NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART ONLINE EDITIONS
Italian Paintings of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

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: 63.5 × 38.1 × 9.21 cm (25 × 15 × 3 5/8 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

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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.

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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.

Miklós Boskovits (1935–2011)

March 21, 2016

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)

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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

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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

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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

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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

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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

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.

a. b. c. d.

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)

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a. b. c. d. e. f.

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)

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

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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

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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

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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.

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[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*

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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.

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

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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.

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.

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[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.

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;[1] probably privately owned in Perugia;[2] Anton de Waal [1837–1917], Rome;[3] probably (Paolo Paolini, Rome), by 1921;[4] Philip Lehman [1861–1947], New York, by 1928; sold June 1943 to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, New York;[5] 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 Dillan 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 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

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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) und 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

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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. See also The Kress Collection Digital Archive, https://kress.nga.gov/Detail/objects/1865.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

1946 Recent Additions to the Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1946, no. 811.

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