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Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

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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 x 33.5 cm (32 7/16 x 13 3/16 in.)
framed: 90.8 x 40.6 x 6 cm (35 3/4 x 16 x 2 3/8 in.)
Samuel H. Kress Collection 1952.5.13

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

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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-Vavalà 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), [15] while the version of the same image now in the National Gallery of Art seems more closely comparable, both in elegance of proportions and

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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. [16] 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. [17] His style clearly differs from that of the Bolognese followers of Giunta Pisano, [18] 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. [19]

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]. [20] 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. [21]

Miklós Boskovits (1935–2011)

March 21, 2016

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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

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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

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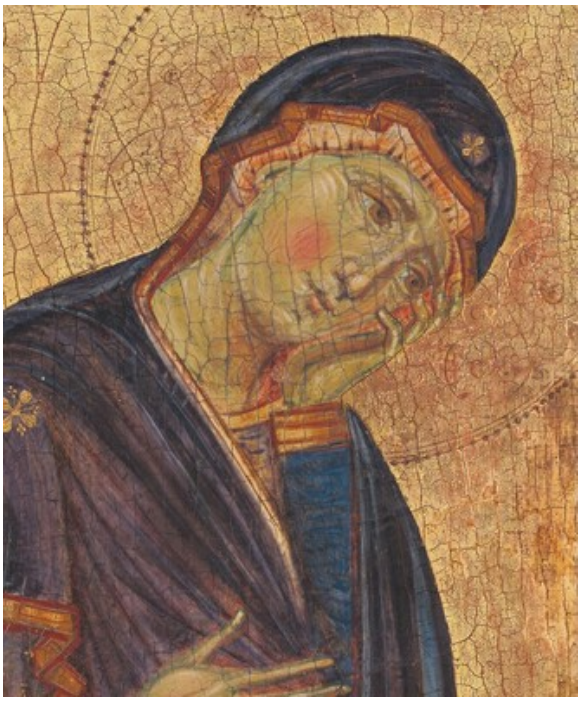

fig. 5 Detail, Master of the Franciscan Crucifixes, *The Mourning Madonna*, 1270/1275, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Samuel H. Kress Collection

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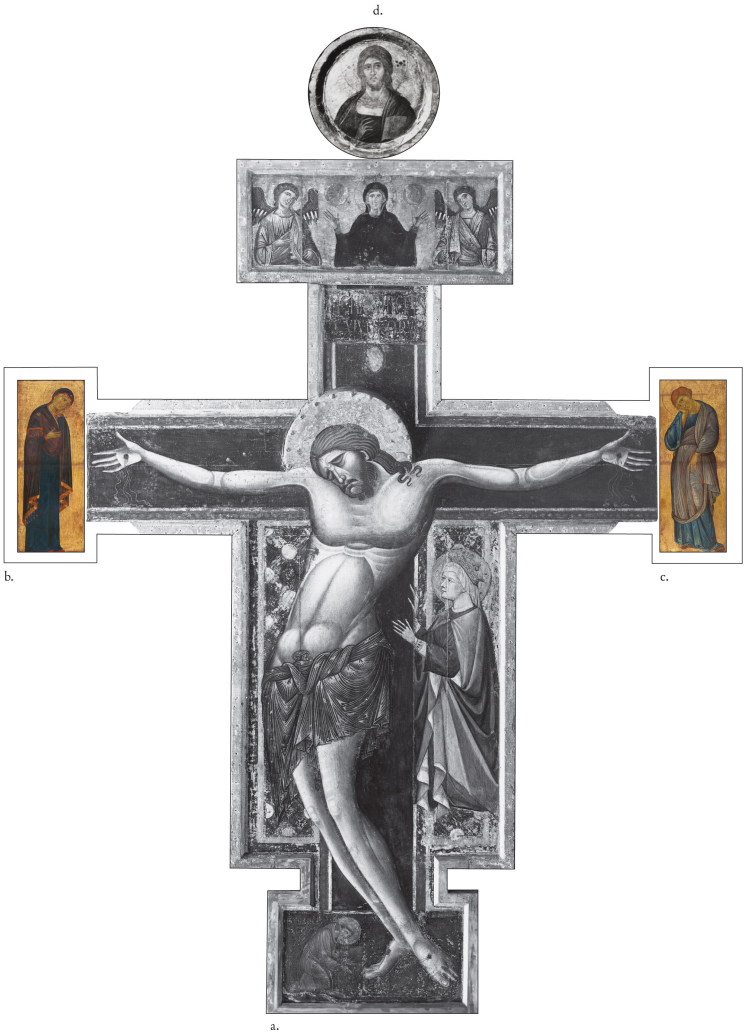
RECONSTRUCTION

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*

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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 Giottos Arenafresken: Farbgebung und Farbikonographie 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 Assis," 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*

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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 Burresi and Antonino Caleca suggested Giunta's authorship, though with a question mark and without mentioning the Washington panels. See Mariagiulia Burresi 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

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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

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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 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.

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. [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.

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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.

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.*

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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;[1] the Crucifix is known to have been in the Lombardi Malvezzi Chapel in that church in 1577,[2] 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);[3] purchased, probably in Italy, by Osvald Sirén [1879–1966], Stockholm, by 1922.[4] Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; purchased June 1943 by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[5] 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

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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:

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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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1946 Frankfurter, Alfred M. *Supplement to the Kress Collection in the National Gallery*. New York, 1946: 15, repro.

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1966 Shapley, Fern Rusk. *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools, XIII-XV Century*. London, 1966: 4, fig. 4.

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