



The Holy Family with Saints Anne and John the Baptist

Date

1592

Primary Maker

Sofonisba Anguissola

Medium

oil on canvas

Description

It was only in 1580s, at a point when her reputation was well established, that Sofonisba Anguissola began to paint multi-figure religious themes such as the Lowe's Holy Family. In fact, this painting is one of the very few works to have survived from the last phase of her long and

prolific career as one of the first women painters in Italy. The Holy Family with Saints Anne and John the Baptist was painted in Genoa, where Anguissola settled when she returned from Spain where she had been an artist at the court of King Philip II. This intimate, candlelit scene depicts the Holy Family in their home in Nazareth. The Virgin Mary, St. Anne, and the infant Jesus are exchanging balls of yarn that have been wound on the metal yarn-winding device depicted behind the family's pet dog. The Baptist peers out from behind the table, while Joseph busies himself in the dark recesses of the room, faintly illuminated by the light of the oil lamp he is carrying.

Dimensions

Sight: 49 1/2 x 43 1/2 in. (125.7 x 110.5 cm) Framed: 61 x 52 in. (154.9 x 132.1 cm)