocchi (2009). See Cristina De Benedictis, “A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco,” *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Siennese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Gertrude Coor, “Trecento–Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:135.
- [3] Examples of the predella type with busts of saints set in round-arched frames are Simone Martini’s polyptych now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (1319–1320); that of Ugolino di Nerio in the Museo Nazionale in Lucca, datable to c. 1320; and that of Meo da Siena, also dating to around 1315–1320, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Perugia. Cf. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: fig. 375; and Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 58–59. Predellas with medallions surrounded by floriated motifs, by contrast, were used by Giotto in his polyptychs in the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce in Florence and in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna in the years 1325–1335, and, among Siennese artists, by Ugolino di Nerio in the

predella now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts at Besançon (see Stubblebine 1979, fig. 465), and by *Bartolomeo Bulgarini* in the predella of his polyptych formerly in Santa Croce, now in the storerooms of the Gallerie Fiorentine; see Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 72. Sometimes, as in Simone Martini's altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse in the Museo di Capodimonte at Naples (1317), the round arches of the predella contain not the busts of saints but small narrative scenes. Perhaps the practice of adding a predella containing busts of saints to small devotional paintings originated in the shops of Simone and Lippo (cf. the Madonna in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, no. P. 30 w 8, or the Crucifixion no. 156 of the Pinacoteca Vaticana). It seems to reflect a type of altarpiece similar to that of Simone in Naples: paintings, that is, with a single scene (instead of several panels with figures of saints) in the main register.

- [4] However, sometimes, as in the above-cited predella of Meo da Siena's polyptych, Christ does not appear among the apostles, and the center of the sequence of busts of apostles is occupied instead by Saints Peter and Paul.
- [5] In Duccio's masterpiece, the large scene representing the Madonna and Child flanked by saints and angels is surmounted by a horizontal second register of half-length saints (from left to right): the busts of Saints Thaddeus, Simon, Philip, James Major, Andrew, Matthew, James Minor, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthias. The apostles Peter and Paul, and John the Evangelist, on the other hand, are represented, together with the Baptist, as full-length figures flanking the throne of the Madonna.
- [6] In his analysis of the problem of the sequence of busts, Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the following order, from left to right: Matthias, Thomas, Bartholomew, James (Minor or Major), Matthew, Andrew, James[?], Philip, Simon, and Thaddeus, observing that this would be the exact reverse of the order followed by Duccio in representing the ten apostles in the *Maestà* and by Simone Martini in the predella of the Pisa polyptych, in which Peter and Paul are naturally added to the ten, in a central position (John the Evangelist appears here among the saints in the main register). See Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts 7* (1987): 83–84. But the sequence represented in the works of Duccio and Simone Martini is not the only possible one. For example, Simone represented the apostles in the *Maestà* he frescoed in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena in the order of: Bartholomew, Philip, Matthew, Thomas, James Minor, James Major, Matthias, Andrew, Thaddeus, and Simon (with Paul, John the Evangelist, John the Baptist, and Peter placed in the foreground); for the identification of the apostles, cf. Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 155–157. Different again is the sequence of apostles adopted by Giotto in the Last Judgment of the Scrovegni Chapel in

Padua, and in the Stefaneschi polyptych in the Pinacoteca Vaticana; cf. Margrit Lisner, “Die Gewandfarben der Apostel in Giotto’s Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbikonographie mit Notizen zu älteren Aposteldarstellungen in Florenz, Assisi und Rom,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53 (1990): 309–375; and Margrit Lisner, “Giotto und die Aufträge des Kardinals Jacopo Stefaneschi für Alt-St. Peter: 2; der Stefaneschi-Altar; Giotto und seine Werkstatt in Rom; das Altarwerk und der verlorene Christuszyklus in der Petersapsis,” *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 30 (1995): 59–133. Only the central position of Peter, Paul, and John (if they form part of the series), as well as James Major and Andrew, holds good as a general rule.

- [7] *Katalog der Gemälde Alter italienischer Meister (1221–1640) in der Sammlung des Conservator J.A. Ramboux* (Cologne, 1862), 15, no. 75.
- [8] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1864–1866), 2:105; Louis Gielly, *Les primitifs siennois* (Paris, 1926), 111.
- [9] At least as regards the panels that entered the Griggs collection in New York through Edward Hutton, the attribution to Simone presumably had been made by the dealer/amateur Hutton himself. The Saint James Minor also seems to have entered the Stoclet collection in Brussels with an attribution to Simone; cf. Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315. August L. Mayer (1930) further accepted Simone Martini’s authorship for the panels then in the Lehman collection, as did George McCall and William Valentiner. August L. Mayer, “Die Sammlung Philip Lehman,” *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 113; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117.
- [10] Perhaps having been asked by Maitland Fuller Griggs in 1926 for his expertise, Richard Offner orally ascribed the four panels acquired for that collection as “school of Simone Martini,” while in 1926 Raimond van Marle, in a manuscript opinion, attributed the paintings to an “immediate follower of Simone Martini.” See Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 96. Intervening in 1932 and then in 1936, and in the posthumous edition of 1968, Bernard Berenson (who in 1925 had conjectured the authorship of the young Lippo Vanni (Sienese, active 1344 - 1376); for his expertise, see Zeri and Gardner 1980, 96) defined the image of Saint Matthew as at least in part by Simone, but classified the other four panels of the series in the Lehman collection as works of the artist’s shop. F. Mason Perkins (1937) thought the Lehman panels in large part executed by Simone’s assistants. The participation of the artist’s assistants was also detected in the paintings by

Gertrude Coor (1956), in *Exposition de la collection Lehman 1957*, by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), by Joseph Polzer (1971), by Burton B. Fredericksen and Zeri (1972), by Zeri and Gardner (1980), by Giovanni Previtali (1987), by Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder (1998), and by Alessandro Bagnoli (1999). Even the recent catalog entry by Sabina Spannocchi (in Bellosi 2009), although citing the series of apostles under Simone's name, considered it executed in part by assistants "under the surveillance" of the master. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 534; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 459; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:404; F. Mason Perkins, "Simone di Martino (Simone Martini)," in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1937), 31:67; Gertrude Coor, "Trecento—Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux," *Wallraf—Richartz—Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 43; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII—XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Joseph Polzer, "Observations on Known Paintings and a New Altarpiece by Francesco Traini," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 386; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Federico Zeri, in *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner (New York, 1980), 95; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 118, 189, 205, 311, 321, 400, 444, 453; Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, ed., *Lust und Verlust*, vol. 2, *Corpus—Band zu Kölner Gemäldesammlungen 1800–1860* (Cologne, 1998), 551–552; Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999) 156 n. 24, 179; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:132–141.

- [11] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) revived the attribution to Lippo Memmi, followed by Pietro Toesca (1951), Maria Cristina Gozzoli (in Contini and Gozzoli 1970), Cristina De Benedictis (1974, 1979, 1996), Michael Mallory (1974), Michel Laclotte (1978), and Andrew Martindale (1988). The present writer (1988) limited himself to rejecting the ascription of the panels to Lippo Memmi, without offering any alternative attribution. See Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), nos. 60–61; Lionello Venturi, *Italian*

*Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: nos. 76–77; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte classica e italiana 3; Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 551 n. 75; Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 105 n. 53; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 93; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201, n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressayre, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 75.

[12] Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979) and Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the date c. 1320; Cristina De Benedictis (1974), 1325—i.e., the date of the lost polyptych by Lippo Memmi for San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa—or, more cautiously (De Benedictis 1996), after 1323, the presumable date of the *Triumph of Saint Thomas* in San Domenico at Pisa. Michael Mallory (1974) dated the series c. 1330; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth Gardner (1980), to the period between c. 1320 and 1333. Sabina Spannocchi (2009) suggested the date of execution as c. 1317. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Siennese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:139.

[13] After the publications by Gordon Moran (1976), who was the first to cast doubt on whether a painter called Barna da Siena had ever existed—according to him, the name was an erroneous transcription of Bartolo di Fredi—and that of Antonino Caleca (1976, 1977), who argued that the works formerly attributed to "Barna" should be reassigned to the catalog of Lippo Memmi, art historians have gone their separate ways in trying to identify the

masters of the paintings left orphans after Barna's "demise." Luciano Bellosi (1977) wrote of the "Famiglia Memmi" as a kind of family concern, while Carlo Volpe (1982) considered probable Moran's hypothesis attributing the paintings to Federico Memmi, brother of Lippo. Giovanna Damiani (1985) maintained that "la firma di Lippo Memmi corrisponda...ad una sorta di etichetta che indica anziché l'attività di una personalità artistica, quella di una bottega comprendente Lippo e Federico Memmi e che doveva avere al suo attivo anche personalità minori" (Lippo Memmi's signature corresponds to a kind of label that indicates not the activity of an artistic personality but the activity of a workshop comprising Lippo and Federico Memmi and that must have included minor figures as well). Returning to the question, Bellosi (1985) thought it right to "riconsiderare unitariamente tutta la produzione che fa capo al prestigioso atelier familiare di Simone Martini, ivi comprese le opere attribuite a Lippo e a Barna" (reconsider integrally the entire production of the prestigious family workshop headed by Simone Martini, including the works attributed to Lippo and Barna). Previtali (1988) went further, affirming that "lo stile che siamo soliti chiamare 'Barna'...sta a Simone un po' come lo stile dei manieristi sta a quello di Michelangiolo" (the style that we are accustomed to calling Barna is to Simone a bit as the style of the mannerists is to Michelangelo). Previtali also proposed, albeit with caution, that some works usually attributed to Lippo be reassigned to Simone himself. To Leone de Castris (1988), a "distinzione puntuale fra le opere di 'Barna'" (precise distinction between the works of "Barna")—in his view probably executed by a presumed Tederico Memmi—and those of the "Maestro della Madonna Straus," another anonymous Simonese painter, seemed to be "operazione assai difficoltosa" (a rather difficult task). Miklós Boskovits (2008) and Ada Labriola (2008) insisted on the necessity of restoring to Lippo Memmi the paintings attributed to Barna, but Sabina Spannocchi (2009) still preferred to speak of the "cosidetto Barna" (the so-called Barna). See Gordan Moran, "Is the Name Barna an Incorrect Transcription of the Name Bartolo?" *Paragone* 27 (1976): 76–80; Antonio Caleca, "Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un'ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1," *Critica d'arte* 41 (1976): 49–59; Antonio Caleca, "Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un'ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 2," *Critica d'arte* 42 (1977): 55–80; Luciano Bellosi, "Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento," *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 21; Carlo Volpe, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'art* (Florence, 1982), 186–187; Giovanna Damiani, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni,"* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 82–85; Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e "chompagni,"* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 94–102; Giovanni Previtali, "Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini," in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985,* ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 160–161; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, "Problemi martiniani avignonesi: Il

‘Maestro degli angeli ribelli,’ i due Ceccarelli ed altro,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 230 n. 10; Miklós Boskovits, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 26; Ada Labriola, *Simone Martini e la pittura gotica a Siena: Duccio di Buoninsegna, Memmo di Filippuccio, Pietro Lorenzetti, Ugolino di Nerio, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Lippo Memmi, Matteo Giovanetti, Naddo Ceccarelli, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, Niccolò di ser Sozzo* (Florence, 2008), 56–58; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:141.

[14] The *Madonna della Misericordia* in Orvieto Cathedral, signed “Lippus de Sena natus nos pinxit amena,” is not dated but in general is thought to have been executed around 1320. Cf. Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 156; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lippo Memmi,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; and Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 176–177. The *Madonna and Child* in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg is usually dated slightly later; see Joseph Polzer, “Symon Martini et Lippus Memmi me pinxerunt,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 168; De Benedictis (1996, 7:732); Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 217 n. 41; and Johannes Tripps, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 49. For the diptych divided between the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and a private collection that bears the date 1333, see Millard Meiss, “Notes on a Dated Diptych by Lippo Memmi,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto and Paolo Dal Poggetto, 2 vols. (Milan, 1977), 1:137–139; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 76.

[15] No. 51.2397; Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. 1, *13th–15th Century* (Boston, 1994), 84, accepted the dating of the work shared by most art historians, to the early 1320s. Boskovits had already proposed in 1990 a comparison between the two images of the saint. Miklós Boskovits, “Review of Simone Martini by Andrew Martindale,” *Kunstchronik* 43 (1990): 595–601.

[16] The date of the altarpiece is variously indicated as 1319 or 1320. Both dates are derived from the same source: the sixteenth-century *Annali* of the Dominican convent in Pisa, which record the placing of the polyptych over the high altar of the church of Santa Caterina in 1320. But this date, if calculated according to the Pisan style in use at the time the polyptych was painted, could be equivalent to 1319 in the modern calendar. Cf. Pierluigi

Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 352.

- [17] Art historians in recent decades generally have agreed on dating the frescoes with half-length figures of saints in the northern transept of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi to the years 1315–1320. Cf. Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 94–95; Luciano Bellosi, “La barba di San Francesco: Nuove proposte per il ‘problema di Assisi,’” *Prospettiva* 22 (1980): 13–14; and Carlo Volpe, in *Il Gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture,oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 179. A similar dating is proposed for the polyptych formerly in Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano; cf. Cristina De Benedictis, “Pittura e miniatura del Duecento e del Trecento in terra di Siena,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:337–339; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 200–202 n. 23; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 349. The polyptych now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (no. 41.100.23, Lehman Collection, no. 1975.1.12 and 13), the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (no. 82.PB.72) is usually dated to the 1320s, but the present writer prefers an earlier dating, towards the mid-1310s; cf. Miklós Boskovits, “Da Duccio a Simone Martini,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 577.
- [18] The punch marks in the four Washington panels are registered as follows by Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998): “Da10a” (present in works by Simone Martini from the San Gimignano polyptych to the late Orsini quadriptych and in various works of Lippo Memmi), 117–119; “Ea1” (present in paintings by Simone with a presumable provenance from Orvieto, in the Orsini quadriptych, and in works by Lippo), 189; “Fd14a” (used in a similar way as the preceding punches); “I16a” (used in Simone’s polyptych divided among the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in the Uffizi Annunciation, and in panels attributed to Lippo), 205; “I70” (present in paintings between the Orvieto phase and the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 321; “Jb59” (present in works of Simone’s Orvieto phase and in the Orsini quadriptych, but not found in authenticated paintings by Lippo), 388; “Jc15” (present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 400–401; “Ka27a” (again present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in various works by Lippo), 444; and “Ka63” (used in a similar way as the previous punch), 453–454.
- [19] Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19.
- [20] The Madonna formerly at Castiglion d’Orcia was not necessarily painted for

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that town and was variously attributed in the past. Serena Padovani (1979) attributed it to Simone, and Alessandro Bagnoli (1997) accepted the attribution, whereas Leone de Castris (2003) thought it was painted “in buona parte” by studio assistants of Simone and dated it to the early 1320s. With regard to the dating of the painting, it should be borne in mind that Frinta (1998) found in it a punch mark present in various works by Simone executed during his period in Orvieto, as well as in the Pisa polyptych of 1319–1320, and in the San Gimignano polyptych. See Serena Padovani, “Una tavola di Castiglione d’Orcia restaurata di recente,” *Prospettiva* 17 (1979): 82–88; Alessandro Bagnoli, *Museo civico e diocesano d’arte sacra di Montalcino* (Siena, 1997), 33, 35; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 209, 354; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 428.

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### TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting and its three companions, *Saint Simon*, *Saint James Major*, and *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, were executed on panels apparently made of a single piece of wood with horizontal grain, which has been thinned to 2.5 cm thick, backed, and cradled. Stephen Pichetto applied the backings and cradles in 1944, at which time he may also have thinned the panels and added the wooden strips that are currently affixed to all sides of each. The inner molding of the arch as well as the capitals and bases of the engaged frame surrounding the painted surface of each panel are original. Before the painting process, the panels were covered with a fabric interleaf, on which a layer of gesso ground was applied. The areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole and the halos decorated with punch marks—those in *Saint Matthew* and *Saint Simon* extend onto the top arches of the engaged frames. Incised lines were used to demarcate the figures; a green underpainting was laid in beneath the flesh tones; and the paint was applied with fine, unblended brushstrokes. Infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 5 microns shows a linear underdrawing in the figures’ hands but not in their clothing, except in *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, in which all the folds in the saint’s cloak were delineated in a liquid medium.[1] Mordant gilding was used for embellishing the borders of the saints’ robes and the bosses and clasps of their books. The books are further decorated with punch marks, and a black material, which might have been silver, has been applied over the gilded clasps and bosses.

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The painted surfaces of all four panels are slightly worn but in fair state apart from a number of small, scattered losses largely associated with the damages to the supports and the removal of parts of the original engaged frames and moldings along the borders. Two small repairs are visible in the gold ground in *Saint Matthew*, and retouchings around the saint's throat, chest, and shoulders have discolored. Retouching in *Saint Simon* mostly affects the saint's right cheek and left shoulder. Vertical and diagonal cracks, with attendant minor paint loss, are more prominent along the bottom edge of *Saint James Major*, while retouching in *Saint Judas Thaddeus* is largely confined to the saint's face and book. The lettering of the inscriptions in all four panels has been reinforced. When he applied the cradles in 1944, Stephen Pichetto also "cleaned, restored, and varnished" the paintings. Robert Lehman (1928) mentioned an earlier cleaning, probably in the early 1920s.[2]

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 focal plane array PtSi camera.
- [2] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), n.p., stated that the panels "were covered by an old varnish which has lately been removed." For the intervention in 1944, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:433.
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### PROVENANCE

Acquired between 1832 and 1842 by Johann Anton Ramboux [1790-1866], Cologne, together with six other components of the same series, presumably in Siena;[1] (his estate sale, J.M. Heberle, Cologne, 23 May 1867, no. 75 [all ten panels], as by Lippo Memmi);[2] the whole series purchased by the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, which deaccessioned it in 1922-1923;[3] the four NGA panels, 1952.5.23-.26, purchased together with a fifth panel of the same series, by Philip Lehman [1861-1947], New York, by 1928;[4] the four NGA panels sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[5] gift 1952 to the NGA. [1] Ramboux built up his huge collection of early Italian pictures essentially in the above-mentioned years of his second period of residence in Italy; see Christoph Merzenich, "*Di diletanza per un artista - Der Sammler Antonio Giovanni Ramboux*

*Saint Matthew*

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in der Toskana," in *Lust und Verlust*, edited by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, 2 vols., Cologne, 1995-1998: 1(1995): 303-314. [2] Without quoting their provenance, the sale catalogue entry states only that the ten busts " . . . stimmen im Ausdruck wie in der übrigen Technik mit den Wandmalereien im Stadthause zu Sangemignano überein." [3] See Kier and Zehnder 1995-1998, 2(1998): 550-552. [4] The four panels in Washington and a fifth, representing *Saint Philip*, are included in the catalogue of the Lehman collection (Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection*, New York, Paris, 1928: nos. xix-xxiii). Possibly, Philip Lehman acquired them through Edward Hutton in London, who also handled the panels of the series now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. [5] The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.23-26, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892-1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1939 Masterpieces of Art. European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300-1800, New York World's Fair, 1939, no. 239.

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 820.

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Simone Martini

Sieneese, active from 1315; died 1344

## *Saint Simon*

c. 1315/1320

tempera on panel

painted surface: 26.2 x 19.7 cm (10 5/16 x 7 3/4 in.)

overall: 30.7 x 23.5 cm (12 1/16 x 9 1/4 in.)

framed: 44.4 x 60 cm (17 1/2 x 23 5/8 in.)

Inscription: on the left side of the Saint: SAN[C]TUS; on the right side of the Saint: SYMON

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.24

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### ENTRY

This panel and its three companions at the Gallery—*Saint Matthew*, *Saint James Major*, and *Saint Judas Thaddeus*—together with six other busts of apostles [fig. 1] [fig. 2] [fig. 3] [fig. 4] [fig. 5] [fig. 6] [fig. 7] [fig. 8] [fig. 9] [fig. 10],[1] originally formed part of a polyptych. The ten panels, acquired as a group by Johann Anton Ramboux in the early nineteenth century, remained together until the 1920s, when they were deaccessioned by the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne and dispersed.

The horizontal graining of the wood of the support in all ten panels suggests they are fragments of a predella.[2] The type of predella formed of busts of saints placed below round arches is rather archaic: in fact, it appears in Sieneese painting no later than the years around 1320. Subsequently, preference was given instead to the insertion of narrative scenes in the predella; if busts of saints were included in the program, they were usually inserted in circular or mixtilinear medallions surrounded by painted ornamental motifs.[3] The absence from this series of busts of two of the most venerated apostles, Peter and John, may suggest that these panels were already lost at the time of Ramboux's acquisition of the panels, together with a bust of Christ (or Christ on the Cross) that normally formed the central image of predellas decorated with busts of saints.[4] But it is more likely that the series of apostles in the predella was originally incomplete and that the images of Peter and John were separated from the rest and incorporated in the main register of the altarpiece, as was the case, for example, in *Duccio's Maestà*

[5] As for the sequence of the individual figures, it seems probable that the apostles Andrew and James Major would have been placed closer to the center (and hence in a position of particular emphasis), and that the images of Matthew, Thomas, Simon, and Thaddeus would have been placed closer to the two ends.[6]

As for the painter of these busts of apostles, an attribution to the Sienese master Lippo Memmi (Sienese, active 1317/1347) was supported by Ramboux in the catalog of his collection (1862).[7] This was endorsed by the older studies, beginning with Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle (1864) and ending with Louis Gielly (1926).[8] It was only when the ten panels reentered the art market that the more prestigious name of Simone Martini was proposed by Robert Lehman (1928) and then by others.[9] Art historians generally accepted the attribution to Simone, though more often than not with the qualifier “shop of” or “school of” Simone.[10] The catalog of the National Gallery of Art also cited the four panels presented by the Kress Collection as works of “Simone Martini and assistants.” The attribution to Lippo Memmi, however, was never wholly discarded and has more recently been revived.[11] Proposed dates vary between c. 1320 and 1333.[12]

The attempts in recent decades to unite the catalogs of paintings previously assembled respectively under the names of Lippo Memmi and Barna da Siena, as well as under the nebulous formulae “Companions of Simone,” “Lippo and Tederico Memmi,” or “shop of Memmi” have complicated the matter of distinguishing among the paintings executed within the orbits of Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi and have made Lippo’s artistic development difficult to understand.[13] Inextricably linked to this issue, the chronology of the series of apostles discussed here remains equally problematic. To judge from the works signed and dated [14] by Lippo in the years between c. 1323 and 1333, the insertion in his oeuvre of the four busts of apostles in the Gallery seems far from convincing. The softness of the modeling and the spontaneous naturalness of the saints’ gestures recall more readily the manner of his brother-in-law (Simone Martini) than the solemn poses, polished forms, and metallic sheen that often distinguish the works of Lippo himself.

Of the series of apostles of which the four panels in the Gallery form part, the Saint Andrew now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York [fig. 11] has close affinities, both in physiognomic type and in his rather surly expression, with the apostle, presumably Saint Andrew as well, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, unanimously recognized as Simone’s work.[15] The Saint Judas Thaddeus [fig. 12] in the Gallery similarly invites comparison with the image of the same saint in

Simone's polyptych in the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo in Pisa.[16] In both images the apostle is presented as a beardless youth who turns towards the arch of the frame with a slight Gothic bend, his head bowed to one side in an attitude of meditation. It cannot be said categorically, however, that the version painted for the polyptych of Pisa around 1319–1320 was the model for the painting in the Gallery, given that the contours of the figure and the drapery folds in the latter are far less agitated, following the stylistic models of previous works by Simone that still fall into the second decade of the century.[17] Comparison with the corresponding figures in the Pisa polyptych remains telling, however, and can also be extended to the representations of Saints Matthew and Simon. Simon is represented as still a young man, with a short, dark beard, while Matthew is a man of middle age in frontal position, with a long, forked beard. Matthew is shown in both paintings in the process of writing his Gospel. Less closely resembling his counterpart in the Washington panel is the Saint James Major of the Pisa polyptych, where we may observe the tendency, absent in the panels discussed here, to present the apostles in movement, to envelop their bodies in voluminous mantles that cast deep folds, and to place sharply foreshortened books in their hands. In the Pisa polyptych the books are in general more voluminous and open, and represented in such a way that some lines of calligraphy are visible. The saints, moreover, often seem to be conversing with one another, accompanying or enforcing their remarks with raised hand or exhibiting an object that not infrequently interrupts the outer contour of the figure, set against the gold ground, as if backlit.

Might the reduced emphasis on agitated rhythms and elegant gestures in the busts of apostles in the Gallery and in their companion panels imply a dating for them prior to the Pisa polyptych? Unfortunately, "objective data" deriving from the use of punch marks help us little in this case, since according to Mojmir S. Frinta's survey (1998), the punched motifs present in the panels now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art [fig. 11] [fig. 13] [fig. 14] [fig. 15] and the Gallery recur virtually throughout the entire oeuvre of Simone Martini, from the San Gimignano polyptych to the Annunciation in the Uffizi, Florence (1333), and beyond.[18] It might be more fruitful to concentrate attention instead on another aspect, namely the fact that Simone, as far as we are able to judge today, generally avoided the use of the round arch in his altarpieces. This motif appears for the last time in the youthful polyptych from San Gimignano, while in later works the arch, if it is not Gothic, is enriched with small trefoil arches on the inside, as in the Pisa polyptych. Not only is the framing of the National Gallery of Art panels very similar to that of the

components of the predella of the Saint Louis of Toulouse in Naples (painted in c. 1317, the year of the saint's canonization), but also their stylistic character is consistent with that of the works realized in the years of rapid development between the Maestà in the Palazzo Pubblico (1315) and the Pisan polyptych of 1319–1320.

These considerations raise the question of identifying the altarpiece of which the ten busts of apostles formed part. Michael Mallory (1974) argued that the four Washington panels, together with their six companion panels in other collections, were in origin the predella of the polyptych by Lippo Memmi of which *Saint John the Baptist* in the Gallery also formed part.[19] The proposal has not met with acceptance in the art historical literature, but no alternative hypotheses have yet been formulated. A possible candidate for the lost central panel of the polyptych of which the series of busts of apostles formed part could be, in the present writer's opinion, the Madonna and Child from the church of Santa Maria Maddalena at Castiglion d'Orcia, now in the Museo Civico e Diocesano at Montalcino (80 × 61 cm).[20] The width of the panel is not very different from that of the images placed at the center of Simone's polyptychs executed for churches in Pisa, Orvieto, or San Gimignano, and its height is also close to that from San Gimignano, now deprived of its original frame. So there is nothing to prevent us from imagining the Montalcino Madonna at the center of a similar polyptych and with a series of apostles in its predella. Our panels share with it not only a similar date but also the external profile terminating in a round arch.

In conclusion, the ten panels of the apostles can, I believe, be firmly attributed to Simone Martini. In the past scholars have generally undervalued these panels, not as a consequence of any intrinsic mediocrity but because of the loss of the pictorial finishes in some of them, flattening the modeling of the figures, and the unhappy result of successive restorations that have obscured many of the more exquisite touches of the pictorial technique, especially in the busts of Saints Bartholomew, Matthias, and Thomas now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, the better-preserved passages in our panels, in particular in the faces of Saints Thaddeus and James Major, still retain qualities that, in the view of the present writer, seem fully worthy of the hand of Simone.

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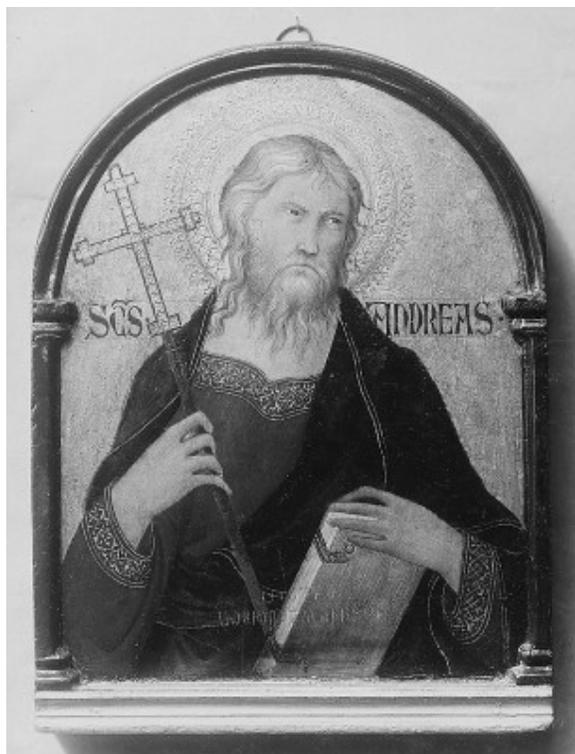
**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



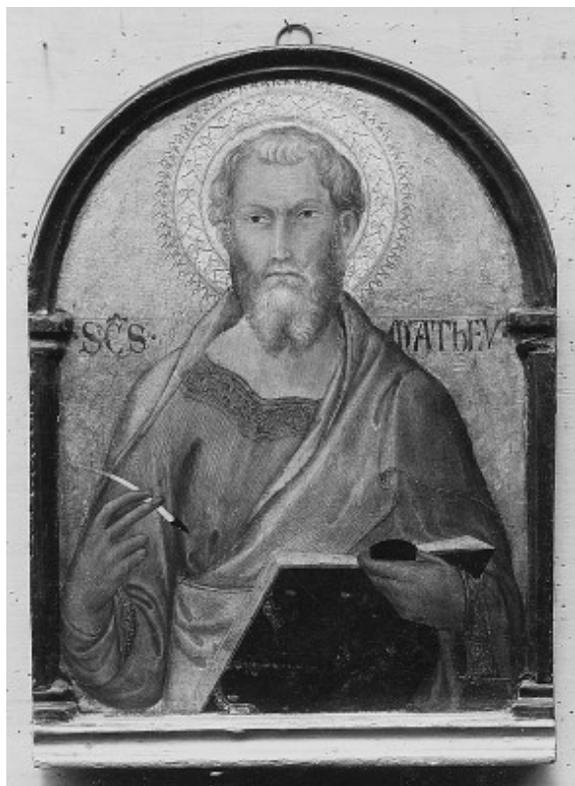
**fig. 2** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Simon*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



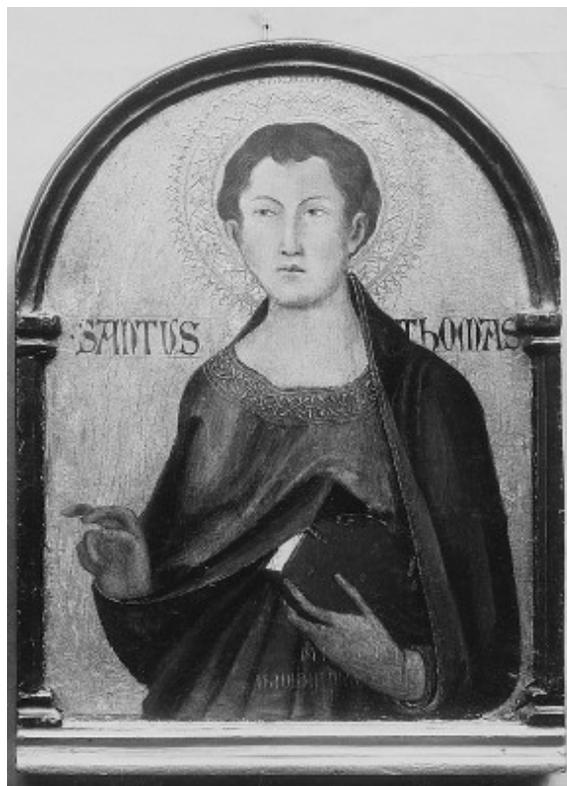
**fig. 3** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



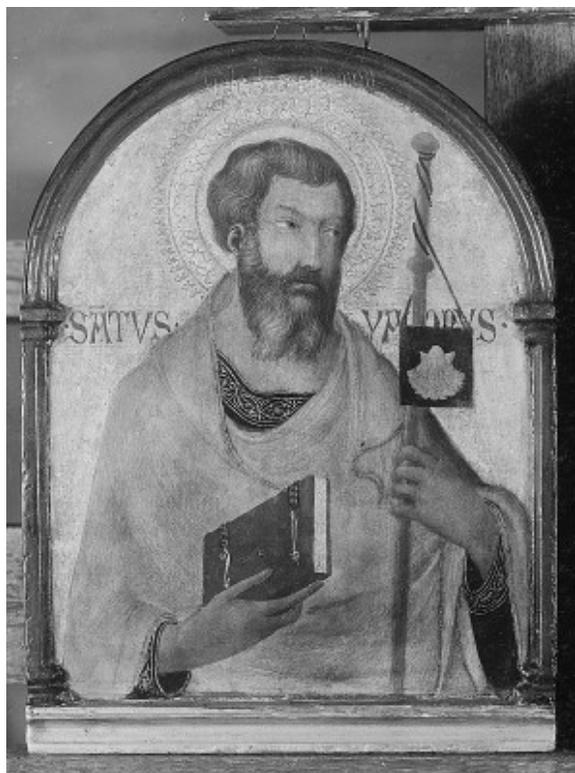
**fig. 4** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 5** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 6** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 7** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Major*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 8** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Philip*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, location unknown. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



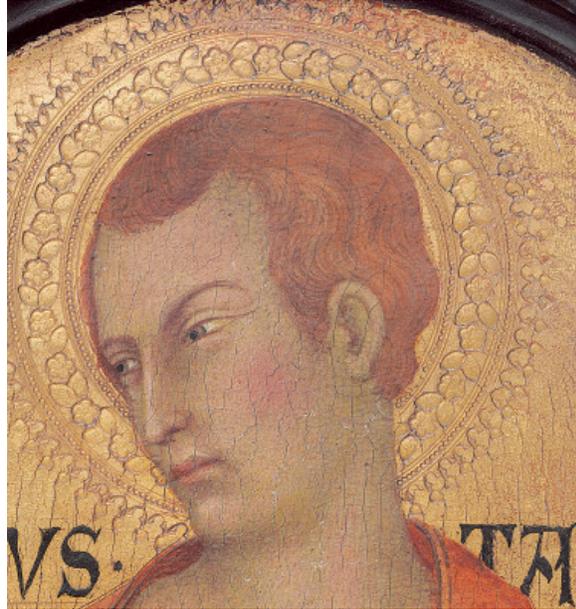
**fig. 9** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint James Minor*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, Salini collection, Castello di Gallico, Asciano, Siena. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



**fig. 10** Archival photograph, c. 1925, old state, Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943. Image: Galerie van Diemen, Berlin



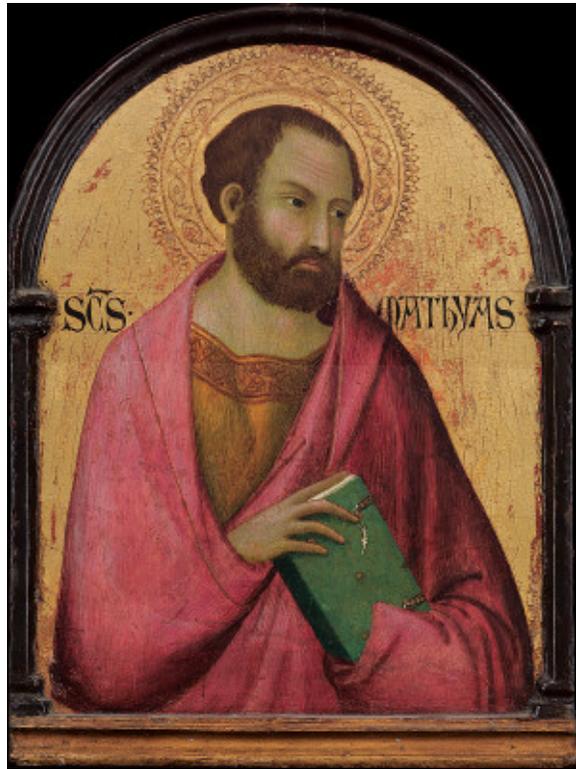
**fig. 11** Simone Martini, *Saint Andrew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 12** Detail, Simone Martini, *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection



**fig. 13** Simone Martini, *Saint Bartholomew*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 14** Simone Martini, *Saint Matthias*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943



**fig. 15** Simone Martini, *Saint Thomas*, c. 1315/1320, tempera on panel, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Maitland F. Griggs Collection, Bequest of Maitland F. Griggs, 1943

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#### NOTES

- [1] In 1924, Maitland Fuller Griggs, acquired four panels of the series—Saints Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthias, and Andrew—through Edward Hutton, and these entered the Metropolitan Museum, New York, in 1943. The bust of Saint James Minor (fig. 9) belonged to the Stoclet Collection in Brussels at least since 1927, and since 2005 it has belonged to the Salini collection at Castello di Gallico (Asciano). Philip Lehman purchased the image of Saint Philip (fig. 8) along with the four panels discussed here before 1928. The Saint Philip was sold at auction at Christie's in New York on January 11, 1991 (lot 12). It was purchased by Carlo de Carlo (Florence), in whose collection it remained until 1999; its present whereabouts are unknown.

- [2] The predella, especially in large-size altarpieces in Tuscany, was almost always painted on a single timber with grain running horizontally, separated from the wooden support of the main panels. The top tier of images above the main register, on the other hand, was frequently painted on the same vertically grained panel as the main register itself. See John White, *Duccio: Tuscan Art and the Medieval Workshop* (New York, 1979), 89–91; Christoph Merzenich, *Vom Schreinerwerk zum Gemälde: Florentiner Altarwerke der ersten Hälfte des Quattrocento* (Berlin, 2001), 55. The following scholars maintained that the panels formed part of the predella of a polyptych: Lionello Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), no. 60; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: no. 76; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117; Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Cristina De Benedictis, *Lippo Memmi in Encyclopaedia dell’arte medievale*, Rome, 1996, 7:732. De Benedictis (1974) initially argued, as Federico Zeri (1980) did, that they belonged instead to the upper register of a polyptych. Gertrude Coor (1956) thought that both solutions were possible, as did Sabina Spannocchi (2009). See Cristina De Benedictis, “A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco,” *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Gertrude Coor, “Trecento–Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux,” *Wallraf–Richartz–Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:135.
- [3] Examples of the predella type with busts of saints set in round-arched frames are Simone Martini’s polyptych now in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa (1319–1320); that of Ugolino di Nerio in the Museo Nazionale in Lucca, datable to c. 1320; and that of Meo da Siena, also dating to around 1315–1320, now in the Pinacoteca Nazionale of Perugia. Cf. James H. Stubblebine, *Duccio di Buoninsegna and His School*, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1979), 2: fig. 375; and Francesco Santi, ed., *Galleria Nazionale dell’Umbria*, vol. 1, *Dipinti, sculture e oggetti d’arte di età romanica e gotica* (Rome, 1969), 58–59. Predellas with medallions surrounded by floriated motifs, by contrast, were used by Giotto in his polyptychs in the Baroncelli Chapel in Santa Croce in Florence and in the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Bologna in the years 1325–1335, and, among Sieneese artists, by Ugolino di Nerio in the

predella now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts at Besançon (see Stubblebine 1979, fig. 465), and by *Bartolomeo Bulgarini* in the predella of his polyptych formerly in Santa Croce, now in the storerooms of the Gallerie Fiorentine; see Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sieneese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), fig. 72. Sometimes, as in Simone Martini's altarpiece of Saint Louis of Toulouse in the Museo di Capodimonte at Naples (1317), the round arches of the predella contain not the busts of saints but small narrative scenes. Perhaps the practice of adding a predella containing busts of saints to small devotional paintings originated in the shops of Simone and Lippo (cf. the Madonna in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, no. P. 30 w 8, or the Crucifixion no. 156 of the Pinacoteca Vaticana). It seems to reflect a type of altarpiece similar to that of Simone in Naples: paintings, that is, with a single scene (instead of several panels with figures of saints) in the main register.

- [4] However, sometimes, as in the above-cited predella of Meo da Siena's polyptych, Christ does not appear among the apostles, and the center of the sequence of busts of apostles is occupied instead by Saints Peter and Paul.
- [5] In Duccio's masterpiece, the large scene representing the Madonna and Child flanked by saints and angels is surmounted by a horizontal second register of half-length saints (from left to right): the busts of Saints Thaddeus, Simon, Philip, James Major, Andrew, Matthew, James Minor, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthias. The apostles Peter and Paul, and John the Evangelist, on the other hand, are represented, together with the Baptist, as full-length figures flanking the throne of the Madonna.
- [6] In his analysis of the problem of the sequence of busts, Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the following order, from left to right: Matthias, Thomas, Bartholomew, James (Minor or Major), Matthew, Andrew, James[?], Philip, Simon, and Thaddeus, observing that this would be the exact reverse of the order followed by Duccio in representing the ten apostles in the *Maestà* and by Simone Martini in the predella of the Pisa polyptych, in which Peter and Paul are naturally added to the ten, in a central position (John the Evangelist appears here among the saints in the main register). See Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts 7* (1987): 83–84. But the sequence represented in the works of Duccio and Simone Martini is not the only possible one. For example, Simone represented the apostles in the *Maestà* he frescoed in the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena in the order of: Bartholomew, Philip, Matthew, Thomas, James Minor, James Major, Matthias, Andrew, Thaddeus, and Simon (with Paul, John the Evangelist, John the Baptist, and Peter placed in the foreground); for the identification of the apostles, cf. Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999), 155–157. Different again is the sequence of apostles adopted by Giotto in the Last Judgment of the

Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, and in the Stefaneschi polyptych in the Pinacoteca Vaticana; cf. Margrit Lisner, “Die Gewandfarben der Apostel in Giotto’s Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbikonographie mit Notizen zu älteren Aposteldarstellungen in Florenz, Assisi und Rom,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 53 (1990): 309–375; and Margrit Lisner, “Giotto und die Aufträge des Kardinals Jacopo Stefaneschi für Alt-St. Peter: 2; der Stefaneschi-Altar; Giotto und seine Werkstatt in Rom; das Altarwerk und der verlorene Christuszyklus in der Petersapsis,” *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 30 (1995): 59–133. Only the central position of Peter, Paul, and John (if they form part of the series), as well as James Major and Andrew, holds good as a general rule.

- [7] *Katalog der Gemälde Alter italienischer Meister (1221–1640) in der Sammlung des Conservator J.A. Ramboux* (Cologne, 1862), 15, no. 75.
- [8] Joseph Archer Crowe and Giovan Battista Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy from the Second to the Sixteenth Century*, 3 vols. (London, 1864–1866), 2:105; Louis Gielly, *Les primitifs siennois* (Paris, 1926), 111.
- [9] At least as regards the panels that entered the Griggs collection in New York through Edward Hutton, the attribution to Simone presumably had been made by the dealer/amateur Hutton himself. The Saint James Minor also seems to have entered the Stoclet collection in Brussels with an attribution to Simone; cf. Pierre Bautier, “I primitivi italiani della collezione Stoclet a Bruxelles,” *Cronache d’arte* 4 (1927): 315. August L. Mayer (1930) further accepted Simone Martini’s authorship for the panels then in the Lehman collection, as did George McCall and William Valentiner. August L. Mayer, “Die Sammlung Philip Lehman,” *Pantheon* 5 (1930): 113; George McCall, *Masterpieces of Art: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, ed. Wilhelm R. Valentiner (New York, 1939), 116–117.
- [10] Perhaps having been asked by Maitland Fuller Griggs in 1926 for his expertise, Richard Offner orally ascribed the four panels acquired for that collection as “school of Simone Martini,” while in 1926 Raimond van Marle, in a manuscript opinion, attributed the paintings to an “immediate follower of Simone Martini.” See Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 96. Intervening in 1932 and then in 1936, and in the posthumous edition of 1968, Bernard Berenson (who in 1925 had conjectured the authorship of the young Lippo Vanni; for his expertise, see Zeri and Gardner 1980, 96) defined the image of Saint Matthew as at least in part by Simone, but classified the other four panels of the series in the Lehman collection as works of the artist’s shop. F. Mason Perkins (1937) thought the Lehman panels in large part executed by Simone’s assistants. The participation of the artist’s assistants was also detected in the paintings by Gertrude Coor

(1956), in *Exposition de la collection Lehman 1957*, by Fern Rusk Shapley (1966), by Joseph Polzer (1971), by Burton B. Fredericksen and Zeri (1972), by Zeri and Gardner (1980), by Giovanni Previtali (1987), by Mojmir S. Frinta (1998), by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder (1998), and by Alessandro Bagnoli (1999). Even the recent catalog entry by Sabina Spannocchi (in Bellosi 2009), although citing the series of apostles under Simone's name, considered it executed in part by assistants "under the surveillance" of the master. See Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: A List of the Principal Artists and Their Works with an Index of Places* (Oxford, 1932), 534; Bernard Berenson, *Pittura italiana del rinascimento: Catalogo dei principali artisti e delle loro opere con un indice dei luoghi*, trans. Emilio Cecchi (Milan, 1936), 459; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:404; F. Mason Perkins, "Simone di Martino (Simone Martini)," in *Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Ulrich Thieme, Felix Becker, and Hans Vollmer, 37 vols. (Leipzig, 1937), 31:67; Gertrude Coor, "Trecento-Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux," *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 18 (1956): 118; *Exposition de la Collection Lehman de New York* (Paris, 1957), 43; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Joseph Polzer, "Observations on Known Paintings and a New Altarpiece by Francesco Traini," *Pantheon* 29 (1971): 386; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 122; Federico Zeri, in *Italian Paintings: Sieneese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner (New York, 1980), 95; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 118, 189, 205, 311, 321, 400, 444, 453; Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, ed., *Lust und Verlust*, vol. 2, *Corpus-Band zu Kölner Gemäldesammlungen 1800–1860* (Cologne, 1998), 551–552; Alessandro Bagnoli, *La Maestà di Simone Martini* (Cinisello Balsamo, Milan, 1999) 156 n. 24, 179; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:132–141.

- [11] Lionello Venturi (1931, 1933) revived the attribution to Lippo Memmi, followed by Pietro Toesca (1951), Maria Cristina Gozzoli (in Contini and Gozzoli 1970), Cristina De Benedictis (1974, 1979, 1996), Michael Mallory (1974), Michel Laclotte (1978), and Andrew Martindale (1988). The present writer (1988) limited himself to rejecting the ascription of the panels to Lippo Memmi, without offering any alternative attribution. See Lionello

Venturi, *Pitture italiane in America* (Milan, 1931), nos. 60–61; Lionello Venturi, *Italian Paintings in America*, trans. Countess Vanden Heuvel and Charles Marriott, 3 vols. (New York and Milan, 1933), 1: nos. 76–77; Pietro Toesca, *Il Trecento*, Storia dell'arte classica e italiana 3; Storia dell'arte italiana 2 (Turin, 1951), 551 n. 75; Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 105 n. 53; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, *La pittura senese 1330–1370* (Florence, 1979), 93; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201, n. 19; Michel Laclotte, in *Retables italiens du XIIIe au XVe siècle*, ed. Claude Ressay, Sylvia Beguin, and Michel Laclotte (Paris, 1978), 19; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 35 n. 18; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 75.

- [12] Fern Rusk Shapley (1966, 1979) and Giovanni Previtali (1987) proposed the date c. 1320; Cristina De Benedictis (1974), 1325—i.e., the date of the lost polyptych by Lippo Memmi for San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno in Pisa—or, more cautiously (De Benedictis 1996), after 1323, the presumable date of the *Triumph of Saint Thomas* in San Domenico at Pisa. Michael Mallory (1974) dated the series c. 1330; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth Gardner (1980), to the period between c. 1320 and 1333. Sabina Spannocchi (2009) suggested the date of execution as c. 1317. See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 48–49; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:332, 333 n. 7; Giovanni Previtali, "Problems in the Workshop of Simone Martini," *Center/National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts* 7 (1987): 83–84; Cristina De Benedictis, "A proposito di un libro su Buffalmacco," *Antichità viva* 13, no. 2 (1974): 8, 10 n. 13; Cristina De Benedictis, "Lippo Memmi," in *Enciclopedia dell'arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; Michael Mallory, "An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19; Federico Zeri and Elizabeth E. Gardner, *Italian Paintings: Sienese and Central Italian Schools; A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1980), 95; Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:139.
- [13] After the publications by Gordon Moran (1976), who was the first to cast doubt on whether a painter called Barna da Siena had ever existed—according to him, the name was an erroneous transcription of Bartolo di

Fredi—and that of Antonino Caleca (1976, 1977), who argued that the works formerly attributed to “Barna” should be reassigned to the catalog of Lippo Memmi, art historians have gone their separate ways in trying to identify the masters of the paintings left orphans after Barna’s “demise.” Luciano Bellosi (1977) wrote of the “Famiglia Memmi” as a kind of family concern, while Carlo Volpe (1982) considered probable Moran’s hypothesis attributing the paintings to Federico Memmi, brother of Lippo. Giovanna Damiani (1985) maintained that “la firma di Lippo Memmi corrisponda...ad una sorta di etichetta che indica anziché l’attività di una personalità artistica, quella di una bottega comprendente Lippo e Federico Memmi e che doveva avere al suo attivo anche personalità minori” (Lippo Memmi’s signature corresponds to a kind of label that indicates not the activity of an artistic personality but the activity of a workshop comprising Lippo and Federico Memmi and that must have included minor figures as well). Returning to the question, Bellosi (1985) thought it right to “riconsiderare unitariamente tutta la produzione che fa capo al prestigioso atelier familiare di Simone Martini, ivi comprese le opere attribuite a Lippo e a Barna” (reconsider integrally the entire production of the prestigious family workshop headed by Simone Martini, including the works attributed to Lippo and Barna). Previtali (1988) went further, affirming that “lo stile che siamo soliti chiamare ‘Barna’...sta a Simone un po’ come lo stile dei manieristi sta a quello di Michelangiolo” (the style that we are accustomed to calling Barna is to Simone a bit as the style of the mannerists is to Michelangelo). Previtali also proposed, albeit with caution, that some works usually attributed to Lippo be reassigned to Simone himself. To Leone de Castris (1988), a “distinzione puntuale fra le opere di ‘Barna’” (precise distinction between the works of “Barna”)—in his view probably executed by a presumed Federico Memmi—and those of the “Maestro della Madonna Straus,” another anonymous Simonese painter, seemed to be “operazione assai difficoltosa” (a rather difficult task). Miklós Boskovits (2008) and Ada Labriola (2008) insisted on the necessity of restoring to Lippo Memmi the paintings attributed to Barna, but Sabina Spannocchi (2009) still preferred to speak of the “cosidetto Barna” (the so-called Barna). See Gordan Moran, “Is the Name Barna an Incorrect Transcription of the Name Bartolo?” *Paragone* 27 (1976): 76–80; Antonio Caleca, “Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 1,” *Critica d’arte* 41 (1976): 49–59; Antonio Caleca, “Tre polittici di Lippo Memmi, un’ipotesi sul Barna e la bottega di Simone e Lippo, 2,” *Critica d’arte* 42 (1977): 55–80; Luciano Bellosi, “Moda e cronologia: B) per la pittura di primo Trecento,” *Prospettiva* 11 (1977): 21; Carlo Volpe, in *Il gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d’art* (Florence, 1982), 186–187; Giovanna Damiani, in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 82–85; Luciano Bellosi, in *Simone Martini e “chompagni,”* ed. Alessandro Bagnoli and Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1985), 94–102; Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai

problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 160–161; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, “Problemi martiniani avignonesi: Il ‘Maestro degli angeli ribelli,’ i due Ceccarelli ed altro,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 230 n. 10; Miklós Boskovits, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 26; Ada Labriola, *Simone Martini e la pittura gotica a Siena: Duccio di Buoninsegna, Memmo di Filippuccio, Pietro Lorenzetti, Ugolino di Nerio, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Lippo Memmi, Matteo Giovanetti, Naddo Ceccarelli, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, Niccolò di ser Sozzo* (Florence, 2008), 56–58; and Sabina Spannocchi, in *La collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV*, ed. Luciano Bellosi, 2 vols. (Florence, 2009), 1:141.

- [14] The *Madonna della Misericordia* in Orvieto Cathedral, signed “Lippus de Sena natus nos pinxit amena,” is not dated but in general is thought to have been executed around 1320. Cf. Giovanni Previtali, “Introduzione ai problemi della bottega di Simone Martini,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 156; Cristina De Benedictis, “Lippo Memmi,” in *Enciclopedia dell’arte medievale*, 12 vols. (Rome, 1996), 7:732; and Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 176–177. The *Madonna and Child* in the Lindenau-Museum in Altenburg is usually dated slightly later; see Joseph Polzer, “Symon Martini et Lippus Memmi me pinxerunt,” in *Simone Martini: Atti del convegno; Siena, March 27–29, 1985*, ed. Luciano Bellosi (Florence, 1988), 168; De Benedictis (1996, 7:732); Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 217 n. 41; and Johannes Tripps, in *Maestri senesi e toscani nel Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg*, ed. Miklós Boskovits and Johannes Tripps (Siena, 2008), 49. For the diptych divided between the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and a private collection that bears the date 1333, see Millard Meiss, “Notes on a Dated Diptych by Lippo Memmi,” in *Scritti di storia dell’arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, ed. Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto and Paolo Dal Poggetto, 2 vols. (Milan, 1977), 1:137–139; Miklós Boskovits, ed., *Frühe italienische Malerei: Gemäldegalerie Berlin, Katalog der Gemälde*, trans. Erich Schleier (Berlin, 1988), 76.
- [15] No. 51.2397; Laurence B. Kanter, *Italian Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. 1, *13th–15th Century* (Boston, 1994), 84, accepted the dating of the work shared by most art historians, to the early 1320s. Boskovits had already proposed in 1990 a comparison between the two images of the saint. Miklós Boskovits, “Review of Simone Martini by Andrew Martindale,” *Kunstchronik* 43 (1990): 595–601.
- [16] The date of the altarpiece is variously indicated as 1319 or 1320. Both dates are derived from the same source: the sixteenth-century *Annali* of the Dominican convent in Pisa, which record the placing of the polyptych over

the high altar of the church of Santa Caterina in 1320. But this date, if calculated according to the Pisan style in use at the time the polyptych was painted, could be equivalent to 1319 in the modern calendar. Cf. Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 352.

- [17] Art historians in recent decades generally have agreed on dating the frescoes with half-length figures of saints in the northern transept of the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi to the years 1315–1320. Cf. Maria Cristina Gozzoli, in *L'opera completa di Simone Martini*, ed. Gianfranco Contini and Maria Cristina Gozzoli (Milan, 1970), 94–95; Luciano Bellosi, “La barba di San Francesco: Nuove proposte per il ‘problema di Assisi,’” *Prospettiva* 22 (1980): 13–14; and Carlo Volpe, in *Il Gotico a Siena: Miniature, pitture, oreficerie, oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 179. A similar dating is proposed for the polyptych formerly in Sant'Agostino at San Gimignano; cf. Cristina De Benedictis, “Pittura e miniatura del Duecento e del Trecento in terra di Siena,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:337–339; Andrew Martindale, *Simone Martini* (Oxford, 1988), 200–202 n. 23; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 349. The polyptych now divided between the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (no. 41.100.23, Lehman Collection, no. 1975.1.12 and 13), the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (no. 82.PB.72) is usually dated to the 1320s, but the present writer prefers an earlier dating, towards the mid-1310s; cf. Miklós Boskovits, “Da Duccio a Simone Martini,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 577.
- [18] The punch marks in the four Washington panels are registered as follows by Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998): “Da10a” (present in works by Simone Martini from the San Gimignano polyptych to the late Orsini quadriptych and in various works of Lippo Memmi), 117–119; “Ea1” (present in paintings by Simone with a presumable provenance from Orvieto, in the Orsini quadriptych, and in works by Lippo), 189; “Fd14a” (used in a similar way as the preceding punches); “I16a” (used in Simone’s polyptych divided among the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in the Uffizi Annunciation, and in panels attributed to Lippo), 205; “I70” (present in paintings between the Orvieto phase and the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 321; “Jb59” (present in works of Simone’s Orvieto phase and in the Orsini quadriptych, but not found in authenticated paintings by Lippo), 388; “Jc15” (present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in works by Lippo), 400–401; “Ka27a” (again present in paintings of Simone’s Orvieto phase, the Uffizi Annunciation, and in various works by Lippo), 444; and

“Ka63” (used in a similar way as the previous punch), 453–454.

- [19] Michael Mallory, “An Altarpiece by Lippo Memmi Reconsidered,” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 9 (1974): 201 n. 19.
- [20] The Madonna formerly at Castiglione d’Orcia was not necessarily painted for that town and was variously attributed in the past. Serena Padovani (1979) attributed it to Simone, and Alessandro Bagnoli (1997) accepted the attribution, whereas Leone de Castris (2003) thought it was painted “in buona parte” by studio assistants of Simone and dated it to the early 1320s. With regard to the dating of the painting, it should be borne in mind that Frinta (1998) found in it a punch mark present in various works by Simone executed during his period in Orvieto, as well as in the Pisa polyptych of 1319–1320, and in the San Gimignano polyptych. See Serena Padovani, “Una tavola di Castiglione d’Orcia restaurata di recente,” *Prospettiva* 17 (1979): 82–88; Alessandro Bagnoli, *Museo civico e diocesano d’arte sacra di Montalcino* (Siena, 1997), 33, 35; Pierluigi Leone De Castris, *Simone Martini* (Milan, 2003), 209, 354; Mojmir Svatopluk Frinta, *Punched Decoration on Late Medieval Panel and Miniature Painting* (Prague, 1998), 428.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This painting and its three companions, *Saint Matthew*, *Saint James Major*, and *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, were executed on panels apparently made of a single piece of wood with horizontal grain, which has been thinned to 2.5 cm thick, backed, and cradled. Stephen Pichetto applied the backings and cradles in 1944, at which time he may also have thinned the panels and added the wooden strips that are currently affixed to all sides of each. The inner molding of the arch as well as the capitals and bases of the engaged frame surrounding the painted surface of each panel are original. Before the painting process, the panels were covered with a fabric interleaf, on which a layer of gesso ground was applied. The areas to be gilded were prepared with red bole and the halos decorated with punch marks—those in *Saint Matthew* and *Saint Simon* extend onto the top arches of the engaged frames. Incised lines were used to demarcate the figures; a green underpainting was laid in beneath the flesh tones; and the paint was applied with fine, unblended brushstrokes. Infrared reflectography at 1.2 to 5 microns shows a linear underdrawing in the figures’ hands but not in their clothing, except in *Saint Judas Thaddeus*, in which all the folds in the saint’s cloak were delineated in a liquid medium.[1] Mordant gilding was used for embellishing the borders of the

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saints' robes and the bosses and clasps of their books. The books are further decorated with punch marks, and a black material, which might have been silver, has been applied over the gilded clasps and bosses.

The painted surfaces of all four panels are slightly worn but in fair state apart from a number of small, scattered losses largely associated with the damages to the supports and the removal of parts of the original engaged frames and moldings along the borders. Two small repairs are visible in the gold ground in *Saint Matthew*, and retouchings around the saint's throat, chest, and shoulders have discolored. Retouching in *Saint Simon* mostly affects the saint's right cheek and left shoulder. Vertical and diagonal cracks, with attendant minor paint loss, are more prominent along the bottom edge of *Saint James Major*, while retouching in *Saint Judas Thaddeus* is largely confined to the saint's face and book. The lettering of the inscriptions in all four panels has been reinforced. When he applied the cradles in 1944, Stephen Pichetto also "cleaned, restored, and varnished" the paintings. Robert Lehman (1928) mentioned an earlier cleaning, probably in the early 1920s.[2]

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] Infrared reflectography was performed using a Mitsubishi M600 focal plane array PtSi camera.
- [2] Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York* (Paris, 1928), n.p., stated that the panels "were covered by an old varnish which has lately been removed." For the intervention in 1944, see Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:433.
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### PROVENANCE

Acquired between 1832 and 1842 by Johann Anton Ramboux [1790-1866], Cologne, together with six other components of the same series, presumably in Siena:[1] (his estate sale, J.M. Heberle, Cologne, 23 May 1867, no. 75 [all ten panels], as by Lippo Memmi);[2] the whole series purchased by the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, Cologne, which deaccessioned it in 1922-1923;[3] the four NGA panels, 1952.5.23-.26, purchased together with a fifth panel of the same series, by

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Philip Lehman [1861-1947], New York, by 1928; [4] the four NGA panels sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York; [5] gift 1952 to the NGA. [1] Ramboux built up his huge collection of early Italian pictures essentially in the above-mentioned years of his second period of residence in Italy; see Christoph Merzenich, "Di dilettanza per un artista - Der Sammler Antonio Giovanni Ramboux in der Toskana," in *Lust und Verlust*, edited by Hiltrud Kier and Frank Günter Zehnder, 2 vols., Cologne, 1995-1998: 1(1995): 303-314. [2] Without quoting their provenance, the sale catalogue entry states only that the ten busts " . . . stimmen im Ausdruck wie in der übrigen Technik mit den Wandmalereien im Stadthause zu Sangemignano überein." [3] See Kier and Zehnder 1995-1998, 2(1998): 550-552. [4] The four panels in Washington and a fifth, representing *Saint Philip*, are included in the catalogue of the Lehman collection (Robert Lehman, *The Philip Lehman Collection, New York, Paris, 1928*: nos. xix-xxiii). Possibly, Philip Lehman acquired them through Edward Hutton in London, who also handled the panels of the series now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. [5] The bill of sale for the Kress Foundation's purchase of fifteen paintings from the Lehman collection, including NGA 1952.5.23-.26, is dated 11 June 1943; payment was made four days later (copy in NGA curatorial files). The documents concerning the 1943 sale all indicate that Philip Lehman's son Robert Lehman (1892-1963) was owner of the paintings, but it is not clear in the Lehman Collection archives at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, whether Robert made the sale for his father or on his own behalf. See Laurence Kanter's e-mail of 6 May 2011, about ownership of the Lehman collection, in NGA curatorial files.

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1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 821.

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# *Tuscan 13th Century*

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Unsigned works of art, especially those that are hundreds of years old, are difficult to assign to a particular artist. Works attributed to “Tuscan 13th Century” are characterized by stylistic elements common in Tuscany during the 13th century.

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Tuscan 13th Century

# *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist, Saint Peter, and Two Angels*

c. 1290

tempera on panel

painted surface (original panel including painted frame): 34.3 × 24.7 cm (13 1/2 × 9 3/4 in.)

overall (including added wooden strips): 36 × 26 cm (14 3/16 × 10 1/4 in.)

Inscription: on the scroll held by Saint John the Baptist: E[C]CE / AGNU[S] /

DEI:[ECCE] / [Q]UI [TOLLIT PECCATUM MUNDI] (from John 1:29)

Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.60

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## ENTRY

The enthroned Madonna supports her son, seated on her left knee, with both hands. The child, in a frontal position, blesses with his right hand, holding a roll of parchment in his left. The composition is a variant of the type of the *Hodegetria* Virgin; in the present case, she does not point towards her son, as in the Byzantine prototype, but instead presents him to the spectator.[1] Her affectionate maternal pose is thus given precedence over her more ritual and impersonal role. But Mary's pose perhaps has another sense: she seems to be rearranging her son's small legs to conform them to the cross-legged position considered suitable for judges and sovereigns in the Middle Ages.[2]

The panel is painted in a rapid, even cursory manner. The artist omits the form of the throne's backrest, which remains hidden by the cloth of honor, supported by angels and decorated with bold motifs of popular taste (an interlocking pattern of quatrefoils and octagons). He designs the form of the throne itself in an incongruous manner, apparently semicircular at the seat and rectangular at the base. According to a convention widespread in Tuscany in the second half of the thirteenth century, the painter presents the seat of the Madonna as if it were seen

not frontally but from the left.[3] This is suggested not only by the position of the step but also by the fact that while the figure of the Baptist is seen in its entirety, that of Saint Peter to the right is partially hidden by the throne. That the patron must have been a person of modest means is suggested both by the cursory execution and by the eschewal of gilding on the frame; instead, the artist adopts the unusual expedient of painting it red and decorating it with a frieze of daisies.[4]

Carlo Lasinio's attribution of the painting to Cimabue, accepted in the sale catalog of 1835, remained ignored in the art historical literature until the panel reappeared at Patterdale Hall in the Lake District in 1934, and even then it did not meet with approval.[5] Following the panel's purchase by the Florentine dealer and collector Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, however, several connoisseurs of late medieval Italian art concurred with the Cimabuesque authorship of the work in their correspondence with its then owner.[6] Roberto Longhi, on publishing the painting in 1948, confirmed this view, dedicating a brief but penetrating comment to the painting; in his opinion the image was a product of Cimabue's first period of residence in Pisa.[7] Luigi Coletti, in 1941, took a different view and argued that the panel was better placed in the circle of the Magdalen Master.[8] Subsequently, once the Madonna had entered the Kress Collection in 1948, the attribution to Cimabue would continue to be supported,[9] but most scholars preferred to leave it in anonymity or ascribed it to Cimabue's shop.[10] The present writer (1976) tentatively associated the panel with the group of paintings that he had gathered around the name of Gaddo Gaddi,[11] and Luciano Bellosi (1998) suggested an attribution to the Florentine Azzo di Mazzetto,[12] no certain works by either of these painters have come down to us. It is worth pointing out, in this regard, that documents record a painter by the name of Azzo who worked for the *comune* of San Gimignano in the years between 1288 and 1293 and who painted "cameram novi palatii comunis" (the room of the new municipal palace) in that town in 1291.[13] The subject of his paintings is not recorded, but it seems plausible to link his name with the frescoes in the Palazzo del Popolo that commemorate the privileges granted to San Gimignano by Charles of Anjou and bear an inscription with the date 1292. The massive, fleshy figures in these frescoes, often hesitant in movement, only vaguely recall the style of the delicate little panel in the National Gallery of Art.[14]

The attribution of the work to Gaddo Gaddi was based on a tradition handed down by *Vasari*, according to whom this master was responsible for the mosaic of the Coronation of the Virgin on the inner façade of the cathedral of Santa Maria del

Fiore in Florence. The authenticity of this tradition was accepted down to recent times, until art historians gradually began to perceive that the figurative style of the mosaic appears not to have been that of an artist of the generation of Giotto (Florentine, c. 1265 - 1337), as Gaddo Gaddi would have been, according to the evidence of documents, but that of a somewhat older master. In recent times, in fact, the identification of Gaddo with the Giottesque Master of Saint Cecilia has been proposed, while the Coronation of the Virgin on the inner façade of the Duomo has been either cited with the traditional attribution or attributed to Francesco Pisano, an artist belonging to Cimabue's generation, or given to the so-called Penultimate Master of the mosaics in the baptistery in Florence.

Some of the paintings formerly associated with the name of Gaddo still seem to me stylistically homogeneous, even if not easy to refer to a particular artist. It is with this group of works that the panel now in Washington should, I believe, be most profitably compared. The agile, nervous figures, with their jerky movements, flashing eyes, and beaklike noses, which Longhi described so brilliantly, invite comparison both with the figures painted in the portable cross in the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and with those in the large painted crucifix in Santo Stefano a Paterno in Florence.[15] In this latter painting, in particular, the grieving Madonna [fig. 1] recalls the protagonist of the painting in the Gallery [fig. 2], while the severe and ascetic blessing Christ in the *cimasa* is comparable to the Baptist in the panel in Washington, bearing in mind, of course, the differences in pictorial technique deriving from their very different dimensions. Drapery forms in these paintings, enlivened by sudden darting highlights and furrowed by sharp, deeply undercut folds so that they seem made of twisted sheet metal instead of fabric, also compare closely. A further observation may be made about the presence of the rare frieze of daisies on the hem of the Madonna's cloak in a painting now in the Allen Memorial Art Museum in Oberlin, Ohio (inv. no. 1945.9). Generally referred to an anonymous follower of Duccio or of Cimabue, recently (Boskovits 2007) it was attributed to the Master of the Cortona-Loeser Crucifixes.[16] That artist's use of the same motif decorating the frame of the Washington Madonna suggests that he too belonged to the ambience of the painter of our panel. Unfortunately, the comparisons listed here do not help us to establish the date of the Gallery's panel, but they do, more generally, permit its insertion into the context of Florentine painting at the close of the thirteenth century.[17]

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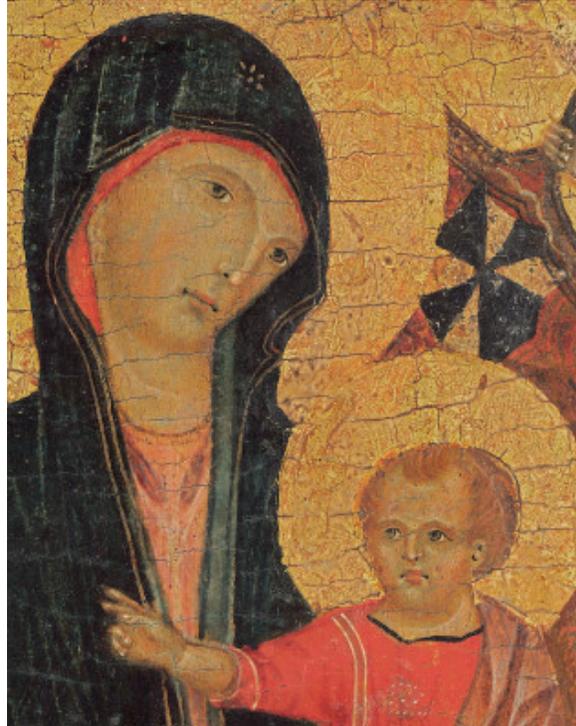
The Pisan provenance of the panel, small and easily transportable, does not imply that it was executed in that city. The master who painted it must have been trained under the influence of Cimabue, and probably at the time of his fresco decoration of the upper church of San Francesco in Assisi. In particular some figures of angels that populate the right transept of that church, with their tense, frowning faces and ruffled garments, suggest that the execution of the panel in the National Gallery of Art should be placed around 1290.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Detail of Mourning Madonna, Penultimate Master of the Baptistery, *Painted Crucifix*, 1280–1290, tempera on panel, Church of Santo Stefano a Paterno, Bagno a Ripoli, Florence. Edizioni Brogi photograph, National Gallery of Art, George Martin Richter Archive, vol. 3, folder 3, sheet 17



**fig. 2** Detail of Madonna, Tuscan thirteenth century, *Madonna and Child with Saint John the Baptist, Saint Peter, and Two Angels*, c. 1290, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

**NOTES**

- [1] Evelyn Sandberg-Valalà, *L'iconografia della Madonna col bambino nella pittura italiana del Duecento* (Siena, 1934), 45–48, classified this subtype as the “seconda modificazione del tipo Odigitria” (second modification of the *Hodegetria* type). On the iconography of the *Hodegetria* (a term translatable as “indicator of the way”), cf. the exhaustive treatment by Gregor Martin Lechner, “Maria,” in *Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst*, ed. Klaus Wessel, 7 vols. (Stuttgart, 2005), 6:58–71. The variants of the protagonists’ poses in this iconographic type are understood as attempts to augment the realistic effect of the image, i.e., expressions of vivacity and of the affection between mother and child.

- [2] That, at any rate, is how I think Mary's gesture should be interpreted. On the significance of the pose of crossed legs in medieval iconography, cf. Johan Jakob Tikkanen, *Die Beinstellungen in der Kunstgeschichte: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der künstlerischen Motive* (Helsingfors, 1912), 153, while François Garnier, *Le langage de l'image au Moyen Age*, vol. 2, *Grammaire des gestes* (Paris, 1989), 158–159, added that “cette attitude est par excellence celle des personages qui remplit les fonctions du Juge” (this is a pose par excellence of people who perform the duties of a judge).
- [3] In a study on the types of thrones in thirteenth-century paintings, James Stubblebine (1954–1957) distinguished four types, of which the third, exemplified by such works as Guido da Siena's *Maestà* in San Domenico in Siena and Duccio's *Madonna Rucellai*, commissioned in 1285 and now in the Uffizi, Florence, is a structure conceived as a “three-dimensional block” and represented so that “the front and back are parallel to the picture plane, while the sides run diagonally.” This typology common to paintings dating to the last quarter of the Duecento naturally implies some indication of the chronological position of the panel discussed here. See James H. Stubblebine, “The Development of the Throne in Dugento Tuscan Painting,” *Marsyas* 7 (1954–1957): 25–39.
- [4] It seems to me that the flowers cursorily painted on the frame can be identified as daisies or marguerites (*leucanthemum vulgare*), symbols, according to Mirella Levi D'Ancona, of the “blessed souls in heaven” as well as of the “incarnation of Christ.” See Mirella Levi D'Ancona, *The Garden of the Renaissance: Botanical Symbolism in Italian Painting* (Florence, 1977), 124–126. The decoration of the frame discussed here vaguely recalls that of the panel with Saint Catherine and stories of her legend, no. 1583 in the Museo Nazionale in Pisa; cf. Lorenzo Carletti, in *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto*, ed. Mariagiulia Burrelli and Antonino Caleca (Pisa, 2005), 193.
- [5] In the 1934 sale, the painting was classified as “Italian school.” Byam Shaw, in his 1963 letter (see Provenance note 4), noted that the inscription on the label affixed to the back of the panel confirmed Lasinio's ascription to Cimabue, adding, “not the highest quality, but undoubtedly a genuine Pisan work of the time.”
- [6] Copies of the expertises by Roberto Longhi, Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, Wilhelm Suida, Raimond van Marle, and Adolfo Venturi are preserved in the NGA curatorial files: they were unanimous in confirming the authorship of Cimabue for the painting. Of these experts, only Longhi provided a chronological indication, maintaining that the panel must antedate Cimabue's *Madonna* (no. 8343) now in the Uffizi, Florence.
- [7] “La Madonna come un falchetto inciprignito,” Roberto Longhi wrote in 1948, “il Bambino con aria di censore prepotente...gli angeli che impugnano,

quasi manovelle di timone, le cocche del drappo...i due santi collerici...che sbuffano ai lati del trono. In un tema puramente sacramentale ce n'è abbastanza per alludere ai drammi imminenti del transetto di Assisi" (The Madonna like an irritated bird of prey, the child with the air of an overbearing censor, the angels who grab the corners of the cloth like the handle of a boat's tiller, the two irascible saints snorting at the sides of the throne. In a purely sacramental theme there is enough to foreshadow the imminent drama of the transept at Assisi). Longhi referred, of course, to the frescoes in the upper church of San Francesco in Assisi, which he dated to the years between the end of the eighth and the first half of the ninth decade of the thirteenth century. See Roberto Longhi, "Giudizio sul Duecento," *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 16.

- [8] Luigi Coletti, *I Primitivi*, vol. 1, *120 tavole* (Novara, 1941), 33–34.
- [9] Supporting Cimabue's authorship were Ugo Galetti and Ettore Camesasca, *Enciclopedia della pittura italiana*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1951), 1:672; Ferdinando Bologna, "Un capolavoro giovanile di Duccio," *Paragone* 11, no. 125 (1960): 9–10, who proposed its execution before 1280; Luiz Marques, *La peinture du Duecento en Italie centrale* (Paris, 1987), 282, who thought that the panel was painted c. 1270–1275; Adam S. Labuda, in *Opus sacrum: Catalogue of the Exhibition from the Collection of Barbara Piasecka Johnson*, ed. Józef Grabski (Vienna, 1990), 30; Nicholas H. J. Hall, ed., *Colnaghi in America: A Survey to Commemorate the First Decade of Colnaghi, New York* (New York, 1992), 134; and Enzo Carli, *La pittura a Pisa dalle origini alla Bella Maniera* (Pisa, 1994), 23, who placed its execution after the Maestà in the Louvre, Paris, a work that, like the Washington Madonna, also comes from the church of San Francesco in Pisa.
- [10] The painting was classified as "attributed to Cimabue" in National Gallery of Art, *Paintings and Sculpture from the Kress Collection* (Washington, DC, 1956), 50–51; National Gallery of Art, *Summary Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture* (Washington, DC, 1965), 28; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII–XV Century* (London, 1966), 5–6; Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:133–134; Dorothy Lygon and Russell Francis, "Tuscan Primitives in London Sales: 1801–1837," *The Burlington Magazine* 122 (1980): 113, 116; and National Gallery of Art, *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue* (Washington, DC, 1985), 89. Scholars who doubted the attribution, although without formulating any alternative proposals, include Sergio Samek Ludovici, *Cimabue* (Milan, 1956), 24, 32; Roberto Salvini, "Cimabue," in *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte*, ed. Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 15 vols. (Florence, 1958–1967), 3 (1960): 472; Miklós Boskovits, "Cenni di Pepe (Pepo), detto Cimabue," in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome, 1979), 23: 542; and Angelo Tartuferi, "Un libro e alcune considerazioni sulla pittura del

Duecento in Italia centrale,” *Arte cristiana* 76 (1988): 434, 440 n. 26. Those who believed that it was produced in the artist’s workshop or by his immediate following include John Pope-Hennessy, “Review of Proporzioni ii by Roberto Longhi,” *The Burlington Magazine* 90 (1948): 360; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Florentine School*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), 1:50; Burton B. Fredericksen and Federico Zeri, *Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Cambridge, MA, 1972), 54. The painting was defined as the work of an anonymous late thirteenth-century Florentine master by Edward B. Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting: An Illustrated Index* (Florence, 1949), 18, 100; Cesare Brandi, *Duccio* (Florence, 1951), 135 n. 13; Carlo Volpe, “Preistoria di Duccio,” *Paragone* 5, no. 49 (1954): 18; Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti, *Pittura del Duecento a Firenze* (Florence, 1955), 124, 127; Enio Sindona, *L’opera completa di Cimabue e il momento figurativo pregiottesco* (Milan, 1975), 117, 118; and Angelo Tartuferi, “Pittura fiorentina del Duecento,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Le origini*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo (Milan, 1985), 236, 240 n. 43. Roberto Salvini, “Postilla a Cimabue,” *Rivista d’arte* 26 (1950): 54; and Enzo Carli, *Pittura medievale pisana* (Milan, 1958), 64, thought it the work of an anonymous Pisan master. Also, Jens T. Wollesen, *Hasten to My Aid and Counsel: The Answers of the Pictures; Private Devotional Panel Painting in Italy around 1300* (New York, 2005), 87–88, 182–183, classified it as Cimabuesque, of c. 1250–1300.

- [11] Miklós Boskovits, *Cimabue e i precursori di Giotto: Affreschi, mosaici e tavole* (Florence, 1976), n.p. [9], no. 22, pointed out that the style of the Gallery’s panel was close to that of the group of works he himself had referred to Gaddo Gaddi. His reconstruction of Gaddo’s oeuvre consisted of the fragmentary Madonna in the church of San Remigio in Florence; the crucifix no. 1345 in the Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence; another painted crucifix in the church of Santo Stefano a Paterno (Bagno a Ripoli, Florence); and a small portable cross in the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts (no. 1929.250), in addition to the mosaic of the Coronation of the Virgin on the inner façade of the Duomo in Florence. Vasari cited the latter as a work by Gaddo Gaddi in his *vita* of that master, together with part of the mosaic on the façade of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome (in general ascribed by the art historical literature to Filippo Rusuti); the mosaic Assumption in the apse of the transept of Pisa Cathedral, in actual fact executed on the basis of a design by Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344); and some other works, which today appear stylistically incongruous or are lost. See Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite dei più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*, ed. Gaetano Milanesi, 9 vols. (Florence, 1878–1885), 1(1878):346–347. In more recent times, Marco Ciatti and Cecelia Frosinini (1993) and Ada Labriola (1998) cited the panel now in the National Gallery of Art as a work by Gaddi. Cf. Marco Ciatti and Cecilia Frosinini, ed., *La Madonna di San Giorgio alla Costa di Giotto: Studi e restauro, Problemi di*

*conservazione e restauro* (Florence, 1995), 36; Ada Labriola, “Gaddi, Gaddo,” in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome, 1998), 51:155.

- [12] Accepting Alessandro Bagnoli’s suggestion, Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 267, thought that the master of the frescoes of the “Sala di Dante” in the Palazzo Pubblico of San Gimignano might be identified with Azzo di Mazzetto, an artist documented in Florence in 1282. He attributed to the same hand a painted crucifix in the Museo Civico in San Gimignano and the present panel of the National Gallery of Art. Silvia Giorgi accepted this proposal in “Azzo di Mazzetto,” in *La pittura in Europa: Il dizionario dei pittori*, ed. Carlo Pirovano, 3 vols. (Milan, 2002), 1:39, and it was cited without comment by Ada Labriola, “Lo stato degli studi su Cimabue e un libro recente,” *Arte cristiana* 88 (2000): 344; and Sonia Chiodo, “Attorno a un dipinto inedito di Ambrogio Lorenzetti,” *Arte cristiana* 91 (2003): 1–6.
- [13] Cf. Pio Rajna, “Pittura e pittori a San Gimignano intorno all’anno 1300,” *Miscellanea storica della Valdelsa* 18 (1920): 1–13.
- [14] Antonino Caleca (1986) placed in doubt Vasari’s claim that Gaddo was the master of the mosaic of the Coronation in the Florentine Duomo. He argues that the execution of the mosaic should be given instead to Francesco da Pisa, documented author of the Christ in Majesty in the apse of Pisa Cathedral. See Antonio Caleca, “Pittura del Duecento e del Trecento a Pisa e a Lucca,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 1:243; and Antonio Caleca, “Francesco da Pisa,” in *La Pittura in Italia: Il Duecento e il Trecento*, ed. Enrico Castelnuovo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1986), 2:570. For my part, ever since 1984, I have observed that the *Coronation of the Virgin* reveals features a good deal more archaic than the most advanced artistic tendencies in Florence at the close of thirteenth century and have conjectured that the work originally was intended for a site other than Arnolfo di Cambio’s Duomo. Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 18–19 n. 31. Later (1993), I expressed my readiness to accept the proposal of Monica Bietti (1983), who identified with Gaddo Gaddi the artist whose oeuvre had been reconstructed under the conventional name of the Master of Saint Cecilia. See Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting: The Fourteenth Century*, sec. 3, vol. 9, *The Miniaturist Tendency* (Florence, 1984), 18–19 n. 31; Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 1, *The Origins of Florentine Painting, 1100–1270* (Florence, 1993), 143 n. 314; Monica Bietti, “Gaddo Gaddi: un’ipotesi,” *Arte cristiana* 71 (1983): 49–52. For their part, Annamaria Giusti (1994) and Luciano Bellosi (1998) accepted, at least as a working hypothesis, Gaddo’s authorship of the Coronation mosaic but denied that the mosaicist had any hand in the panel paintings attributed

to him; cf. Annamaria Giusti, “I mosaici dei coretti, dei parapetti del matroneo, e del tamburo della cupola,” in *Il Battistero di San Giovanni a Firenze*, ed. Antonio Paolucci, 2 vols. (Modena, 1994), 1:325, 327 et passim; Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 129, 137. For a discussion of the Gaddo = St. Cecilia Master hypothesis, see Miklós Boskovits, “Un nome per il maestro del Trittico Horne,” *Saggi e memorie di storia dell’arte* 27 (2003): 57–70. The attribution to Francesco Pisano has been repropoed in recent times by Mariagiulia Burrese and Antonino Caleca, “Pittura a Pisa da Giunta a Giotto,” in *Cimabue a Pisa: La pittura pisana del Duecento da Giunta a Giotto*, ed. Mariagiulia Burrese and Antonino Caleca (Pisa, 2005), 82–84, whereas the present writer gives the Coronation to the author of part of the mosaics of the dome of the baptistery, called the “Penultimate Master,” in Miklós Boskovits, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, sec. 1, vol. 2, *The Mosaics of the Baptistry of Florence* (Florence, 2007), 591–594.

- [15] Roberto Longhi, “Giudizio sul Duecento,” *Proporzioni* 2 (1948): 16.
- [16] Miklós Boskovits, “Da Duccio a Simone Martini,” in *Medioevo: La chiesa e il palazzo; Atti del convegno internazionale di studi, Parma, September 20–24, 2005*, ed. Arturo Carlo Quintavalle (Milan, 2007), 566–569.
- [17] For a broad discussion of the chronology of this decorative enterprise, cf. Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue*, ed. Giovanna Ragionieri (Milan, 1998), 162–182, 278–281.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The support consists of a single wooden panel with vertical grain, which was thinned and cradled in 1948. The frame was carved in one with the panel and remains intact. Possible evidence of hinges on both sides is visible in the x-radiograph, indicating that the panel may have been the center of a triptych. The panel was prepared with a white gesso ground. Green underpaint was used under the flesh tones, and the gold leaf was laid over a reddish orange bole. The halos are decorated with incised foliate ornament. Paint and gold leaf losses are scattered throughout the painted surface; some flaking damage in the gold leaf has remained unretouched. Mauro Pelliccioli restored the painting, probably by the mid-1930s, and Stephen Pichetto treated it again in 1948.[1] Inpainted passages are especially evident in the cloth of honor and in the Virgin’s cloak, as well as in the left side of the right-hand angel’s face, the left side of Saint Peter’s face, and the child’s hair. The figures’ eyes and mouths have been reinforced. Inpainting also is

evident in the frame, especially in the lower left and upper right corners.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

[1] See Fern Rusk Shapley, *Catalogue of the Italian Paintings*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC, 1979), 1:133–134 n. 7. Several layers of inpainting are visible under ultraviolet light. Pelliccioli's restoration followed the acquisition of the panel by Contini-Bonacossi. Presumably, Pichetto did not remove Pelliccioli's inpainting before adding his own in 1948.

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## PROVENANCE

Church of San Francesco, Pisa; Carlo Lasinio [1759-1838], Pisa;<sup>[1]</sup> possibly Francis Douce [1757-1834], London, by 1829;<sup>[2]</sup> Mrs. Fanshaw; (sale, Christie & Manson, London, 21 March 1835, no. 80).<sup>[3]</sup> (country sale, Patterdale Hall, Ullswater, near Penrith, Cumbria, 8 August 1934); (P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London); sold 8 April 1935 to (Gualtiero Volterra, Florence);<sup>[4]</sup> (Count Alessandro Contini-Bonacossi, Florence), by 1935; sold 1948 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;<sup>[5]</sup> gift 1952 to NGA. [1] Wilhelm Suida (letter dated August 1935; copy in NGA curatorial files) and Roberti Longhi ("Giudizio sul Duecento," *Proporzioni* 2 [1948]: 16) could still read "Lasinio's inscription" on the back of the panel, according to which the painting came from the "Sacristy of S. Francesco at Pisa [and] is Cimabue's work". This inscription must clearly have been in Italian and written on a paper label glued onto the wood, as usually was the case with paintings subjected to Lasinio's expertise. It would also have been accompanied by the customary wax seal of the Pisan collector and dealer; see the back of panels 40559 and 40560 in the Pinacoteca Vaticana (Francesco Rossi, *Catalogo della Pinacoteca Vaticana. Vol. 3: Il Trecento. Umbria, Marche, Italia del Nord*, Vatican City, 1994: figs. 105, 108) and that of no. 174 in the Museo Amedeo Lia at La Spezia (Federico Zeri and Andrea De Marchi, *La Spezia. Museo Civico Amedeo Lia. Dipinti*, Milan, 1997: fig. 376). The label of the NGA painting was lost during its restoration in 1948 (typewritten note in the NGA curatorial files); however the examination report of the NGA Painting Conservation Department, 21 July 1988, states that "...x-radiographs both before and after the cradling show a dense circular area to the right of the Virgin's head, which may be a seal or stamp on the reverse of the panel." [2] Donata Levi ("Carlo Lasinio, curator, collector and dealer," *The Burlington Magazine* 135 (1993): 133-148)

points out that in 1829 Lasinio offered Francis Douce a series of paintings, illustrated with a sketch representing fourteen panels of Italian masters. The last of these, reproduced at the bottom right of the sheet (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms Douce d 57, fol. 84; fig. 86 in Levi's article), is identified with the caption "Madonna di Cimabue / 1200", but unfortunately in this case Lasinio failed to provide any sketch of the composition. Dillian Gordon (*National Gallery Catalogues. The Fifteenth Century Italian Paintings*, London, 2003: 32-36) has identified the panel that Lasinio attributed to Cimabue, which together with the others was presumably sold to Douce in 1830, with a small painting, a genuine work of Cimabue acquired by the National Gallery in London (inv. 6583). Gordon's proposal is, of course, a hypothesis based on the small dimensions of the work and Lasinio's attribution to the Florentine artist. There is, however, no evidence that the London painting was ever in Lasinio's collection and, in any case, as the same scholar remarks, "the small label on the back (£ 6.15.4') strongly suggests that it was acquired in England." Thus, the alternative identification of Lasinio's "Cimabue" with the NGA panel also may be hypothesized. [3] *A Catalogue of a Valuable Collection of Italian, French, Flemish Dutch and English Pictures...The Property of Charles John West etc.. Lots 75-90 in this catalogue, indicated as the "property of a Lady", were, as the archives of Christie's in London advised NGA systematic catalogue author Miklòs Boskovits, the paintings from the collection of Mrs. Fanshaw. Dorothy Lygon and Francis Russell ("Tuscan Primitives in London Sales: 1801 - 1837," *The Burlington Magazine* 122 [1980]: 113) identify the woman as a Miss Fanshawe, "...one of three sisters who lived in Berkeley Square and knew Thomas Hope..." [4] In his letter of 16 May 1963 to John Walker (in NGA curatorial files), James Byam Shaw states that Mayer, his former partner in the Colnaghi firm, had purchased the painting "at a country sale" on 8 August 1934, and then he himself resold it on 8 April of the following year "to Volterra the Italian dealer", clearly a reference to Gualtiero Volterra, Contini-Bonaccossi's agent in London. [5] As was his habit, Contini-Bonaccossi sought advice about the painting he had acquired by consulting the most highly respected experts of Italian painting of the day. Of these, Wilhelm Suida's and Giuseppe Fiocco's opinions (copies in NGA curatorial files) are dated August 1935 and were written in Florence, where the painting evidently was located at that time. The painting was eventually taken to New York and is one of twenty-eight works listed in the purchase offer addressed to the count by the Kress Foundation on 7 June 1948, and accepted by him on 11 July 1948 (copies in NGA curatorial files).*

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# Vanni, Andrea di

Also known as

Andrea di Vanni d'Andrea Salvani

Vanni, Andrea

Andrea di Vanni d'Andrea

Siennese, c. 1330 - 1413

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## BIOGRAPHY

A bureaucrat, as well as an artist, Andrea di Vanni was a prominent member of the Riformatori, a political faction that ruled the city of Siena from 1368 to 1385. The extent to which this painter was occupied with governmental affairs makes it somewhat remarkable that he was able to accept and fulfill major artistic commissions. Elected to the General Council in December 1357, Andrea must have already reached the age of majority, suggesting that he was born in or around Siena sometime in the early 1330s. His political career began in earnest amid the interfactional strife that accompanied the arrival in Siena of Emperor Charles IV in 1368. During the violence that erupted on December 13 of that year, Andrea was elected to represent his district's military company, the Spadaforte. Two weeks later, on December 27, he was appointed chief magistrate to the newly formed Council of the Riformatori and for the next three months Andrea's presence is recorded among the city's most important legislative councils, indicating that he was closely involved in subsequent political developments. In addition to serving on various committees, Andrea undertook lengthy diplomatic missions to Rome, Naples, and the papal court at Avignon, he served as Castellano of the fortress of Montalcino in 1369, and in 1379 he was appointed Capitano del Popolo ("Captain of the People"), head of Siena's civic militia. It was during this time that Andrea is believed to have befriended Saint Catherine of Siena, who wrote to the painter on at least three occasions.[1] Andrea also belonged to the important religious confraternity of Santa Maria Vergine and served as an advisor to the Opera del Duomo, the cathedral's board of works.

The first artistic reference to Andrea dates from July 21, 1351, when he was paid for decorating a pair of small chests (*cofanetti*) in the Palazzo Pubblico, seat of Siena's communal government.[2] Two years later, on December 3, 1353, he entered into a partnership with the local painter Bartolo di Fredi (c. 1330–1410) and together they

contracted to rent a workshop.[3] Andrea is also known to have collaborated with his brothers Cristofano and Francesco, who were also painters, as well as with the Florentine-trained artist, Antonio Veneziano (active 1369–1419), with whom he executed paintings for the cathedral in 1370.[4] Andrea is noted as a registered member of the Sienese painters' guild (the *Arte dei Pittori*) in the list of artists appended to the 1356 statutes and his name also appears in the successive lists of 1363, 1389, 1394, and 1402.[5]

Most of the documents concerning Andrea are unrelated to his artistic career and, as a consequence, his stylistic development remains highly problematical.[6] The artist traveled frequently within Sienese territory and is believed to have created paintings in Naples and Sicily.[7] Of the surviving works that can be securely dated, the majority were executed toward the end of the painter's life, such as the polyptych (1400) he created for the church of Santo Stefano alla Lizza in Siena.[8] It is therefore difficult to determine a chronology for the artist's activity. What is certain, however, is that Andrea's works reflect the lasting impact of Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and the Lorenzetti brothers on Sienese art; his paintings almost invariably echo a stylistic idiom developed over the previous fifty years.[9] For example, the *Madonna and Child* in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and the *Saint Paul* from the Sant'Eugenio polyptych now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, reveal close study of Simone's rich textures and figure types, combining a comparably delicate comportment with sharply delineated contours. At the same time, the sculpturally conceived folds of the Fitzwilliam Madonna's drapery and the sophisticated spatial organization and circumstantial details of the triptych at the National Gallery of Art grant Andrea's work the plastic force and rationalized pictorial space of Pietro Lorenzetti (Sienese, active 1306 - 1345). Even Andrea's latest works, such as the Santo Stefano polyptych or the *Crucifixion* at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (inv. no. 114), are clearly dependent on artistic models of the previous generation.[10] Such conservatism might best be considered not as a deficiency but as a persistent belief in what were regarded as the most authoritative representations of the divine.[11]

Like many of his contemporaries, Andrea worked in diverse media and his oeuvre includes large- and small-scale panel paintings, polyptychs, frescoes, sculpture, manuscript illuminations, and ephemera such as heraldic standards.[12] Among the many surviving works attributed to his hand, the triptych now in the National Gallery of Art is agreed to be the most successful. More than any other work by the

artist, this painting displays the sophisticated use of gesture, brilliantly contrasted colors, boldly silhouetted forms, and narrative clarity that represent the best of Sieneese Trecento painting.

[1] In these letters, Catherine urges Andrea to judge others as he would judge himself and to treat all citizens equally. Saint Catherine, *Le Lettere di S. Caterina di Siena*, ed. Piero Misciattelli, 6 vols. (Siena, 1913–1921), 5: nos. 358, 363, 366. Andrea is often dubiously attributed with the earliest known painting of Saint Catherine. The fresco is located in a chapel at the Sieneese church of San Domenico and depicts Catherine holding a lily with one hand as she reaches down with the other to touch the lips of a kneeling penitent. Early in its history, this “portrait” of Saint Catherine was accredited with miraculous agency. In a letter to his mother from February 22, 1416, Fra Giovanni Dominici claimed to have been cured of a speech impediment when he prayed beneath the image. See B. Giovanni Dominici, *Lettere spirituali*, eds. Maria Teresa Casella and G. Pozzi (Freiburg, 1969), 227 (espistola 55). The diary of Andrea’s friend, Cristofano Guidini, records another early painting of Saint Catherine in the Chapel of Saint James Intercisus at Siena Cathedral. This painting has also been attributed to Andrea. See “Ricordi di Cristofano Guidini,” *Archivio storico italiano* 4, pt. 1 (1843): 39 n. 40.

[2] Ettore Romagnoli, *Biografia cronologica de’ bellartisti senesi, 1200–1800: opera manoscritta in tredici volume*, 13 vols. (Florence, 1976), 3: 19.

[3] They were to rent the workshop, located near the church of Santa Maria della Misericordia, for two years. See Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell’arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 27.

[4] Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 305–306.

[5] See Alberto Cornice, “Andrea Vanni,” in *Il gotico a Siena: miniature, pitture,oreficerie, ed oggetti d’arte* (Florence, 1982), 286. As Laurence B. Kanter has noted, the list added to the 1356 statutes probably dates from sometime between 1378 and 1386. Laurence B. Kanter, in Timken Museum of Art, *European Works of Art, American Paintings and Russian Icons in the Putnam Foundation Collection* (San Diego, 1996), 28. See also Pia Palladino, *Art and Devotion in Siena after 1350: Lucca di Tommè and Niccolò di Buonaccorso* (San Diego, 1997), 74 n. 14.

[6] Cf. Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 264, 275, 294–307, 385–386; Raimond van Marle, *The*

*Development of the Italian Schools of Painting, vol. 2, The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 432–451; George Harold Edgell, *A History of Sienese Painting* (New York, 1932), 170–174; John Pope-Hennessy, “Notes on Andrea Vanni,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 74, no. 431 (1939): 92, 97; John Pope-Hennessy, “A Madonna by Andrea Vanni,” *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 83, no. 484 (1943): 174–177; Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese* (Milan, 1955), 154–158; Federico Zeri, “Appunti nell’Ermitage e nel Museo Pushkin,” *Bollettino d’arte* 46, no. 3 (1961): 223–226.

[7] See Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell’arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 54–55; and Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell’arte nell’età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 325–326.

[8] This date relies on the testimony of the sixteenth-century historian Sigismondo Tizio, which is recorded in Gaetano Milanesi, *Documenti per la storia dell’arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 306.

[9] Andrea is often considered a late follower of Simone Martini and is presumed to have been a pupil of Simone’s brother-in-law, Lippo Memmi, although there is no documentary evidence to support this claim. See George Harold Edgell, *A History of Sienese Painting* (New York, 1932), 170; Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance. Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1: 441; Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sienese Painters in their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College), 1978, 114–157; and Alberto Cornice, “Andrea Vanni,” in *Il gotico a Siena: miniature, pitture, oreficerie, ed oggetti d’arte* (Florence, 1982), 286–289.

[10] David Alan Brown has noted that the outlines are harder and the figures more stiff in Andrea’s later works than in what are presumed to be earlier works, which, in his opinion, appear more directly indebted to the art of Simone Martini. See David Alan Brown, “Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery,” in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 36. A similar opinion is voiced by Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting, vol. 2, The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 435.

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[11] Cf. Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sieneese Painters in their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College, 1978), 148–149.

[12] See Alberto Cornice's summation in "Andrea Vanni," in *Il gotico a Siena: miniature, pitture, oreficerie, ed oggetti d'arte* (Florence, 1982), 286–289; as well as Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sieneese Painters in their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College, 1978), 145–157; and G. Vailati Schoenburg Waldenburg, ed., *La miniatura italiana in eta romanica e gotica. Atti del congresso di storia della miniatura italiana, Cortona, 26–28 maggio 1978* (Florence, 1979), 553–574.

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Andrea di Vanni  
Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413

## *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden [left panel]*

1380s

tempera on panel

painted surface: 47 × 23.8 cm (18 1/2 × 9 3/8 in.)

overall: 56.7 × 29.3 × 3.4 cm (22 5/16 × 11 9/16 × 1 5/16 in.)

Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.79.711.a

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### ENTRY

This highly detailed panel from a triptych by the Sienese painter Andrea di Vanni is a recent addition to the National Gallery of Art collection. One of the most prominent works acquired from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the altarpiece consists of three panels depicting stories from the Passion of Christ. Attached by modern hinges, the two lateral panels can be folded over the central painting to protect it and facilitate transportation. When opened, the triptych's panels represent, from left to right, Christ's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, the *Crucifixion*, and the *Descent into Limbo*. Placed against a gold ground, each scene is set on a rocky outcropping that extends from one panel to the next, creating a formal coherence among scenes that took place at different times and places.

The altarpiece's left wing contains several episodes presented in a continuous narrative. In the middle ground, Christ kneels in prayer above a well-tended garden on the Mount of Olives. With his arms folded across his chest in a gesture of humility, he gazes heavenward toward a descending angel who holds out a chalice. The chalice here evidently refers to Christ's supplication: "Oh my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want," i.e., his imminent sacrifice upon the cross.[1] The anguish weighing upon Christ's countenance is physically manifested by the drops of blood that he sweats in

accordance with the Gospel account.[2] In the foreground, Jesus is represented a second time, admonishing the disciples for sleeping when he had asked them to stay awake and pray with him. His rebuke is a slight one, however, for Christ pulls Saint Peter up from the ground to signify his selection of that apostle to head his church. In the background, a group of soldiers led by torch-bearers and the traitor Judas Iscariot depart from Jerusalem to arrest Jesus. The villainy of the former apostle Judas is clearly denoted by the black halo surrounding his head.

The central panel, which depicts the Crucifixion, reflects a growing concern among fourteenth-century artists to historicize the Biblical narrative. To accomplish this, the painter attempted to recreate, with the greatest possible accuracy, the details of the events on Mount Calvary. These details, moreover, are carefully arranged to enhance the narrative legibility of what would otherwise be a chaotic scene.

Already dead upon the cross, Christ is portrayed amid a large cast of characters and vignettes arranged symmetrically across the picture. On either side of Jesus are the two thieves with whom he was crucified. Groups of soldiers dressed in mail and Pharisees with long beards crowd around these figures to witness their demise. Like Christ, the thief on the left has passed away and his slumped body shares a similar greenish hue. This is the penitent thief mentioned in the Gospel of Luke (23:39–43). Having confessed to Christ as he hung on the cross, the soul of this thief (represented as an infant) is carried to heaven by angels. On the right is the unrepentant thief who taunted Jesus. His ruddy flesh tones and pained expression indicate that he continues to suffer the torments of execution. Only now does he receive the coup de grace: the breaking of his legs, which will hasten his death and relinquish his soul to the black devils that hover above him.

As in all three panels, the painted surface of the Crucifixion scene is exquisitely worked. Each figure's physiognomy and gestures are individualized so that the two soldiers on horseback that frame Jesus, for example, respond to him in different ways. With his hands clasped in prayer, the figure on the left leans forward as if to see Christ more clearly. His lance identifies him as Longinus, the visually impaired soldier who pierced Jesus's side and whose vision, according to one legend, was miraculously restored when the blood and water flowing from Christ's wound fell upon his eyes.[3] The other equestrian is the Good Centurion who recognized Christ's divinity at his crucifixion despite his debased appearance, exclaiming: "Truly this man was the Son of God."<sup>[4]</sup> With his hand placed over his heart, this figure's gesture suggests that his belief must come from within. At the foot of the cross, Mary Magdalene caresses Christ's feet as she grieves, while next to her the

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young Saint John weeps visibly as he stares adoringly at the Savior. In the left foreground, a group of lamenting women in vibrantly colored mantles surrounds the Virgin Mary, who has collapsed at the sight of her son's lifeless body. To the right of these women, three soldiers grapple over Christ's blue garment. The Gospel of John states that upon discovering that Jesus's tunic was woven without a seam (and thus expensive), the soldiers decided to choose a new owner according to lot, rather than cut it into shares.[5] As was common in Tuscan crucifixion scenes from this time, the soldiers draw straws rather than cast dice.[6]

Between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, Christ is said to have descended into the realm of the dead where he liberated the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets. This event, known as the Descent into Limbo, is represented on the right wing of the triptych. The story is not recorded in the canonical Gospels, but comes instead from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, the contents of which were widely disseminated throughout medieval Europe.[7] In Andrea's interpretation, Christ the Redeemer has descended victoriously into hell, where he has demolished the gateway and crushed the devil beneath it, visualizing the words inscribed on the banderole held by God the Father, who floats overhead: "Destruxit quidam mortes inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli" (He has destroyed the shades of hell, and has overthrown the powers of the devil).[8] The painting also reaffirms an article of the Apostles' Creed ("he descended into hell"). Here—at the very edge of the underworld (*limbus patrum*)—the righteous who lived before Christ kneel in a cavern. Foremost among these figures is Adam, with his long, white beard, followed by Eve, and then King David (holding a psaltery). On the far right is Saint John the Baptist with his scroll saying "Ecce Agnus [Dei]" (Behold the Lamb of God). Having overcome death, Christ appears in a transformed state indicated not only by his lustrous mantle and the golden rays emanating from his body, but also by the reactions of Limbo's inhabitants: several figures shade their eyes from Christ's radiance. With the standard of victory in his left hand, Jesus reaches forward with his right to grasp hold of Adam in a gesture reminiscent of the one he performs on the triptych's left wing, where he clutches Saint Peter's hand.[9] The formal correspondence between these scenes underscores a causal relationship between the two events, for while Christ submitted himself to God's will in the garden at Gethsemane, the result of his obedience (i.e., his triumph over death) is conveyed in the harrowing of hell.[10] In both scenes, the action of lifting up those overcome by sorrow and regret stresses the charity of Christ.

The sophisticated compositional organization, brilliant, jewel-like colors, and luxuriously textured patterns of Andrea's paintings exemplify a skillful conflation of elements derived from the previous generation of Sienese painters, particularly Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and the Lorenzetti brothers. The exquisite miniaturist quality of execution and glowing palette recall the works of Simone, as do some of the figure types Andrea employed in the Crucifixion scene. The recumbent form of the Virgin Mary and her attendants, for example, are comparable to those in the Crucifixion panel [fig. 1] of Simone's Orsini Polyptych in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp, as is the figure of Andrea's Christ, whose proportions and knobby knees also appear dependent on the prototype. Despite that, the heavy, robust forms and simplified contours of Andrea's other figures mark a departure from the art of Simone and reveal the impact of the Lorenzetti. The voluminous mantle and lost profile of the Magdalene, for example, resemble the same figure in *Pietro Lorenzetti's* small *Crucifixion* [fig. 2] at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (inv. no. 147), as does the pose of Saint John the Evangelist. Also reminiscent of Pietro's art is Andrea's inclusion of provocative anecdotal details, dynamic use of space, and construction of depth. Despite the flattening effect of the gilded background, Andrea succeeded in creating a convincing spatial setting defined by the overlapping of figures and rocky landscape that not only diminish in scale but also darken as they recede.[11] The result is a narrative vivacity combined with an intimate expressive force.

The putative Neapolitan provenance of the Gallery's triptych has led several scholars to suggest that it was produced *in situ* while the artist was acting as an emissary to the city.[12] As explained in his *biography*, Andrea undertook lengthy diplomatic missions to Avignon, Rome, and elsewhere on behalf of the Republic of Siena, and he is documented in Naples between 1383 and 1385.[13] It is to this period that scholars routinely assign the triptych.[14] And yet, Andrea is believed to have traveled to Naples on other occasions and it is just as plausible that he completed the altarpiece during one or several undocumented visits.[15] Alternatively, he could have produced the work in Siena and exported it to a distant patron. For these reasons, a definitive date of execution and place of origin for the altarpiece have yet to be determined.

Equally problematic for the study of the panels is the question of whether they were originally intended to form a portable altarpiece or if they were once part of a larger, stationary polyptych. The panels clearly belong together, but technical analysis has revealed conflicting evidence, suggesting that they may not have

always been arranged in the present configuration. The most perplexing incongruity concerns the presence of four large dowel holes along the lateral edges of the central panel as well as a punched decorative pattern on its reverse, now hidden beneath a layer of gesso. Neither of the side panels contains traces of corresponding joinery and no punchwork has been detected on their backs. These observations present more problems than solutions, for the evidence of dowel joints in the central panel indicates that at one time this painting might have been immovably attached to adjacent panels or a larger framing structure. However, it is entirely possible that the *Crucifixion* was painted on a reused plank that had been prepared for another commission or that the side panels were originally wider and included portions containing dowel joints that were subsequently cut off.[16] The spacing of the dowel holes is also unusual, as they are not located at equal distances from the top and bottom edges of the panel, as one would expect. In fact, the close proximity of the upper dowel holes to the top of the panel implies that the painting originally may have been taller and included an upper register.[17] This could strengthen the idea that the central panel was originally part of a different altarpiece configuration and was repurposed for this triptych. Apart from the modern hinges, all three panels reveal additional indications of what might be traces of an earlier means of attachment, but it remains to be determined whether they are in fact vestiges of a previous joining mechanism.[18]

If the panels contributed to a stationary polyptych, then their rectangular shape suggests that they were located along the ensemble's lower register and presumably with other, as of yet unidentified, paintings of Christ's Passion. The strongest evidence against this scenario lies in the presence of decoration on the back of the central panel. In the later fourteenth century, most large, double-sided altarpieces consisted of separate panels for the front and back.[19] If Andrea's paintings were components of such an altarpiece, they would have been installed into a larger, thicker framework that would have concealed their reverses. It seems more likely that the paintings contributed to an altarpiece of modest dimensions intended for a side altar or domestic setting in which the decoration on the central panel's reverse could be admired. The precise size of this hypothetical altarpiece and the means by which its panels were attached remain open questions.

Among the various works attributed to Vanni or his followers, Bernard Berenson associated the Gallery's triptych with two small panels: the *Resurrection*, formerly in the Ingenheim Collection, and the *Ascension* in the State Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg [fig. 3] [fig. 4]. [20] As Federico Zeri first noted, the two panels share

similar dimensions, ornamental motifs, and arched formats.[21] It is safe to assume that they were components of the same altarpiece, but one unrelated to the Gallery's triptych. Close scrutiny has revealed that the tooled and punched designs of the halos as well as the raised gesso or *pastiglia* ornaments in the pointed arches and cusping of the ex-Ingenheim and Hermitage paintings are markedly different from those found in the spandrels of the Gallery's panels. These discrepancies militate against correlating the triptych with the *Resurrection* and *Ascension*. [22]

Since it was first published, the triptych has been considered the artist's only remaining signed work.[23] Inscribed freehand on the bottom edge of central panel's engaged frame is "ANDREAS VANNIS DE SENIS ME PINXIT" (Andrea Vanni of Siena painted me). Several of the letters have been repaired with new gilding and the blue paint has been reinforced at least twice, but the signature appears legitimate. Nevertheless, the inscription once may have contained other information for the decorative pattern that brackets the signature has been reworked and the location of the inscription appears decidedly off-center. Moreover, a significant space to the right of "PINXIT" is filled with an unusual motif that occurs nowhere else on the frame. Given the consistency of the frame's ornamentation, one can only speculate why this highly abstracted motif was incorporated, but it may supplant letters that had become illegible. The space is not large enough to have recorded the date of execution, but it may have contained a modifier such as the supplication "AMENA," which concludes the inscription adorning the polygonal base of *Lippo Memmi's Madonna dei Raccomandati* at Orvieto Cathedral.[24]

What is beyond speculation is the supremely high quality of the triptych. The deep, saturated hues of red, yellow, and blue create rhythmic alternations of color that play against the gold backgrounds and halos to animate the scenes. Such dazzling effects are carried over into the patterns decorating the soldiers' armor and the mantle of the Pharisee in the Crucifixion scene, as well as Christ's garment in the Descent into Limbo, which are executed in sgraffito, a technique that mimics the effects of brocade by scraping away areas of paint laid over gold leaf and tooled with patterned punches. The elaborate costumes join the carefully diversified facial features and body movements to communicate the narrative in a concise but vivid manner. Andrea di Vanni is often regarded as lacking the skill and sophistication of his great predecessors, but the refined execution, balanced organization of complex iconographic elements, and compelling depiction of human emotion that

characterize the Gallery's triptych should prompt a revision of his stature.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Simone Martini, *Crucifixion* (from the Orsini Polyptych), c. 1335, tempera on panel, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp



**fig. 2** Pietro Lorenzetti, *Crucifixion*, c. 1325–1326, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena



**fig. 3** Andrea di Vanni, *Ascension*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Gift of the heirs of Count G. S. Stroganov, 1911



**fig. 4** Andrea di Vanni, *Resurrection*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, location unknown, formerly in the Ingenheim collection

**NOTES**

- [1] Matthew 26:39. Gertrud Schiller notes that the chalice was an Old Testament symbol of divine wrath, but since it is tied to the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper it may also be considered the cup of Christ's

sacrifice. See Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. Janet Seligman, 2 vols. (Greenwich, 1971–1972), 2(1972): 48, 51; as well as Victor Schmidt, unpublished article written for the Corcoran Gallery of Art, September 11, 1995, in the NGA curatorial files.

- [2] Luke 22:44: “In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.”
- [3] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:184.
- [4] Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39.
- [5] John 19:23–24. In his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, Saint Augustine interpreted the casting of lots as a positive act, for it was by way of lots, the traditional means by which one invoked a decision from God, that the seamless garment of Christ remained undivided. Likewise, it was by the will of God that the Church remained undivided. Saint Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, trans. John W. Rettig, 5 vols. (Washington, DC, 1988–1995), 5:42–43 (tractate 118). The Bible does not reveal the winner of the garment. According to *The Golden Legend*, Pontius Pilate gained possession of the seamless tunic and wore it before Tiberius to subdue the Emperor’s wrath when the Emperor learned that Pilate had unjustly condemned Jesus. See Jacopo de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:212–213. Lynette Muir has noted several Passion plays from Northern Europe that mention Pilate as the winner of Christ’s garment. See Lynette Muir, *The Biblical Drama of Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), 254 n. 54. The mystery surrounding the outcome of the event has led to the discovery of several seamless garments over the centuries. The Holy Robe at the cathedral of Trier in Germany is considered the most authentic; however, at least five cities claim to possess the original. See Franz Ronig, *Trier Cathedral*, trans. M. Maxwell, 4th ed. (Trier, 1986), 14, 26, 29–30, 32; and Friedrich Lauchert, “Holy Coat,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York, 1907–1913), 7(1910): 400–402.
- [6] A few other examples include Andrea da Firenze’s fresco of the Crucifixion (1365–1367) in the Spanish Chapel at the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella, the Crucifixion fresco (c. 1340) by “Barna da Siena” in the collegiate church of San Gimignano, Andrea di Bartolo (Sienese, active from 1389 - died 1428) painting of the Crucifixion (late 14th century) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Crucifixion scene (c. 1390) by *Agnolo Gaddi* at the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, and *Jacopo di Cione*’s Crucifixion panel (1369–1370) at the National Gallery, London.
- [7] See George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York, 1954), 153–154; and Gertrud Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 3(1971): 56–66.

- [8] Like the image, the phrase celebrates Christ's triumph, but the particular wording is nearly identical to one of the responses performed during Tenebrae on Holy Saturday: *Destruxit quidem claustra inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli* (He has destroyed the gates of hell and has overthrown the powers of the devil). Tenebrae (meaning "shadows" or "darkness") is a ceremony performed during the last three days of Holy Week to commemorate the death of Jesus. The structure of the ceremony is the same on all three days, but on Good Friday the service includes a gradual extinguishing of candles while a series of psalms and readings are chanted. On Saturday, the ceremony is conducted entirely in darkness with the exception of a single candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. The incorporation of a phrase drawn from the responsorial for one of the most important commemorative services celebrated during Holy Week could operate as an additional means by which the artist sought to bring sacred past into the devotional present for the viewers of his painting.
- [9] A detail noted by Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 193.
- [10] Cf. Thomas Fletcher Worthen, *The Harrowing of Hell in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1981), 387 n. 31.
- [11] This technique was recommended by Cennino Cennini and frequently practiced by Trecento painters. See Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza, 2003), chap. LXXXV, 127; and Miklós Boskovits in this catalog, entry for Jacopo di Cione's *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*, note 23.
- [12] According to David Alan Brown, a note in the Fototeca Berenson at the Villa I Tatti, Florence, records that the pictures belonged to Count Carlo Zezza, who obtained it from wife, a member of the Naples branch of the Medici family. However, the Zezza provenance is not confirmed. See David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 36.
- [13] See Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 295–302; and Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 54–55.
- [14] A notable exception is Valerie Linda Wainwright, who dates the triptych to c. 1360–1370. See Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sienese Painters in Their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College, 1978), 156.
- [15] Cf. Andrea Costa, *Rammemorazione storica dell'effigie di Santa Maria di Casaluca* (Naples, 1709), 172; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana*

(Rome, 1969), 325–326; and Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 246.

- [16] Unlike the lateral panels, the central panel also has a slight concave warp which is unusual. As Joanna Dunn has observed, if the panel was repurposed, its former arrangement and function could have induced the warping as well as account for the punchwork on its reverse. See Dunn's examination report dated December 21, 2015 in the NGA conservation files, where she also mentions the possibility of each side panel originally including two scenes of equal width.
- [17] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [18] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [19] See Julian Gardner, "Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure," in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo, il contributo dell'analisi tecnica alla storia dell'arte*, eds. Hendrik W. van Os and J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322.
- [20] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:442. The current location of the *Resurrection* is unknown. It was sold on July 22, 1981 at the Neumeister, Münchener Kunstauktionhaus, sale 203, lot 749. Other scholars who attribute the *Resurrection* to Andrea di Vanni include Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte* 46, no. 3 (1961): repro. 221, 225; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 325–326; and David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 34. The *Ascension* once belonged to Count Gregory Stroganoff in Rome and has been variously attributed to Andrea, to one of his followers, and to Bartolo di Fredi. Cf. Antonio Muñoz, *Pièces de choix de la collection du Comte Grégoire Stroganoff à Rome*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1912), 2: 11; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 504–505 n. 1; Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa. II Trecento senese, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 274; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 31; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Proischozhenie italjanskogo vozrozhdenija*, vol. 2, *Iskusstvo treento* (Moscow, 1959), 289–290, n. 283; Zeri (1961): repro. 221, 223–226; and Svetlana Vsevolozhskaya and Albert Kostenevich, *The Hermitage: Italian Paintings* (Leningrad, 1984), 227.
- [21] Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte*

46, no. 3 (1961): 223–226.

- [22] Laurence Kanter has suggested that the ex-Ingeneim and Hermitage panels are from an entirely different period in the artist's career. Communicated in an email dated October 21, 2015, in the NGA curatorial files.
- [23] F. Mason Perkins, "A Triptych by Andrea Vanni," *Art in America* 9 (1921): 186.
- [24] For the inscription on Lippo's painting see Michael Mallory, "Thoughts Concerning the Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas," *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 17 n. 26; and Bonnie Apgar Bennett, *Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini's "fratello in arte": The Image Revealed by His Documented Works* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1977), 17, 105–107, 124 n. 21.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel is the left-hand part of a triptych that also includes *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Descent into Limbo* [right panel] and *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Crucifixion* [middle panel]. Each panel is made from a single board with a vertical grain. Each side panel is attached to the center panel with two modern butt hinges. The original means of attachment is unknown, but x-radiographs reveal holes that may be evidence of prior dowels or hinges along both edges of *The Crucifixion*, the right edge of the *The Agony*, and the left edge of *The Descent*. The x-radiographs also show four long dowel shapes in the center panel that do not have counterparts in the side panels. These may be evidence that the center panel was repurposed. Each of the three panels is bordered by an engaged frame composed of wood moldings adhered to the front of the panel.

The panels were prepared with gesso, and no fabric layer is visible in the x-radiographs. *Pastiglia* decoration forms a pointed arch with trefoil cusping on the tops of *The Agony* and *The Descent* and a cusped frieze along the top of *The Crucifixion*. The *pastiglia*, frames, and backgrounds are gilded and these gilded areas were prepared with a red bole. Punchwork was used to decorate the *pastiglia* and the figures' halos, garments, and mail. The gilded areas of the composition also bear decorative borders formed by punchwork. In addition, Christ's robe in *The Descent*, the robes of the two Pharisees in *The Crucifixion*, and the armor and mail of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion* are decorated with sgraffito. Silver gilding was used in the mail, armor, and shields of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion*.<sup>[1]</sup> There is a sgraffito design in blue paint in the flat part of the frame

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with punchwork in the gold portion of the design. There is a signature in the sgraffito in the bottom of the center panel.

The painted areas of the composition were demarcated with incised lines. Infrared examination at 1.1 to 2.5 microns<sup>[2]</sup> reveals broadly brushed washes under the landscapes and fine lines marking the folds in the drapery of the kneeling Christ in *The Agony* and the Madonna in *The Crucifixion*, but no other underdrawing. The paint was applied in narrow, parallel strokes.

The backs of all three panels have been covered in white ground and painted in a faux finish resembling woodgrain. Modern wooden moldings have been attached to the backs of the panels to create engaged frames that resemble those on the front. The back of the center panel has a bumpy texture, as though particles were mixed into the ground. In contrast, the backs of the side panels are smooth. X-radiographs show a double row of circular punches forming a border in the center panel. These punches do not relate to the design on the front of the panels. X-ray fluorescence also detected silver on the back of the center panel,<sup>[3]</sup> indicating that originally it may have been silver gilt. In contrast, no punchwork or silver was found on the backs of the side panels. This further supports the idea that the center panel was repurposed.

There is a fairly thick layer of natural resin varnish on the front of the paintings. The frames on the fronts are covered with a layer of shellac, as are the entire backs of the paintings.

*The Crucifixion* panel has a slight concave warp, but both *The Agony* and *The Descent* remain in plane. There is a large knot in the wood that runs through the torchbearers and Judas in *The Agony*, and another in the foreground of *The Crucifixion* below the figure of Mary. The paint is in good condition with a minute craquelure pattern throughout. There are scattered, small losses and the paint has been reinforced in some areas. At least two generations of inpainting are visible with ultraviolet light. The most recent inpaint is very discrete, but the older inpaint was applied less carefully and blended onto the original. The gilding in the flats of the painting is in good condition, but in the area of the pastiglia there is a fair amount of shell gold restoration. The frame moldings have been regilded and the blue paint on the frames has been reinforced at least twice. Raking light also reveals another “S” between “DE” and “SENIS” and possibly two other letters at the end of the inscription. Also, the inscription is off-center and at the end of the signature is a three-centimeter-long area where the design differs from the circular

*Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden [left panel]*

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design found in the rest of the border. It is unclear if the signature originally extended into this area or if the design change was added to center the signature. The varnish is somewhat glossy and has discolored slightly. It is also blanched in the darks, especially in the silver gilt areas of *The Crucifixion*.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The painting was analyzed while in the collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Gwen Manthey, "X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy Report," January 2012 in conservation department files.
  - [2] Infrared examination was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.
  - [3] X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy was performed by the NGA scientific research department (see forthcoming report in conservation files).
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### PROVENANCE

William Andrews Clark [1839-1925], New York, by 1919; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein, New York, 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1978, fig. 27.

2002 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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Andrea di Vanni  
Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413

## *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden, the Crucifixion, and the Descent into Limbo [entire triptych]*

1380s

tempera on panel

overall: 56.9 × 116.4 × 3.4 cm (22 3/8 × 45 13/16 × 1 5/16 in.)

Inscription: middle panel, lower center on original frame, some of the letters restored: ANDREAS UANNIS / DE SENIS / ME PINXIT (Andreas di Vanni of Siena painted me); middle panel, above Christ: INRI; right panel, in black paint on the scroll held by God the Father: Destruxit quidam mortes inferni / et subvertit potentias diaboli; right panel, in black paint on the scroll held by Saint John the Baptist: ECCE.ANGIUS[AGNUS]. (Behold the Lamb)

Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.79.711.a-c

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### ENTRY

This highly detailed triptych by the Sienese painter Andrea di Vanni is a recent addition to the National Gallery of Art collection. One of the most prominent works acquired from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the altarpiece consists of three panels depicting stories from the Passion of Christ. Attached by modern hinges, the two lateral panels can be folded over the central painting to protect it and facilitate transportation. When opened, the triptych's panels represent, from left to right, Christ's *Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*, the *Crucifixion*, and the *Descent into Limbo*. Placed against a gold ground, each scene is set on a rocky

outcropping that extends from one panel to the next, creating a formal coherence among scenes that took place at different times and places.

The altarpiece's left wing contains several episodes presented in a continuous narrative. In the middle ground, Christ kneels in prayer above a well-tended garden on the Mount of Olives. With his arms folded across his chest in a gesture of humility, he gazes heavenward toward a descending angel who holds out a chalice. The chalice here evidently refers to Christ's supplication: "Oh my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want," i.e., his imminent sacrifice upon the cross.[1] The anguish weighing upon Christ's countenance is physically manifested by the drops of blood that he sweats in accordance with the Gospel account.[2] In the foreground, Jesus is represented a second time, admonishing the disciples for sleeping when he had asked them to stay awake and pray with him. His rebuke is a slight one, however, for Christ pulls Saint Peter up from the ground to signify his selection of that apostle to head his church. In the background, a group of soldiers led by torch-bearers and the traitor Judas Iscariot depart from Jerusalem to arrest Jesus. The villainy of the former apostle Judas is clearly denoted by the black halo surrounding his head.

The central panel, which depicts the Crucifixion, reflects a growing concern among fourteenth-century artists to historicize the Biblical narrative. To accomplish this, the painter attempted to recreate, with the greatest possible accuracy, the details of the events on Mount Calvary. These details, moreover, are carefully arranged to enhance the narrative legibility of what would otherwise be a chaotic scene. Already dead upon the cross, Christ is portrayed amid a large cast of characters and vignettes arranged symmetrically across the picture. On either side of Jesus are the two thieves with whom he was crucified. Groups of soldiers dressed in mail and Pharisees with long beards crowd around these figures to witness their demise. Like Christ, the thief on the left has passed away and his slumped body shares a similar greenish hue. This is the penitent thief mentioned in the Gospel of Luke (23:39–43). Having confessed to Christ as he hung on the cross, the soul of this thief (represented as an infant) is carried to heaven by angels. On the right is the unrepentant thief who taunted Jesus. His ruddy flesh tones and pained expression indicate that he continues to suffer the torments of execution. Only now does he receive the coup de grace: the breaking of his legs, which will hasten his death and relinquish his soul to the black devils that hover above him.

As in all three panels, the painted surface of the Crucifixion scene is exquisitely worked. Each figure's physiognomy and gestures are individualized so that the two

soldiers on horseback that frame Jesus, for example, respond to him in different ways. With his hands clasped in prayer, the figure on the left leans forward as if to see Christ more clearly. His lance identifies him as Longinus, the visually impaired soldier who pierced Jesus's side and whose vision, according to one legend, was miraculously restored when the blood and water flowing from Christ's wound fell upon his eyes.[3] The other equestrian is the Good Centurion who recognized Christ's divinity at his crucifixion despite his debased appearance, exclaiming: "Truly this man was the Son of God." [4] With his hand placed over his heart, this figure's gesture suggests that his belief must come from within. At the foot of the cross, Mary Magdalene caresses Christ's feet as she grieves, while next to her the young Saint John weeps visibly as he stares adoringly at the Savior. In the left foreground, a group of lamenting women in vibrantly colored mantles surrounds the Virgin Mary, who has collapsed at the sight of her son's lifeless body. To the right of these women, three soldiers grapple over Christ's blue garment. The Gospel of John states that upon discovering that Jesus's tunic was woven without a seam (and thus expensive), the soldiers decided to choose a new owner according to lot, rather than cut it into shares.[5] As was common in Tuscan crucifixion scenes from this time, the soldiers draw straws rather than cast dice.[6]

Between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, Christ is said to have descended into the realm of the dead where he liberated the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets. This event, known as the Descent into Limbo, is represented on the right wing of the triptych. The story is not recorded in the canonical Gospels, but comes instead from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, the contents of which were widely disseminated throughout medieval Europe.[7] In Andrea's interpretation, Christ the Redeemer has descended victoriously into hell, where he has demolished the gateway and crushed the devil beneath it, visualizing the words inscribed on the banderole held by God the Father, who floats overhead: "Destruxit quidam mortes inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli" (He has destroyed the shades of hell, and has overthrown the powers of the devil).[8] The painting also reaffirms an article of the Apostles' Creed ("he descended into hell"). Here—at the very edge of the underworld (*limbus patrum*)—the righteous who lived before Christ kneel in a cavern. Foremost among these figures is Adam, with his long, white beard, followed by Eve, and then King David (holding a psaltery). On the far right is Saint John the Baptist with his scroll saying "Ecce Agnus [Dei]" (Behold the Lamb of God). Having overcome death, Christ appears in a transformed state indicated not only by his lustrous mantle and the golden rays emanating from his body, but also by the reactions of Limbo's inhabitants: several figures shade their eyes from

Christ's radiance. With the standard of victory in his left hand, Jesus reaches forward with his right to grasp hold of Adam in a gesture reminiscent of the one he performs on the triptych's left wing, where he clutches Saint Peter's hand.[9] The formal correspondence between these scenes underscores a causal relationship between the two events, for while Christ submitted himself to God's will in the garden at Gethsemane, the result of his obedience (i.e., his triumph over death) is conveyed in the harrowing of hell.[10] In both scenes, the action of lifting up those overcome by sorrow and regret stresses the charity of Christ.

The sophisticated compositional organization, brilliant, jewel-like colors, and luxuriously textured patterns of Andrea's paintings exemplify a skillful conflation of elements derived from the previous generation of Sienese painters, particularly Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and the Lorenzetti brothers. The exquisite miniaturist quality of execution and glowing palette recall the works of Simone, as do some of the figure types Andrea employed in the Crucifixion scene. The recumbent form of the Virgin Mary and her attendants, for example, are comparable to those in the Crucifixion panel [fig. 1] of Simone's Orsini Polyptych in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp, as is the figure of Andrea's Christ, whose proportions and knobby knees also appear dependent on the prototype. Despite that, the heavy, robust forms and simplified contours of Andrea's other figures mark a departure from the art of Simone and reveal the impact of the Lorenzetti. The voluminous mantle and lost profile of the Magdalene, for example, resemble the same figure in *Pietro Lorenzetti's* small *Crucifixion* [fig. 2] at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (inv. no. 147), as does the pose of Saint John the Evangelist. Also reminiscent of Pietro's art is Andrea's inclusion of provocative anecdotal details, dynamic use of space, and construction of depth. Despite the flattening effect of the gilded background, Andrea succeeded in creating a convincing spatial setting defined by the overlapping of figures and rocky landscape that not only diminish in scale but also darken as they recede.[11] The result is a narrative vivacity combined with an intimate expressive force.

The putative Neapolitan provenance of the Gallery's triptych has led several scholars to suggest that it was produced *in situ* while the artist was acting as an emissary to the city.[12] As explained in his *biography*, Andrea undertook lengthy diplomatic missions to Avignon, Rome, and elsewhere on behalf of the Republic of Siena, and he is documented in Naples between 1383 and 1385.[13] It is to this period that scholars routinely assign the triptych.[14] And yet, Andrea is believed to have traveled to Naples on other occasions and it is just as plausible that he

completed the altarpiece during one or several undocumented visits.[15]

Alternatively, he could have produced the work in Siena and exported it to a distant patron. For these reasons, a definitive date of execution and place of origin for the altarpiece have yet to be determined.

Equally problematic for the study of the panels is the question of whether they were originally intended to form a portable altarpiece or if they were once part of a larger, stationary polyptych. The panels clearly belong together, but technical analysis has revealed conflicting evidence, suggesting that they may not have always been arranged in the present configuration. The most perplexing incongruity concerns the presence of four large dowel holes along the lateral edges of the central panel as well as a punched decorative pattern on its reverse, now hidden beneath a layer of gesso. Neither of the side panels contains traces of corresponding joinery and no punchwork has been detected on their backs. These observations present more problems than solutions, for the evidence of dowel joints in the central panel indicates that at one time this painting might have been immovably attached to adjacent panels or a larger framing structure. However, it is entirely possible that the *Crucifixion* was painted on a reused plank that had been prepared for another commission or that the side panels were originally wider and included portions containing dowel joints that were subsequently cut off.[16] The spacing of the dowel holes is also unusual, as they are not located at equal distances from the top and bottom edges of the panel, as one would expect. In fact, the close proximity of the upper dowel holes to the top of the panel implies that the painting originally may have been taller and included an upper register.[17] This could strengthen the idea that the central panel was originally part of a different altarpiece configuration and was repurposed for this triptych. Apart from the modern hinges, all three panels reveal additional indications of what might be traces of an earlier means of attachment, but it remains to be determined whether they are in fact vestiges of a previous joining mechanism.[18]

If the panels contributed to a stationary polyptych, then their rectangular shape suggests that they were located along the ensemble's lower register and presumably with other, as of yet unidentified, paintings of Christ's Passion. The strongest evidence against this scenario lies in the presence of decoration on the back of the central panel. In the later fourteenth century, most large, double-sided altarpieces consisted of separate panels for the front and back.[19] If Andrea's paintings were components of such an altarpiece, they would have been installed into a larger, thicker framework that would have concealed their reverses. It seems

more likely that the paintings contributed to an altarpiece of modest dimensions intended for a side altar or domestic setting in which the decoration on the central panel's reverse could be admired. The precise size of this hypothetical altarpiece and the means by which its panels were attached remain open questions.

Among the various works attributed to Vanni or his followers, Bernard Berenson associated the Gallery's triptych with two small panels: the *Resurrection*, formerly in the Ingenheim Collection, and the *Ascension* in the State Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg [fig. 3] [fig. 4].<sup>[20]</sup> As Federico Zeri first noted, the two panels share similar dimensions, ornamental motifs, and arched formats.<sup>[21]</sup> It is safe to assume that they were components of the same altarpiece, but one unrelated to the Gallery's triptych. Close scrutiny has revealed that the tooled and punched designs of the halos as well as the raised gesso or *pastiglia* ornaments in the pointed arches and cusping of the ex-Ingenheim and Hermitage paintings are markedly different from those found in the spandrels of the Gallery's panels. These discrepancies militate against correlating the triptych with the *Resurrection* and *Ascension*.<sup>[22]</sup>

Since it was first published, the triptych has been considered the artist's only remaining signed work.<sup>[23]</sup> Inscribed freehand on the bottom edge of central panel's engaged frame is "ANDREAS VANNIS DE SENIS ME PINXIT" (Andrea Vanni of Siena painted me). Several of the letters have been repaired with new gilding and the blue paint has been reinforced at least twice, but the signature appears legitimate. Nevertheless, the inscription once may have contained other information for the decorative pattern that brackets the signature has been reworked and the location of the inscription appears decidedly off-center. Moreover, a significant space to the right of "PINXIT" is filled with an unusual motif that occurs nowhere else on the frame. Given the consistency of the frame's ornamentation, one can only speculate why this highly abstracted motif was incorporated, but it may supplant letters that had become illegible. The space is not large enough to have recorded the date of execution, but it may have contained a modifier such as the supplication "AMENA," which concludes the inscription adorning the polygonal base of *Lippo Memmi's Madonna dei Raccomandati* at Orvieto Cathedral.<sup>[24]</sup>

What is beyond speculation is the supremely high quality of the triptych. The deep, saturated hues of red, yellow, and blue create rhythmic alternations of color that play against the gold backgrounds and halos to animate the scenes. Such dazzling effects are carried over into the patterns decorating the soldiers' armor and the

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*Italian Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Paintings*

mantle of the Pharisee in the Crucifixion scene, as well as Christ's garment in the Descent into Limbo, which are executed in sgraffito, a technique that mimics the effects of brocade by scraping away areas of paint laid over gold leaf and tooled with patterned punches. The elaborate costumes join the carefully diversified facial features and body movements to communicate the narrative in a concise but vivid manner. Andrea di Vanni is often regarded as lacking the skill and sophistication of his great predecessors, but the refined execution, balanced organization of complex iconographic elements, and compelling depiction of human emotion that characterize the Gallery's triptych should prompt a revision of his stature.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Simone Martini, *Crucifixion* (from the Orsini Polyptych), c. 1335, tempera on panel, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp



**fig. 2** Pietro Lorenzetti, *Crucifixion*, c. 1325–1326, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena



**fig. 3** Andrea di Vanni, *Ascension*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Gift of the heirs of Count G. S. Stroganov, 1911



**fig. 4** Andrea di Vanni, *Resurrection*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, location unknown, formerly in the Ingenheim collection

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**NOTES**

- [1] Matthew 26:39. Gertrud Schiller notes that the chalice was an Old Testament symbol of divine wrath, but since it is tied to the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper it may also be considered the cup of Christ's

sacrifice. See Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. Janet Seligman, 2 vols. (Greenwich, 1971–1972), 2(1972): 48, 51; as well as Victor Schmidt, unpublished article written for the Corcoran Gallery of Art, September 11, 1995, in the NGA curatorial files.

- [2] Luke 22:44: “In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.”
- [3] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993): 1:184.
- [4] Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39.
- [5] John 19:23–24. In his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, Saint Augustine interpreted the casting of lots as a positive act, for it was by way of lots, the traditional means by which one invoked a decision from God, that the seamless garment of Christ remained undivided. Likewise, it was by the will of God that the Church remained undivided. Saint Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, trans. John W. Rettig, 5 vols. (Washington, DC, 1988–1995), 5:42–43 (tractate 118). The Bible does not reveal the winner of the garment. According to *The Golden Legend*, Pontius Pilate gained possession of the seamless tunic and wore it before Tiberius to subdue the Emperor’s wrath when the Emperor learned that Pilate had unjustly condemned Jesus. See Jacopo de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:212–213. Lynette Muir has noted several Passion plays from Northern Europe that mention Pilate as the winner of Christ’s garment. See Lynette Muir, *The Biblical Drama of Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), 254 n. 54. The mystery surrounding the outcome of the event has led to the discovery of several seamless garments over the centuries. The Holy Robe at the cathedral of Trier in Germany is considered the most authentic; however, at least five cities claim to possess the original. See Franz Ronig, *Trier Cathedral*, trans. M. Maxwell, 4th ed. (Trier, 1986), 14, 26, 29–30, 32; and Friedrich Lauchert, “Holy Coat,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York, 1907–1913), 7(1910): 400–402.
- [6] A few other examples include Andrea da Firenze’s fresco of the Crucifixion (1365–1367) in the Spanish Chapel at the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella, the Crucifixion fresco (c. 1340) by “Barna da Siena” in the collegiate church of San Gimignano, *Andrea di Bartolo’s* painting of the Crucifixion (late 14th century) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Crucifixion scene (c. 1390) by Agnolo Gaddi (Florentine, c. 1350 - 1396) at the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, and *Jacopo di Cione’s* Crucifixion panel (1369–1370) at the National Gallery, London.
- [7] See George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York, 1954), 153–154; and Gertrud Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 3(1971): 56–66.

- [8] Like the image, the phrase celebrates Christ's triumph, but the particular wording is nearly identical to one of the responses performed during Tenebrae on Holy Saturday: *Destruxit quidem claustra inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli* (He has destroyed the gates of hell and has overthrown the powers of the devil). Tenebrae (meaning "shadows" or "darkness") is a ceremony performed during the last three days of Holy Week to commemorate the death of Jesus. The structure of the ceremony is the same on all three days, but on Good Friday the service includes a gradual extinguishing of candles while a series of psalms and readings are chanted. On Saturday, the ceremony is conducted entirely in darkness with the exception of a single candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. The incorporation of a phrase drawn from the responsorial for one of the most important commemorative services celebrated during Holy Week could operate as an additional means by which the artist sought to bring sacred past into the devotional present for the viewers of his painting.
- [9] A detail noted by Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 193.
- [10] Cf. Thomas Fletcher Worthen, *The Harrowing of Hell in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1981), 387 n. 31.
- [11] This technique was recommended by Cennino Cennini and frequently practiced by Trecento painters. See Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza, 2003), chap. LXXXV, 127; and Miklós Boskovits in this catalog, entry for Jacopo di Cione's *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*, note 23.
- [12] According to David Alan Brown, a note in the Fototeca Berenson at the Villa I Tatti, Florence, records that the pictures belonged to Count Carlo Zezza, who obtained it from wife, a member of the Naples branch of the Medici family. However, the Zezza provenance is not confirmed. See David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 36.
- [13] See Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 295–302; and Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 54–55.
- [14] A notable exception is Valerie Linda Wainwright, who dates the triptych to c. 1360–1370. See Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sienese Painters in Their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College, 1978), 156.
- [15] Cf. Andrea Costa, *Rammemorazione storica dell'effigie di Santa Maria di Casaluca* (Naples, 1709), 172; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana*

(Rome, 1969), 325–326; and Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 246.

- [16] Unlike the lateral panels, the central panel also has a slight concave warp which is unusual. As Joanna Dunn has observed, if the panel was repurposed, its former arrangement and function could have induced the warping as well as account for the punchwork on its reverse. See Dunn's examination report dated December 21, 2015 in the NGA conservation files, where she also mentions the possibility of each side panel originally including two scenes of equal width.
- [17] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [18] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [19] See Julian Gardner, "Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure," in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo, il contributo dell'analisi tecnica alla storia dell'arte*, eds. Hendrik W. van Os and J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322.
- [20] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:442. The current location of the *Resurrection* is unknown. It was sold on July 22, 1981 at the Neumeister, Münchener Kunstauktionhaus, sale 203, lot 749. Other scholars who attribute the *Resurrection* to Andrea di Vanni include Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte* 46, no. 3 (1961): repro. 221, 225; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 325–326; and David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 34. The *Ascension* once belonged to Count Gregory Stroganoff in Rome and has been variously attributed to Andrea, to one of his followers, and to Bartolo di Fredi. Cf. Antonio Muñoz, *Pièces de choix de la collection du Comte Grégoire Stroganoff à Rome*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1912), 2: 11; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 504–505 n. 1; Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa. II Trecento senese, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 274; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 31; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Proischozhenie italjanskogo vrozozhdenija*, vol. 2, *Iskusstvo treento* (Moscow, 1959), 289–290, n. 283; Zeri (1961): repro. 221, 223–226; and Svetlana Vsevolozhskaya and Albert Kostenevich, *The Hermitage: Italian Paintings* (Leningrad, 1984), 227.
- [21] Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte*

46, no. 3 (1961): 223–226.

- [22] Laurence Kanter has suggested that the ex-Ingeneim and Hermitage panels are from an entirely different period in the artist's career. Communicated in an email dated October 21, 2015, in the NGA curatorial files.
- [23] F. Mason Perkins, "A Triptych by Andrea Vanni," *Art in America* 9 (1921): 186.
- [24] For the inscription on Lippo's painting see Michael Mallory, "Thoughts Concerning the Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas," *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 17 n. 26; and Bonnie Apgar Bennett, *Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini's "fratello in arte": The Image Revealed by His Documented Works* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1977), 17, 105–107, 124 n. 21.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Each panel of this triptych is made from a single board with a vertical grain. Each side panel is attached to the center panel with two modern butt hinges. The original means of attachment is unknown, but x-radiographs reveal holes that may be evidence of prior dowels or hinges along both edges of *The Crucifixion*, the right edge of the *The Agony*, and the left edge of *The Descent*. The x-radiographs also show four long dowel shapes in the center panel that do not have counterparts in the side panels. These may be evidence that the center panel was repurposed. Each of the three panels is bordered by an engaged frame composed of wood moldings adhered to the front of the panel.

The panels were prepared with gesso, and no fabric layer is visible in the x-radiographs. *Pastiglia* decoration forms a pointed arch with trefoil cusping on the tops of *The Agony* and *The Descent* and a cusped frieze along the top of *The Crucifixion*. The *pastiglia*, frames, and backgrounds are gilded and these gilded areas were prepared with a red bole. Punchwork was used to decorate the *pastiglia* and the figures' halos, garments, and mail. The gilded areas of the composition also bear decorative borders formed by punchwork. In addition, Christ's robe in *The Descent*, the robes of the two Pharisees in *The Crucifixion*, and the armor and mail of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion* are decorated with sgraffito. Silver gilding was used in the mail, armor, and shields of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion*.<sup>[1]</sup> There is a sgraffito design in blue paint in the flat part of the frame with punchwork in the gold portion of the design. There is a signature in the sgraffito in the bottom of the center panel.

The painted areas of the composition were demarcated with incised lines. Infrared examination at 1.1 to 2.5 microns [2] reveals broadly brushed washes under the landscapes and fine lines marking the folds in the drapery of the kneeling Christ in *The Agony* and the Madonna in *The Crucifixion*, but no other underdrawing. The paint was applied in narrow, parallel strokes.

The backs of all three panels have been covered in white ground and painted in a faux finish resembling woodgrain. Modern wooden moldings have been attached to the backs of the panels to create engaged frames that resemble those on the front. The back of the center panel has a bumpy texture, as though particles were mixed into the ground. In contrast, the backs of the side panels are smooth. X-radiographs show a double row of circular punches forming a border in the center panel. These punches do not relate to the design on the front of the panels. X-ray fluorescence also detected silver on the back of the center panel,[3] indicating that originally it may have been silver gilt. In contrast, no punchwork or silver was found on the backs of the side panels. This further supports the idea that the center panel was repurposed.

There is a fairly thick layer of natural resin varnish on the front of the paintings. The frames on the fronts are covered with a layer of shellac, as are the entire backs of the paintings..

*The Crucifixion* panel has a slight concave warp, but both *The Agony* and *The Descent* remain in plane. There is a large knot in the wood that runs through the torchbearers and Judas in *The Agony*, and another in the foreground of *The Crucifixion* below the figure of Mary. The paint is in good condition with a minute craquelure pattern throughout. There are scattered, small losses and the paint has been reinforced in some areas. At least two generations of inpainting are visible with ultraviolet light. The most recent inpaint is very discrete, but the older inpaint was applied less carefully and blended onto the original. The gilding in the flats of the painting is in good condition, but in the area of the *pastiglia* there is a fair amount of shell gold restoration. The frame moldings have been regilded and the blue paint on the frames has been reinforced at least twice. Raking light also reveals another “S” between “DE” and “SENIS” and possibly two other letters at the end of the inscription. Also, the inscription is off-center and at the end of the signature is a three-centimeter-long area where the design differs from the circular design found in the rest of the border. It is unclear if the signature originally extended into this area or if the design change was added to center the signature.

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The varnish is somewhat glossy and has discolored slightly. It is also blanched in the darks, especially in the silver gilt areas of *The Crucifixion*.

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## TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The painting was analyzed while in the collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Gwen Manthey, "X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy Report," January 2012 in conservation department files.
  - [2] Infrared examination was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.
  - [3] X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy was performed by the NGA scientific research department (see forthcoming report in conservation files).
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## PROVENANCE

William Andrews Clark [1839-1925], New York, by 1919; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

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## EXHIBITION HISTORY

1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein, New York, 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1978, fig. 27.

2002 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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Andrea di Vanni  
Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413

## *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Crucifixion [middle panel]*

1380s

tempera on panel

painted surface: 46.9 × 49 cm (18 7/16 × 19 5/16 in.)

overall: 56.9 × 57.9 × 3.4 cm (22 3/8 × 22 13/16 × 1 5/16 in.)

Inscription: lower center on original frame of the panel, some of the letters restored: ANDREAS UANNIS / DE SENIS / ME

PINXIT (Andreas di Vanni of Siena painted me); above Christ: INRI

Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.79.711.b

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### ENTRY

This highly detailed panel from a triptych by the Sienese painter Andrea di Vanni is a recent addition to the National Gallery of Art collection. One of the most prominent works acquired from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the altarpiece consists of three panels depicting stories from the Passion of Christ. Attached by modern hinges, the two lateral panels can be folded over the central painting to protect it and facilitate transportation. When opened, the triptych's panels represent, from left to right, *Christ's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*, the Crucifixion, and the *Descent into Limbo*. Placed against a gold ground, each scene is set on a rocky outcropping that extends from one panel to the next, creating a formal coherence among scenes that took place at different times and places.

The altarpiece's left wing contains several episodes presented in a continuous narrative. In the middle ground, Christ kneels in prayer above a well-tended garden

on the Mount of Olives. With his arms folded across his chest in a gesture of humility, he gazes heavenward toward a descending angel who holds out a chalice. The chalice here evidently refers to Christ's supplication: "Oh my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want," i.e., his imminent sacrifice upon the cross.[1] The anguish weighing upon Christ's countenance is physically manifested by the drops of blood that he sweats in accordance with the Gospel account.[2] In the foreground, Jesus is represented a second time, admonishing the disciples for sleeping when he had asked them to stay awake and pray with him. His rebuke is a slight one, however, for Christ pulls Saint Peter up from the ground to signify his selection of that apostle to head his church. In the background, a group of soldiers led by torch-bearers and the traitor Judas Iscariot depart from Jerusalem to arrest Jesus. The villainy of the former apostle Judas is clearly denoted by the black halo surrounding his head.

The central panel, which depicts the Crucifixion, reflects a growing concern among fourteenth-century artists to historicize the Biblical narrative. To accomplish this, the painter attempted to recreate, with the greatest possible accuracy, the details of the events on Mount Calvary. These details, moreover, are carefully arranged to enhance the narrative legibility of what would otherwise be a chaotic scene. Already dead upon the cross, Christ is portrayed amid a large cast of characters and vignettes arranged symmetrically across the picture. On either side of Jesus are the two thieves with whom he was crucified. Groups of soldiers dressed in mail and Pharisees with long beards crowd around these figures to witness their demise. Like Christ, the thief on the left has passed away and his slumped body shares a similar greenish hue. This is the penitent thief mentioned in the Gospel of Luke (23:39–43). Having confessed to Christ as he hung on the cross, the soul of this thief (represented as an infant) is carried to heaven by angels. On the right is the unrepentant thief who taunted Jesus. His ruddy flesh tones and pained expression indicate that he continues to suffer the torments of execution. Only now does he receive the coup de grace: the breaking of his legs, which will hasten his death and relinquish his soul to the black devils that hover above him.

As in all three panels, the painted surface of the Crucifixion scene is exquisitely worked. Each figure's physiognomy and gestures are individualized so that the two soldiers on horseback that frame Jesus, for example, respond to him in different ways. With his hands clasped in prayer, the figure on the left leans forward as if to see Christ more clearly. His lance identifies him as Longinus, the visually impaired soldier who pierced Jesus's side and whose vision, according to one legend, was

miraculously restored when the blood and water flowing from Christ's wound fell upon his eyes.[3] The other equestrian is the Good Centurion who recognized Christ's divinity at his crucifixion despite his debased appearance, exclaiming: "Truly this man was the Son of God." [4] With his hand placed over his heart, this figure's gesture suggests that his belief must come from within. At the foot of the cross, Mary Magdalene caresses Christ's feet as she grieves, while next to her the young Saint John weeps visibly as he stares adoringly at the Savior. In the left foreground, a group of lamenting women in vibrantly colored mantles surrounds the Virgin Mary, who has collapsed at the sight of her son's lifeless body. To the right of these women, three soldiers grapple over Christ's blue garment. The Gospel of John states that upon discovering that Jesus's tunic was woven without a seam (and thus expensive), the soldiers decided to choose a new owner according to lot, rather than cut it into shares.[5] As was common in Tuscan crucifixion scenes from this time, the soldiers draw straws rather than cast dice.[6]

Between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, Christ is said to have descended into the realm of the dead where he liberated the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets. This event, known as the Descent into Limbo, is represented on the right wing of the triptych. The story is not recorded in the canonical Gospels, but comes instead from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, the contents of which were widely disseminated throughout medieval Europe.[7] In Andrea's interpretation, Christ the Redeemer has descended victoriously into hell, where he has demolished the gateway and crushed the devil beneath it, visualizing the words inscribed on the banderole held by God the Father, who floats overhead: "Destruxit quidam mortes inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli" (He has destroyed the shades of hell, and has overthrown the powers of the devil).[8] The painting also reaffirms an article of the Apostles' Creed ("he descended into hell"). Here—at the very edge of the underworld (*limbus patrum*)—the righteous who lived before Christ kneel in a cavern. Foremost among these figures is Adam, with his long, white beard, followed by Eve, and then King David (holding a psaltery). On the far right is Saint John the Baptist with his scroll saying "Ecce Agnus [Dei]" (Behold the Lamb of God). Having overcome death, Christ appears in a transformed state indicated not only by his lustrous mantle and the golden rays emanating from his body, but also by the reactions of Limbo's inhabitants: several figures shade their eyes from Christ's radiance. With the standard of victory in his left hand, Jesus reaches forward with his right to grasp hold of Adam in a gesture reminiscent of the one he performs on the triptych's left wing, where he clutches Saint Peter's hand.[9] The formal correspondence between these scenes underscores a causal relationship

between the two events, for while Christ submitted himself to God's will in the garden at Gethsemane, the result of his obedience (i.e., his triumph over death) is conveyed in the harrowing of hell.[10] In both scenes, the action of lifting up those overcome by sorrow and regret stresses the charity of Christ.

The sophisticated compositional organization, brilliant, jewel-like colors, and luxuriously textured patterns of Andrea's paintings exemplify a skillful conflation of elements derived from the previous generation of Sienese painters, particularly Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and the Lorenzetti brothers. The exquisite miniaturist quality of execution and glowing palette recall the works of Simone, as do some of the figure types Andrea employed in the Crucifixion scene. The recumbent form of the Virgin Mary and her attendants, for example, are comparable to those in the Crucifixion panel [fig. 1] of Simone's Orsini Polyptych in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp, as is the figure of Andrea's Christ, whose proportions and knobby knees also appear dependent on the prototype. Despite that, the heavy, robust forms and simplified contours of Andrea's other figures mark a departure from the art of Simone and reveal the impact of the Lorenzetti. The voluminous mantle and lost profile of the Magdalene, for example, resemble the same figure in *Pietro Lorenzetti's* small *Crucifixion* [fig. 2] at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (inv. no. 147), as does the pose of Saint John the Evangelist. Also reminiscent of Pietro's art is Andrea's inclusion of provocative anecdotal details, dynamic use of space, and construction of depth. Despite the flattening effect of the gilded background, Andrea succeeded in creating a convincing spatial setting defined by the overlapping of figures and rocky landscape that not only diminish in scale but also darken as they recede.[11] The result is a narrative vivacity combined with an intimate expressive force.

The putative Neapolitan provenance of the Gallery's triptych has led several scholars to suggest that it was produced *in situ* while the artist was acting as an emissary to the city.[12] As explained in his *biography*, Andrea undertook lengthy diplomatic missions to Avignon, Rome, and elsewhere on behalf of the Republic of Siena, and he is documented in Naples between 1383 and 1385.[13] It is to this period that scholars routinely assign the triptych.[14] And yet, Andrea is believed to have traveled to Naples on other occasions and it is just as plausible that he completed the altarpiece during one or several undocumented visits.[15] Alternatively, he could have produced the work in Siena and exported it to a distant patron. For these reasons, a definitive date of execution and place of origin for the altarpiece have yet to be determined.

Equally problematic for the study of the panels is the question of whether they were originally intended to form a portable altarpiece or if they were once part of a larger, stationary polyptych. The panels clearly belong together, but technical analysis has revealed conflicting evidence, suggesting that they may not have always been arranged in the present configuration. The most perplexing incongruity concerns the presence of four large dowel holes along the lateral edges of the central panel as well as a punched decorative pattern on its reverse, now hidden beneath a layer of gesso. Neither of the side panels contains traces of corresponding joinery and no punchwork has been detected on their backs. These observations present more problems than solutions, for the evidence of dowel joints in the central panel indicates that at one time this painting might have been immovably attached to adjacent panels or a larger framing structure. However, it is entirely possible that the *Crucifixion* was painted on a reused plank that had been prepared for another commission or that the side panels were originally wider and included portions containing dowel joints that were subsequently cut off.<sup>[16]</sup> The spacing of the dowel holes is also unusual, as they are not located at equal distances from the top and bottom edges of the panel, as one would expect. In fact, the close proximity of the upper dowel holes to the top of the panel implies that the painting originally may have been taller and included an upper register.<sup>[17]</sup> This could strengthen the idea that the central panel was originally part of a different altarpiece configuration and was repurposed for this triptych. Apart from the modern hinges, all three panels reveal additional indications of what might be traces of an earlier means of attachment, but it remains to be determined whether they are in fact vestiges of a previous joining mechanism.<sup>[18]</sup>

If the panels contributed to a stationary polyptych, then their rectangular shape suggests that they were located along the ensemble's lower register and presumably with other, as of yet unidentified, paintings of Christ's Passion. The strongest evidence against this scenario lies in the presence of decoration on the back of the central panel. In the later fourteenth century, most large, double-sided altarpieces consisted of separate panels for the front and back.<sup>[19]</sup> If Andrea's paintings were components of such an altarpiece, they would have been installed into a larger, thicker framework that would have concealed their reverses. It seems more likely that the paintings contributed to an altarpiece of modest dimensions intended for a side altar or domestic setting in which the decoration on the central panel's reverse could be admired. The precise size of this hypothetical altarpiece and the means by which its panels were attached remain open questions.

Among the various works attributed to Vanni or his followers, Bernard Berenson associated the Gallery's triptych with two small panels: the *Resurrection*, formerly in the Ingenheim Collection, and the *Ascension* in the State Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg [fig. 3] [fig. 4].<sup>[20]</sup> As Federico Zeri first noted, the two panels share similar dimensions, ornamental motifs, and arched formats.<sup>[21]</sup> It is safe to assume that they were components of the same altarpiece, but one unrelated to the Gallery's triptych. Close scrutiny has revealed that the tooled and punched designs of the halos as well as the raised gesso or *pastiglia* ornaments in the pointed arches and cusping of the ex-Ingenheim and Hermitage paintings are markedly different from those found in the spandrels of the Gallery's panels. These discrepancies militate against correlating the triptych with the *Resurrection* and *Ascension*.<sup>[22]</sup>

Since it was first published, the triptych has been considered the artist's only remaining signed work.<sup>[23]</sup> Inscribed freehand on the bottom edge of central panel's engaged frame is "ANDREAS VANNIS DE SENIS ME PINXIT" (Andrea Vanni of Siena painted me). Several of the letters have been repaired with new gilding and the blue paint has been reinforced at least twice, but the signature appears legitimate. Nevertheless, the inscription once may have contained other information for the decorative pattern that brackets the signature has been reworked and the location of the inscription appears decidedly off-center. Moreover, a significant space to the right of "PINXIT" is filled with an unusual motif that occurs nowhere else on the frame. Given the consistency of the frame's ornamentation, one can only speculate why this highly abstracted motif was incorporated, but it may supplant letters that had become illegible. The space is not large enough to have recorded the date of execution, but it may have contained a modifier such as the supplication "AMENA," which concludes the inscription adorning the polygonal base of *Lippo Memmi's Madonna dei Raccomandati* at Orvieto Cathedral.<sup>[24]</sup>

What is beyond speculation is the supremely high quality of the triptych. The deep, saturated hues of red, yellow, and blue create rhythmic alternations of color that play against the gold backgrounds and halos to animate the scenes. Such dazzling effects are carried over into the patterns decorating the soldiers' armor and the mantle of the Pharisee in the Crucifixion scene, as well as Christ's garment in the Descent into Limbo, which are executed in sgraffito, a technique that mimics the effects of brocade by scraping away areas of paint laid over gold leaf and tooled with patterned punches. The elaborate costumes join the carefully diversified facial

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features and body movements to communicate the narrative in a concise but vivid manner. Andrea di Vanni is often regarded as lacking the skill and sophistication of his great predecessors, but the refined execution, balanced organization of complex iconographic elements, and compelling depiction of human emotion that characterize the Gallery's triptych should prompt a revision of his stature.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Simone Martini, *Crucifixion* (from the Orsini Polyptych), c. 1335, tempera on panel, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp



**fig. 2** Pietro Lorenzetti, *Crucifixion*, c. 1325–1326, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena



**fig. 3** Andrea di Vanni, *Ascension*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Gift of the heirs of Count G. S. Stroganov, 1911



**fig. 4** Andrea di Vanni, *Resurrection*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, location unknown, formerly in the Ingenheim collection

**NOTES**

- [1] Matthew 26:39. Gertrud Schiller notes that the chalice was an Old Testament symbol of divine wrath, but since it is tied to the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper it may also be considered the cup of Christ's

sacrifice. See Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. Janet Seligman, 2 vols. (Greenwich, 1971–1972), 2(1972): 48, 51; as well as Victor Schmidt, unpublished article written for the Corcoran Gallery of Art, September 11, 1995, in the NGA curatorial files.

- [2] Luke 22:44: “In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.”
- [3] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:184.
- [4] Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39.
- [5] John 19:23–24. In his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, Saint Augustine interpreted the casting of lots as a positive act, for it was by way of lots, the traditional means by which one invoked a decision from God, that the seamless garment of Christ remained undivided. Likewise, it was by the will of God that the Church remained undivided. Saint Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, trans. John W. Rettig, 5 vols. (Washington, DC, 1988–1995), 5:42–43 (tractate 118). The Bible does not reveal the winner of the garment. According to *The Golden Legend*, Pontius Pilate gained possession of the seamless tunic and wore it before Tiberius to subdue the Emperor’s wrath when the Emperor learned that Pilate had unjustly condemned Jesus. See Jacopo de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:212–213. Lynette Muir has noted several Passion plays from Northern Europe that mention Pilate as the winner of Christ’s garment. See Lynette Muir, *The Biblical Drama of Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), 254 n. 54. The mystery surrounding the outcome of the event has led to the discovery of several seamless garments over the centuries. The Holy Robe at the cathedral of Trier in Germany is considered the most authentic; however, at least five cities claim to possess the original. See Franz Ronig, *Trier Cathedral*, trans. M. Maxwell, 4th ed. (Trier, 1986), 14, 26, 29–30, 32; and Friedrich Lauchert, “Holy Coat,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York, 1907–1913), 7(1910): 400–402.
- [6] A few other examples include Andrea da Firenze’s fresco of the Crucifixion (1365–1367) in the Spanish Chapel at the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella, the Crucifixion fresco (c. 1340) by “Barna da Siena” in the collegiate church of San Gimignano, *Andrea di Bartolo’s* painting of the Crucifixion (late 14th century) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Crucifixion scene (c. 1390) by *Agnolo Gaddi* at the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, and *Jacopo di Cione’s* Crucifixion panel (1369–1370) at the National Gallery, London.
- [7] See George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York, 1954), 153–154; and Gertrud Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 3(1971): 56–66.

- [8] Like the image, the phrase celebrates Christ's triumph, but the particular wording is nearly identical to one of the responses performed during Tenebrae on Holy Saturday: *Destruxit quidem claustra inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli* (He has destroyed the gates of hell and has overthrown the powers of the devil). Tenebrae (meaning "shadows" or "darkness") is a ceremony performed during the last three days of Holy Week to commemorate the death of Jesus. The structure of the ceremony is the same on all three days, but on Good Friday the service includes a gradual extinguishing of candles while a series of psalms and readings are chanted. On Saturday, the ceremony is conducted entirely in darkness with the exception of a single candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. The incorporation of a phrase drawn from the responsorial for one of the most important commemorative services celebrated during Holy Week could operate as an additional means by which the artist sought to bring sacred past into the devotional present for the viewers of his painting.
- [9] A detail noted by Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 193.
- [10] Cf. Thomas Fletcher Worthen, *The Harrowing of Hell in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1981), 387 n. 31.
- [11] This technique was recommended by Cennino Cennini and frequently practiced by Trecento painters. See Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza, 2003), chap. LXXXV, 127; and Miklós Boskovits in this catalog, entry for Jacopo di Cione's *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*, note 23.
- [12] According to David Alan Brown, a note in the Fototeca Berenson at the Villa I Tatti, Florence, records that the pictures belonged to Count Carlo Zezza, who obtained it from wife, a member of the Naples branch of the Medici family. However, the Zezza provenance is not confirmed. See David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 36.
- [13] See Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 295–302; and Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 54–55.
- [14] A notable exception is Valerie Linda Wainwright, who dates the triptych to c. 1360–1370. See Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sienese Painters in Their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College, 1978), 156.
- [15] Cf. Andrea Costa, *Rammemorazione storica dell'effigie di Santa Maria di Casaluca* (Naples, 1709), 172; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana*

(Rome, 1969), 325–326; and Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 246.

- [16] Unlike the lateral panels, the central panel also has a slight concave warp which is unusual. As Joanna Dunn has observed, if the panel was repurposed, its former arrangement and function could have induced the warping as well as account for the punchwork on its reverse. See Dunn's examination report dated December 21, 2015 in the NGA conservation files, where she also mentions the possibility of each side panel originally including two scenes of equal width.
- [17] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [18] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [19] See Julian Gardner, "Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure," in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo, il contributo dell'analisi tecnica alla storia dell'arte*, eds. Hendrik W. van Os and J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322.
- [20] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:442. The current location of the *Resurrection* is unknown. It was sold on July 22, 1981 at the Neumeister, Münchener Kunstauktionhaus, sale 203, lot 749. Other scholars who attribute the *Resurrection* to Andrea di Vanni include Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte* 46, no. 3 (1961): repro. 221, 225; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 325–326; and David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 34. The *Ascension* once belonged to Count Gregory Stroganoff in Rome and has been variously attributed to Andrea, to one of his followers, and to Bartolo di Fredi. Cf. Antonio Muñoz, *Pièces de choix de la collection du Comte Grégoire Stroganoff à Rome*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1912), 2: 11; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 504–505 n. 1; Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa. II Trecento senese, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 274; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 31; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Proischozhenie italjanskogo vozrozhdenija*, vol. 2, *Iskusstvo treento* (Moscow, 1959), 289–290, n. 283; Zeri (1961): repro. 221, 223–226; and Svetlana Vsevolozhskaya and Albert Kostenevich, *The Hermitage: Italian Paintings* (Leningrad, 1984), 227.
- [21] Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte*

46, no. 3 (1961): 223–226.

- [22] Laurence Kanter has suggested that the ex-Ingeneim and Hermitage panels are from an entirely different period in the artist's career. Communicated in an email dated October 21, 2015, in the NGA curatorial files.
- [23] F. Mason Perkins, "A Triptych by Andrea Vanni," *Art in America* 9 (1921): 186.
- [24] For the inscription on Lippo's painting see Michael Mallory, "Thoughts Concerning the Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas," *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 17 n. 26; and Bonnie Apgar Bennett, *Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini's "fratello in arte": The Image Revealed by His Documented Works* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1977), 17, 105–107, 124 n. 21.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel is the central part of a triptych that also includes *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden* [left panel] and *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Descent into Limbo* [right panel]. Each panel is made from a single board with a vertical grain. Each side panel is attached to the center panel with two modern butt hinges. The original means of attachment is unknown, but x-radiographs reveal holes that may be evidence of prior dowels or hinges along both edges of *The Crucifixion*, the right edge of the *The Agony*, and the left edge of *The Descent*. The x-radiographs also show four long dowel shapes in the center panel that do not have counterparts in the side panels. These may be evidence that the center panel was repurposed. Each of the three panels is bordered by an engaged frame composed of wood moldings adhered to the front of the panel.

The panels were prepared with gesso, and no fabric layer is visible in the x-radiographs. *Pastiglia* decoration forms a pointed arch with trefoil cusping on the tops of *The Agony* and *The Descent* and a cusped frieze along the top of *The Crucifixion*. The *pastiglia*, frames, and backgrounds are gilded and these gilded areas were prepared with a red bole. Punchwork was used to decorate the *pastiglia* and the figures' halos, garments, and mail. The gilded areas of the composition also bear decorative borders formed by punchwork. In addition, Christ's robe in *The Descent*, the robes of the two Pharisees in *The Crucifixion*, and the armor and mail of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion* are decorated with *sgraffito*. Silver gilding was used in the mail, armor, and shields of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion*.<sup>[1]</sup> There is a *sgraffito* design in blue paint in the flat part of the frame

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with punchwork in the gold portion of the design. There is a signature in the sgraffito in the bottom of the center panel.

The painted areas of the composition were demarcated with incised lines. Infrared examination at 1.1 to 2.5 microns [2] reveals broadly brushed washes under the landscapes and fine lines marking the folds in the drapery of the kneeling Christ in *The Agony* and the Madonna in *The Crucifixion*, but no other underdrawing. The paint was applied in narrow, parallel strokes.

The backs of all three panels have been covered in white ground and painted in a faux finish resembling woodgrain. Modern wooden moldings have been attached to the backs of the panels to create engaged frames that resemble those on the front. The back of the center panel has a bumpy texture, as though particles were mixed into the ground. In contrast, the backs of the side panels are smooth. X-radiographs show a double row of circular punches forming a border in the center panel. These punches do not relate to the design on the front of the panels. X-ray fluorescence also detected silver on the back of the center panel,[3] indicating that originally it may have been silver gilt. In contrast, no punchwork or silver was found on the backs of the side panels. This further supports the idea that the center panel was repurposed.

There is a fairly thick layer of natural resin varnish on the front of the paintings. The frames on the fronts are covered with a layer of shellac, as are the entire backs of the paintings.

*The Crucifixion* panel has a slight concave warp, but both *The Agony* and *The Descent* remain in plane. There is a large knot in the wood that runs through the torchbearers and Judas in *The Agony*, and another in the foreground of *The Crucifixion* below the figure of Mary. The paint is in good condition with a minute craquelure pattern throughout. There are scattered, small losses and the paint has been reinforced in some areas. At least two generations of inpainting are visible with ultraviolet light. The most recent inpaint is very discrete, but the older inpaint was applied less carefully and blended onto the original. The gilding in the flats of the painting is in good condition, but in the area of the pastiglia there is a fair amount of shell gold restoration. The frame moldings have been regilded and the blue paint on the frames has been reinforced at least twice. Raking light also reveals another “S” between “DE” and “SENIS” and possibly two other letters at the end of the inscription. Also, the inscription is off-center and at the end of the signature is a three-centimeter-long area where the design differs from the circular

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design found in the rest of the border. It is unclear if the signature originally extended into this area or if the design change was added to center the signature. The varnish is somewhat glossy and has discolored slightly. It is also blanched in the darks, especially in the silver gilt areas of *The Crucifixion*.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The painting was analyzed while in the collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Gwen Manthey, "X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy Report," January 2012 in conservation department files.
  - [2] Infrared examination was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.
  - [3] X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy was performed by the NGA scientific research department (see forthcoming report in conservation files).
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### PROVENANCE

William Andrews Clark [1839-1925], New York, by 1919; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein, New York, 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1978, fig. 27.

2002 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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Andrea di Vanni  
Sienese, c. 1330 - 1413

## *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Descent into Limbo [right panel]*

1380s

tempera on panel

painted surface: 47.2 × 25 cm (18 9/16 × 9 13/16 in.)

overall: 56.7 × 29.2 × 3.3 cm (22 5/16 × 11 1/2 × 1 5/16 in.)

Inscription: in black paint on the scroll held by God the Father: *Destruxit quidam mortes inferni / et subvertit potentias diaboli*; in black paint on the scroll held by Saint John the Baptist: *ECCE.ANGIUS[AGNUS]*. (Behold the Lamb)

Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection) 2014.79.711.c

### ENTRY

This highly detailed panel from a triptych by the Sienese painter Andrea di Vanni is a recent addition to the National Gallery of Art collection. One of the most prominent works acquired from the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the altarpiece consists of three panels depicting stories from the Passion of Christ. Attached by modern hinges, the two lateral panels can be folded over the central painting to protect it and facilitate transportation. When opened, the triptych's panels represent, from left to right, *Christ's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane*, the *Crucifixion*, and the Descent into Limbo. Placed against a gold ground, each scene is set on a rocky outcropping that extends from one panel to the next, creating a formal coherence among scenes that took place at different times and places.

The altarpiece's left wing contains several episodes presented in a continuous narrative. In the middle ground, Christ kneels in prayer above a well-tended garden on the Mount of Olives. With his arms folded across his chest in a gesture of humility, he gazes heavenward toward a descending angel who holds out a chalice. The chalice here evidently refers to Christ's supplication: "Oh my Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want," i.e., his imminent sacrifice upon the cross.[1] The anguish weighing upon Christ's

countenance is physically manifested by the drops of blood that he sweats in accordance with the Gospel account.<sup>[2]</sup> In the foreground, Jesus is represented a second time, admonishing the disciples for sleeping when he had asked them to stay awake and pray with him. His rebuke is a slight one, however, for Christ pulls Saint Peter up from the ground to signify his selection of that apostle to head his church. In the background, a group of soldiers led by torch-bearers and the traitor Judas Iscariot depart from Jerusalem to arrest Jesus. The villainy of the former apostle Judas is clearly denoted by the black halo surrounding his head.

The central panel, which depicts the Crucifixion, reflects a growing concern among fourteenth-century artists to historicize the Biblical narrative. To accomplish this, the painter attempted to recreate, with the greatest possible accuracy, the details of the events on Mount Calvary. These details, moreover, are carefully arranged to enhance the narrative legibility of what would otherwise be a chaotic scene. Already dead upon the cross, Christ is portrayed amid a large cast of characters and vignettes arranged symmetrically across the picture. On either side of Jesus are the two thieves with whom he was crucified. Groups of soldiers dressed in mail and Pharisees with long beards crowd around these figures to witness their demise. Like Christ, the thief on the left has passed away and his slumped body shares a similar greenish hue. This is the penitent thief mentioned in the Gospel of Luke (23:39–43). Having confessed to Christ as he hung on the cross, the soul of this thief (represented as an infant) is carried to heaven by angels. On the right is the unrepentant thief who taunted Jesus. His ruddy flesh tones and pained expression indicate that he continues to suffer the torments of execution. Only now does he receive the coup de grace: the breaking of his legs, which will hasten his death and relinquish his soul to the black devils that hover above him.

As in all three panels, the painted surface of the Crucifixion scene is exquisitely worked. Each figure's physiognomy and gestures are individualized so that the two soldiers on horseback that frame Jesus, for example, respond to him in different ways. With his hands clasped in prayer, the figure on the left leans forward as if to see Christ more clearly. His lance identifies him as Longinus, the visually impaired soldier who pierced Jesus's side and whose vision, according to one legend, was miraculously restored when the blood and water flowing from Christ's wound fell upon his eyes.<sup>[3]</sup> The other equestrian is the Good Centurion who recognized Christ's divinity at his crucifixion despite his debased appearance, exclaiming: "Truly this man was the Son of God."<sup>[4]</sup> With his hand placed over his heart, this figure's gesture suggests that his belief must come from within. At the foot of the

cross, Mary Magdalene caresses Christ's feet as she grieves, while next to her the young Saint John weeps visibly as he stares adoringly at the Savior. In the left foreground, a group of lamenting women in vibrantly colored mantles surrounds the Virgin Mary, who has collapsed at the sight of her son's lifeless body. To the right of these women, three soldiers grapple over Christ's blue garment. The Gospel of John states that upon discovering that Jesus's tunic was woven without a seam (and thus expensive), the soldiers decided to choose a new owner according to lot, rather than cut it into shares.[5] As was common in Tuscan crucifixion scenes from this time, the soldiers draw straws rather than cast dice.[6]

Between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, Christ is said to have descended into the realm of the dead where he liberated the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets. This event, known as the Descent into Limbo, is represented on the right wing of the triptych. The story is not recorded in the canonical Gospels, but comes instead from the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, the contents of which were widely disseminated throughout medieval Europe.[7] In Andrea's interpretation, Christ the Redeemer has descended victoriously into hell, where he has demolished the gateway and crushed the devil beneath it, visualizing the words inscribed on the banner held by God the Father, who floats overhead: "Destruxit quidam portes inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli" (He has destroyed the shades of hell, and has overthrown the powers of the devil).[8] The painting also reaffirms an article of the Apostles' Creed ("he descended into hell"). Here—at the very edge of the underworld (*limbus patrum*)—the righteous who lived before Christ kneel in a cavern. Foremost among these figures is Adam, with his long, white beard, followed by Eve, and then King David (holding a psaltery). On the far right is Saint John the Baptist with his scroll saying "Ecce Agnus [Dei]" (Behold the Lamb of God). Having overcome death, Christ appears in a transformed state indicated not only by his lustrous mantle and the golden rays emanating from his body, but also by the reactions of Limbo's inhabitants: several figures shade their eyes from Christ's radiance. With the standard of victory in his left hand, Jesus reaches forward with his right to grasp hold of Adam in a gesture reminiscent of the one he performs on the triptych's left wing, where he clutches Saint Peter's hand.[9] The formal correspondence between these scenes underscores a causal relationship between the two events, for while Christ submitted himself to God's will in the garden at Gethsemane, the result of his obedience (i.e., his triumph over death) is conveyed in the harrowing of hell.[10] In both scenes, the action of lifting up those overcome by sorrow and regret stresses the charity of Christ.

The sophisticated compositional organization, brilliant, jewel-like colors, and luxuriously textured patterns of Andrea's paintings exemplify a skillful conflation of elements derived from the previous generation of Sienese painters, particularly Simone Martini (Sienese, active from 1315; died 1344) and the Lorenzetti brothers. The exquisite miniaturist quality of execution and glowing palette recall the works of Simone, as do some of the figure types Andrea employed in the Crucifixion scene. The recumbent form of the Virgin Mary and her attendants, for example, are comparable to those in the Crucifixion panel [fig. 1] of Simone's Orsini Polyptych in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp, as is the figure of Andrea's Christ, whose proportions and knobby knees also appear dependent on the prototype. Despite that, the heavy, robust forms and simplified contours of Andrea's other figures mark a departure from the art of Simone and reveal the impact of the Lorenzetti. The voluminous mantle and lost profile of the Magdalene, for example, resemble the same figure in *Pietro Lorenzetti's* small *Crucifixion* [fig. 2] at the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Siena (inv. no. 147), as does the pose of Saint John the Evangelist. Also reminiscent of Pietro's art is Andrea's inclusion of provocative anecdotal details, dynamic use of space, and construction of depth. Despite the flattening effect of the gilded background, Andrea succeeded in creating a convincing spatial setting defined by the overlapping of figures and rocky landscape that not only diminish in scale but also darken as they recede.[11] The result is a narrative vivacity combined with an intimate expressive force.

The putative Neapolitan provenance of the Gallery's triptych has led several scholars to suggest that it was produced *in situ* while the artist was acting as an emissary to the city.[12] As explained in his *biography*, Andrea undertook lengthy diplomatic missions to Avignon, Rome, and elsewhere on behalf of the Republic of Siena, and he is documented in Naples between 1383 and 1385.[13] It is to this period that scholars routinely assign the triptych.[14] And yet, Andrea is believed to have traveled to Naples on other occasions and it is just as plausible that he completed the altarpiece during one or several undocumented visits.[15] Alternatively, he could have produced the work in Siena and exported it to a distant patron. For these reasons, a definitive date of execution and place of origin for the altarpiece have yet to be determined.

Equally problematic for the study of the panels is the question of whether they were originally intended to form a portable altarpiece or if they were once part of a larger, stationary polyptych. The panels clearly belong together, but technical analysis has revealed conflicting evidence, suggesting that they may not have

always been arranged in the present configuration. The most perplexing incongruity concerns the presence of four large dowel holes along the lateral edges of the central panel as well as a punched decorative pattern on its reverse, now hidden beneath a layer of gesso. Neither of the side panels contains traces of corresponding joinery and no punchwork has been detected on their backs. These observations present more problems than solutions, for the evidence of dowel joints in the central panel indicates that at one time this painting might have been immovably attached to adjacent panels or a larger framing structure. However, it is entirely possible that the *Crucifixion* was painted on a reused plank that had been prepared for another commission or that the side panels were originally wider and included portions containing dowel joints that were subsequently cut off.[16] The spacing of the dowel holes is also unusual, as they are not located at equal distances from the top and bottom edges of the panel, as one would expect. In fact, the close proximity of the upper dowel holes to the top of the panel implies that the painting originally may have been taller and included an upper register.[17] This could strengthen the idea that the central panel was originally part of a different altarpiece configuration and was repurposed for this triptych. Apart from the modern hinges, all three panels reveal additional indications of what might be traces of an earlier means of attachment, but it remains to be determined whether they are in fact vestiges of a previous joining mechanism.[18]

If the panels contributed to a stationary polyptych, then their rectangular shape suggests that they were located along the ensemble's lower register and presumably with other, as of yet unidentified, paintings of Christ's Passion. The strongest evidence against this scenario lies in the presence of decoration on the back of the central panel. In the later fourteenth century, most large, double-sided altarpieces consisted of separate panels for the front and back.[19] If Andrea's paintings were components of such an altarpiece, they would have been installed into a larger, thicker framework that would have concealed their reverses. It seems more likely that the paintings contributed to an altarpiece of modest dimensions intended for a side altar or domestic setting in which the decoration on the central panel's reverse could be admired. The precise size of this hypothetical altarpiece and the means by which its panels were attached remain open questions.

Among the various works attributed to Vanni or his followers, Bernard Berenson associated the Gallery's triptych with two small panels: the *Resurrection*, formerly in the Ingenheim Collection, and the *Ascension* in the State Hermitage Museum at St. Petersburg [fig. 3] [fig. 4].[20] As Federico Zeri first noted, the two panels share

similar dimensions, ornamental motifs, and arched formats.[21] It is safe to assume that they were components of the same altarpiece, but one unrelated to the Gallery's triptych. Close scrutiny has revealed that the tooled and punched designs of the halos as well as the raised gesso or *pastiglia* ornaments in the pointed arches and cusping of the ex-Ingenheim and Hermitage paintings are markedly different from those found in the spandrels of the Gallery's panels. These discrepancies militate against correlating the triptych with the *Resurrection* and *Ascension*. [22]

Since it was first published, the triptych has been considered the artist's only remaining signed work.[23] Inscribed freehand on the bottom edge of central panel's engaged frame is "ANDREAS VANNIS DE SENIS ME PINXIT" (Andrea Vanni of Siena painted me). Several of the letters have been repaired with new gilding and the blue paint has been reinforced at least twice, but the signature appears legitimate. Nevertheless, the inscription once may have contained other information for the decorative pattern that brackets the signature has been reworked and the location of the inscription appears decidedly off-center. Moreover, a significant space to the right of "PINXIT" is filled with an unusual motif that occurs nowhere else on the frame. Given the consistency of the frame's ornamentation, one can only speculate why this highly abstracted motif was incorporated, but it may supplant letters that had become illegible. The space is not large enough to have recorded the date of execution, but it may have contained a modifier such as the supplication "AMENA," which concludes the inscription adorning the polygonal base of *Lippo Memmi's Madonna dei Raccomandati* at Orvieto Cathedral.[24]

What is beyond speculation is the supremely high quality of the triptych. The deep, saturated hues of red, yellow, and blue create rhythmic alternations of color that play against the gold backgrounds and halos to animate the scenes. Such dazzling effects are carried over into the patterns decorating the soldiers' armor and the mantle of the Pharisee in the Crucifixion scene, as well as Christ's garment in the Descent into Limbo, which are executed in sgraffito, a technique that mimics the effects of brocade by scraping away areas of paint laid over gold leaf and tooled with patterned punches. The elaborate costumes join the carefully diversified facial features and body movements to communicate the narrative in a concise but vivid manner. Andrea di Vanni is often regarded as lacking the skill and sophistication of his great predecessors, but the refined execution, balanced organization of complex iconographic elements, and compelling depiction of human emotion that

characterize the Gallery's triptych should prompt a revision of his stature.

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**COMPARATIVE FIGURES**



**fig. 1** Simone Martini, *Crucifixion* (from the Orsini Polyptych), c. 1335, tempera on panel, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Antwerp



**fig. 2** Pietro Lorenzetti, *Crucifixion*, c. 1325–1326, tempera on panel, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena



**fig. 3** Andrea di Vanni, *Ascension*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Gift of the heirs of Count G. S. Stroganov, 1911



**fig. 4** Andrea di Vanni, *Resurrection*, c. 1380s, tempera on panel, location unknown, formerly in the Ingenheim collection

**NOTES**

- [1] Matthew 26:39. Gertrud Schiller notes that the chalice was an Old Testament symbol of divine wrath, but since it is tied to the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper it may also be considered the cup of Christ's

sacrifice. See Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art*, trans. Janet Seligman, 2 vols. (Greenwich, 1971–1972), 2(1972): 48, 51; as well as Victor Schmidt, unpublished article written for the Corcoran Gallery of Art, September 11, 1995, in the NGA curatorial files.

- [2] Luke 22:44: “In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.”
- [3] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:184.
- [4] Matthew 27:54; Mark 15:39.
- [5] John 19:23–24. In his *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, Saint Augustine interpreted the casting of lots as a positive act, for it was by way of lots, the traditional means by which one invoked a decision from God, that the seamless garment of Christ remained undivided. Likewise, it was by the will of God that the Church remained undivided. Saint Augustine, *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, trans. John W. Rettig, 5 vols. (Washington, DC, 1988–1995), 5:42–43 (tractate 118). The Bible does not reveal the winner of the garment. According to *The Golden Legend*, Pontius Pilate gained possession of the seamless tunic and wore it before Tiberius to subdue the Emperor’s wrath when the Emperor learned that Pilate had unjustly condemned Jesus. See Jacopo de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 1:212–213. Lynette Muir has noted several Passion plays from Northern Europe that mention Pilate as the winner of Christ’s garment. See Lynette Muir, *The Biblical Drama of Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1995), 254 n. 54. The mystery surrounding the outcome of the event has led to the discovery of several seamless garments over the centuries. The Holy Robe at the cathedral of Trier in Germany is considered the most authentic; however, at least five cities claim to possess the original. See Franz Ronig, *Trier Cathedral*, trans. M. Maxwell, 4th ed. (Trier, 1986), 14, 26, 29–30, 32; and Friedrich Lauchert, “Holy Coat,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York, 1907–1913), 7(1910): 400–402.
- [6] A few other examples include Andrea da Firenze’s fresco of the Crucifixion (1365–1367) in the Spanish Chapel at the Florentine church of Santa Maria Novella, the Crucifixion fresco (c. 1340) by “Barna da Siena” in the collegiate church of San Gimignano, *Andrea di Bartolo’s* painting of the Crucifixion (late 14th century) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Crucifixion scene (c. 1390) by *Agnolo Gaddi* at the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, and *Jacopo di Cione’s* Crucifixion panel (1369–1370) at the National Gallery, London.
- [7] See George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (New York, 1954), 153–154; and Gertrud Schiller, *Iconographie der christlichen Kunst*, 6 vols. (Gütersloh, 1966–1990), 3(1971): 56–66.

- [8] Like the image, the phrase celebrates Christ's triumph, but the particular wording is nearly identical to one of the responses performed during Tenebrae on Holy Saturday: *Destruxit quidem claustra inferni et subvertit potentias diaboli* (He has destroyed the gates of hell and has overthrown the powers of the devil). Tenebrae (meaning "shadows" or "darkness") is a ceremony performed during the last three days of Holy Week to commemorate the death of Jesus. The structure of the ceremony is the same on all three days, but on Good Friday the service includes a gradual extinguishing of candles while a series of psalms and readings are chanted. On Saturday, the ceremony is conducted entirely in darkness with the exception of a single candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. The incorporation of a phrase drawn from the responsorial for one of the most important commemorative services celebrated during Holy Week could operate as an additional means by which the artist sought to bring sacred past into the devotional present for the viewers of his painting.
- [9] A detail noted by Victor M. Schmidt, *Painted Piety: Panel Paintings for Personal Devotion in Tuscany, 1250–1400* (Florence, 2005), 193.
- [10] Cf. Thomas Fletcher Worthen, *The Harrowing of Hell in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1981), 387 n. 31.
- [11] This technique was recommended by Cennino Cennini and frequently practiced by Trecento painters. See Cennino Cennini, *Il libro dell'arte*, ed. Fabio Frezzato (Vicenza, 2003), chap. LXXXV, 127; and Miklós Boskovits in this catalog, entry for Jacopo di Cione's *Madonna and Child with God the Father Blessing and Angels*, note 23.
- [12] According to David Alan Brown, a note in the Fototeca Berenson at the Villa I Tatti, Florence, records that the pictures belonged to Count Carlo Zezza, who obtained it from wife, a member of the Naples branch of the Medici family. However, the Zezza provenance is not confirmed. See David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 36.
- [13] See Gaetano Milanese, *Documenti per la storia dell'arte senese*, 3 vols. (Siena, 1854–1856), 1(1854): 295–302; and Scipione Borghesi and Luciano Banchi, *Nuovi documenti per la storia dell'arte senese* (Siena, 1898), 54–55.
- [14] A notable exception is Valerie Linda Wainwright, who dates the triptych to c. 1360–1370. See Valerie Linda Wainwright, *Andrea Vanni and Bartolo di Fredi: Sienese Painters in Their Social Context* (PhD diss., University of London, University College, 1978), 156.
- [15] Cf. Andrea Costa, *Rammemorazione storica dell'effigie di Santa Maria di Casaluca* (Naples, 1709), 172; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana*

(Rome, 1969), 325–326; and Enzo Carli, *La pittura senese del Trecento* (Milan, 1981), 246.

- [16] Unlike the lateral panels, the central panel also has a slight concave warp which is unusual. As Joanna Dunn has observed, if the panel was repurposed, its former arrangement and function could have induced the warping as well as account for the punchwork on its reverse. See Dunn's examination report dated December 21, 2015 in the NGA conservation files, where she also mentions the possibility of each side panel originally including two scenes of equal width.
- [17] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [18] Joanna Dunn, examination report dated December 21, 2015, in the NGA conservation files.
- [19] See Julian Gardner, "Fronts and Backs: Setting and Structure," in *La pittura nel XIV e XV secolo, il contributo dell'analisi tecnica alla storia dell'arte*, eds. Hendrik W. van Os and J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer (Bologna, 1983), 297–322.
- [20] Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools*, 3 vols. (London, 1968), 1:442. The current location of the *Resurrection* is unknown. It was sold on July 22, 1981 at the Neumeister, Münchener Kunstauktionhaus, sale 203, lot 749. Other scholars who attribute the *Resurrection* to Andrea di Vanni include Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte* 46, no. 3 (1961): repro. 221, 225; Ferdinando Bologna, *I pittori alla corte angioina di Napoli, 1266–1414, e un riesame dell'arte nell'età fridericiana* (Rome, 1969), 325–326; and David Alan Brown, "Andrea Vanni in the Corcoran Gallery," in *The William A. Corcoran Collection: An Exhibition Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Installation of the Clark Collection at the Corcoran Gallery of Art* (Washington, DC, 1978), 34. The *Ascension* once belonged to Count Gregory Stroganoff in Rome and has been variously attributed to Andrea, to one of his followers, and to Bartolo di Fredi. Cf. Antonio Muñoz, *Pièces de choix de la collection du Comte Grégoire Stroganoff à Rome*, 2 vols. (Rome, 1912), 2: 11; Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, vol. 2, *The Sienese School of the 14th Century* (The Hague, 1924), 504–505 n. 1; Bernard Berenson, "Quadri senza casa. II Trecento senese, 1," *Dedalo* 11 (1930–1931): 274; Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death* (Princeton, 1951), 31; Viktor Nikiti Lazarev, *Proischozhenie italjanskogo vozrozhdenija*, vol. 2, *Iskusstvo treento* (Moscow, 1959), 289–290, n. 283; Zeri (1961): repro. 221, 223–226; and Svetlana Vsevolozhskaya and Albert Kostenevich, *The Hermitage: Italian Paintings* (Leningrad, 1984), 227.
- [21] Federico Zeri, "Appunti nell'Ermitage e nel Museo Pusckin," *Bollettino d'arte*

46, no. 3 (1961): 223–226.

- [22] Laurence Kanter has suggested that the ex-Ingeneim and Hermitage panels are from an entirely different period in the artist's career. Communicated in an email dated October 21, 2015, in the NGA curatorial files.
- [23] F. Mason Perkins, "A Triptych by Andrea Vanni," *Art in America* 9 (1921): 186.
- [24] For the inscription on Lippo's painting see Michael Mallory, "Thoughts Concerning the Master of the Glorification of St. Thomas," *The Art Bulletin* 57 (1975): 17 n. 26; and Bonnie Apgar Bennett, *Lippo Memmi, Simone Martini's "fratello in arte": The Image Revealed by His Documented Works* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1977), 17, 105–107, 124 n. 21.
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## TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This panel is the right-hand part of a triptych that also includes *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Agony in the Garden* [left panel] and *Scenes from the Passion of Christ: The Crucifixion* [middle panel]. Each panel is made from a single board with a vertical grain. Each side panel is attached to the center panel with two modern butt hinges. The original means of attachment is unknown, but x-radiographs reveal holes that may be evidence of prior dowels or hinges along both edges of *The Crucifixion*, the right edge of the *The Agony*, and the left edge of *The Descent*. The x-radiographs also show four long dowel shapes in the center panel that do not have counterparts in the side panels. These may be evidence that the center panel was repurposed. Each of the three panels is bordered by an engaged frame composed of wood moldings adhered to the front of the panel.

The panels were prepared with gesso, and no fabric layer is visible in the x-radiographs. *Pastiglia* decoration forms a pointed arch with trefoil cusping on the tops of *The Agony* and *The Descent* and a cusped frieze along the top of *The Crucifixion*. The *pastiglia*, frames, and backgrounds are gilded and these gilded areas were prepared with a red bole. Punchwork was used to decorate the *pastiglia* and the figures' halos, garments, and mail. The gilded areas of the composition also bear decorative borders formed by punchwork. In addition, Christ's robe in *The Descent*, the robes of the two Pharisees in *The Crucifixion*, and the armor and mail of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion* are decorated with sgraffito. Silver gilding was used in the mail, armor, and shields of the soldiers in *The Crucifixion*.<sup>[1]</sup> There is a sgraffito design in blue paint in the flat part of the frame

with punchwork in the gold portion of the design. There is a signature in the sgraffito in the bottom of the center panel.

The painted areas of the composition were demarcated with incised lines. Infrared examination at 1.1 to 2.5 microns<sup>[2]</sup> reveals broadly brushed washes under the landscapes and fine lines marking the folds in the drapery of the kneeling Christ in *The Agony* and the Madonna in *The Crucifixion*, but no other underdrawing. The paint was applied in narrow, parallel strokes.

The backs of all three panels have been covered in white ground and painted in a faux finish resembling woodgrain. Modern wooden moldings have been attached to the backs of the panels to create engaged frames that resemble those on the front. The back of the center panel has a bumpy texture, as though particles were mixed into the ground. In contrast, the backs of the side panels are smooth. X-radiographs show a double row of circular punches forming a border in the center panel. These punches do not relate to the design on the front of the panels. X-ray fluorescence also detected silver on the back of the center panel,<sup>[3]</sup> indicating that originally it may have been silver gilt. In contrast, no punchwork or silver was found on the backs of the side panels. This further supports the idea that the center panel was repurposed.

There is a fairly thick layer of natural resin varnish on the front of the paintings. The frames on the fronts are covered with a layer of shellac, as are the entire backs of the paintings.

*The Crucifixion* panel has a slight concave warp, but both *The Agony* and *The Descent* remain in plane. There is a large knot in the wood that runs through the torchbearers and Judas in *The Agony*, and another in the foreground of *The Crucifixion* below the figure of Mary. The paint is in good condition with a minute craquelure pattern throughout. There are scattered, small losses and the paint has been reinforced in some areas. At least two generations of inpainting are visible with ultraviolet light. The most recent inpaint is very discrete, but the older inpaint was applied less carefully and blended onto the original. The gilding in the flats of the painting is in good condition, but in the area of the *pastiglia* there is a fair amount of shell gold restoration. The frame moldings have been regilded and the blue paint on the frames has been reinforced at least twice. Raking light also reveals another “S” between “DE” and “SENIS” and possibly two other letters at the end of the inscription. Also, the inscription is off-center and at the end of the signature is a three-centimeter-long area where the design differs from the circular

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design found in the rest of the border. It is unclear if the signature originally extended into this area or if the design change was added to center the signature. The varnish is somewhat glossy and has discolored slightly. It is also blanched in the darks, especially in the silver gilt areas of *The Crucifixion*.

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### TECHNICAL NOTES

- [1] The painting was analyzed while in the collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art. Gwen Manthey, "X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy Report," January 2012 in conservation department files.
  - [2] Infrared examination was performed with a Santa Barbara Focalplane InSb camera fitted with H, J, and K astronomy filters.
  - [3] X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy was performed by the NGA scientific research department (see forthcoming report in conservation files).
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### PROVENANCE

William Andrews Clark [1839-1925], New York, by 1919; bequest 1926 to the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington; acquired 2014 by the National Gallery of Art.

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### EXHIBITION HISTORY

1959 Loan Exhibition. Masterpieces of the Corcoran Gallery of Art: A Benefit Exhibition in Honor of the Gallery's Centenary, Wildenstein, New York, 1959, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

1978 The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1978, fig. 27.

2002 Antiquities to Impressionism: The William A. Clark Collection, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, 2001-2002, unnumbered catalogue, repro.

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# Concordance of Old – New Attributions

Attributions changed since publication by the National Gallery of Art of  
*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings* (Washington, DC, 1979).

Old Attribution	Accession Number	New Attribution
“Ugolino Lorenzetti”	1943.4.20	Bartolomeo Bulgarini
Byzantine Thirteenth Century	1949.71	Byzantine Thirteenth Century (possibly from Constantinople)
Byzantine Thirteenth century	1937.1.1	Byzantine Thirteenth Century (possibly from Constantinople)
Attributed to Bernardo Daddi c. 1335	1961.9.2	Bernardo Daddi c. 1320/1325
Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist	1952.5.68	Giovanni Baronzio
Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist	1939.1.131	Giovanni Baronzio
Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist	1943.4.45	Giovanni Baronzio
Follower of Cimabue	1937.1.2.a–c	Grifo di Tancredi
Orcagna and Jacopo di Cione	1952.5.18	Jacopo di Cione
Attributed to Martino di Bartolomeo di Biagio	1950.11.1.a–.c	Martino di Bartolomeo
Follower of Duccio di Buoninsegna	1961.9.77	Master of Città di Castello
Paolo Veneziano	1952.5.87	Master of the Washington Coronation
Workshop of Simone Martini	1952.5.23	Simone Martini
Workshop of Simone Martini	1952.5.24	Simone Martini

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Workshop of Simone Martini	1952.5.25	Simone Martini
Workshop of Simone Martini	952.5.26	Simone Martini
Attributed to Cimabue	1952.5.60	Tuscan Thirteenth Century

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# Concordance of Old – New Titles and Dates

Titles and / or dates changed since publication by the National Gallery of Art of  
*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings* (Washington, DC, 1979).

Artist*	Accession Number	Old Title	New Title
Andrea di Bartolo	1939.1.20.a,b	<i>Madonna and Child</i> (obverse); <i>The Crucifixion</i> (reverse) c. 1415	<i>Madonna of Humility, The Blessing</i> <i>Christ, Two Angels, and a Donor</i> (obverse); <i>Christ on the Cross</i> (reverse) c. 1380/1390
Andrea di Bartolo	1939.1.41	<i>The Presentation of the</i> <i>Virgin</i> c. 1400	<i>The Presentation of the Virgin in the</i> <i>Temple</i> c. 1400/1405
Andrea di Bartolo	1939.1.42	c. 1400 <i>The Nativity of the Virgin</i>	c. 1400/1405
Andrea di Bartolo	1939.1.43	<i>Joachim and the Beggars</i> c. 1400	<i>Joachim and Anna Giving Food to the</i> <i>Poor and Offerings to the Temple</i> c. 1400/1405
Bernardo Daddi	1937.1.3	<i>Saint Paul</i>	<i>Saint Paul and a Group of Worshippers</i>
Bernardo Daddi	1952.5.61	1330s <i>Madonna and Child with</i> <i>Saints and Angels</i>	c. 1345

Duccio di Buoninsegna	1937.1.8	1308/1311	1308–1311
<i>The Nativity with the Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel</i>			Note: The hyphen indicates that we know the painting was begun in 1308 and completed in 1311. The previously used slash indicates more uncertainty about the date of execution, that the painting was executed sometime between the two dates.
Duccio di Buoninsegna	1939.1.141	1308/1311	1308–1311
<i>The Calling of the Apostles Peter and Andrew</i>			See note above.
Paolo di Giovanni Fei	1961.9.4	<i>The Presentation of the Virgin</i> c. 1400	<i>The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple</i> 1398–1399
Paolo di Giovanni Fei	1961.9.71	<i>The Assumption of the Virgin</i> probably c. 1385	<i>The Assumption of the Virgin with Busts of the Archangel Gabriel and the Virgin of the Annunciation</i> c. 1400/1405
Agnolo Gaddi	1937.1.4.a–c	<i>Madonna Enthroned with Saints and Angels</i> 1380/1390	<i>Saint Andrew and Saint Benedict with the Archangel Gabriel</i> [left panel]; <i>Madonna and Child Enthroned with Twelve Angels, and with the Blessing Christ</i> [middle panel]; <i>Saint Bernard and Saint Catherine of Alexandria with the Virgin of the Annunciation</i> [right panel] shortly before 1387
Agnolo Gaddi	1939.1.203	<i>The Coronation of the Virgin</i> probably c. 1370	<i>The Coronation of the Virgin with Six Angels</i> c. 1390

Giotto <i>Madonna and Child</i>	1939.1.256 (cat. 17)	probably 1320/1330	c. 1310/1315
Lippo Memmi <i>Madonna and Child with Donor</i>	1937.1.11	probably c. 1335	1325/1330
Pietro Lorenzetti	1941.5.1.a–c	<i>Madonna and Child with Saint Mary Magdalene and Saint Catherine</i> c. 1330/1340	<i>Saint Mary Magdalene, with an Angel</i> [left panel]; <i>Madonna and Child, with the Blessing Christ</i> [middle panel]; <i>Saint Catherine of Alexandria, with an Angel</i> [right panel] probably 1340
Margaritone d'Arezzo	1952.5.12	<i>Madonna and Child Enthroned</i> c. 1270	<i>Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints</i> c. 1240/1245
Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes <i>The Mourning Madonna</i>			
Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes	1952.5.14	<i>Saint John the Evangelist</i> c. 1272	<i>The Mourning Saint John the Evangelist</i> c. 1270/1275
Master of Saint Francis <i>Saint James Minor</i>	1952.5.15	probably c. 1270/1280	c. 1272
Master of Saint Francis <i>Saint John the Evangelist</i>	1952.5.16	probably c. 1270/1280	c. 1272
Nardo di Cione	1939.1.261.a–c	<i>Madonna and Child with Saint Peter and Saint John the Evangelist</i> probably c. 1360	<i>Saint Peter</i> [left panel]; <i>Madonna and Child, with the Man of Sorrows</i> [middle panel]; <i>Saint John the Evangelist</i> [right panel] c. 1360

Paolo Veneziano <i>The Crucifixion</i>	1939.1.143	c. 1340	c. 1340/1345
Puccio di Simone and Allegretto Nuzi	1937.1.6.a–c	<i>Madonna Enthroned with Saints</i> c. 1354	<i>Saint Anthony Abbot</i> [left panel]; <i>Madonna and Child Enthroned with Four Saints and Eighteen Angels</i> [middle panel]; <i>Saint Venantius</i> [right panel] 1354
Simone Martini <i>The Angel of the Annunciation</i>	1939.1.216	c. 1333	c. 1330

\* *When title is unchanged, it is included in this column for purposes of clarity.*

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# *Concordance of Old – New Artist Names and Life Dates*

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Names and/or dates changed since publication by the National Gallery of Art of  
*Catalogue of the Italian Paintings* (Washington, DC, 1979).

<b>Old Name/Dates</b>	<b>New Name and/or Dates</b>
Duccio di Buoninsegna active from 1278; died 1318/1319	c. 1250/1255–1318/1319
Paolo di Giovanni Fei mentioned from 1369; died 1411	c. 1335/1345–1411
Agnolo Gaddi active from 1369; died 1396	c. 1350–1396
Giotto 1266/1267–1337	c. 1265–1337
Master of the Life of Saint John the Baptist active second quarter fourteenth century	Giovanni Baronzio active c. 1320–1350
Jacopo di Cione active 1368–1398	c. 1340–c. 1400?
Pietro Lorenzetti active possibly 1306–late 1340s; probably died 1348	active 1306–1345
Lorenzo Monaco c. 1370–1422/1424	c. 1370–c. 1425

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Editor's note: This bibliography was compiled by Miklós Boskovits in 2011. It has been updated by National Gallery of Art staff to include publications released from 2011–2015. Publications about Andrea di Vanni, whose *Scenes from the Passion of Christ* was acquired by the National Gallery of Art in 2014, have also been added.

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