



Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels

Date

ca. 1510-1515

Primary Maker

Bernardino Fungai

Medium

tempera on wood

Description

Large round paintings of the Madonna with the Christ Child lying on the ground in front of his adoring mother or

standing by her side, accompanied by saints and angels, became popular in Tuscany in the late fifteenth century. Departing from this iconographic tradition, the infant Christ in Fungai's painting is carried by angels on a litter decorated with red and white roses, flowers sacred to the Virgin. This unusual motif is not merely decorative but also symbolic, representing the marriage of Christ, the bridegroom, with his bride, Mary-Ecclesia (the Church), who tenderly touches the chin of her beloved. Witnessing this union is Mary Magdalene, covered with the long hair she grew during her thirty years in the desert as a penitent. Four other saints known for their asceticism and retirement into the wilderness – John the Baptist, Jerome, Francis, and Christopher – also are depicted in the painting. The original location of the painting is unknown; however, the imagery suggests that it may have hung in a church associated with a convent in Siena or its environs.

Dimensions

Sight: 48 1/2 in. (123.2 cm) Framed: 66 1/2 x 66 1/2 x 5 1/2 in. (168.9 x 168.9 x 14 cm)