



The Crucifixion

Date

ca. 1330-1350

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

tempera on wood

Description

The Crucifixion is an unusually well-preserved example of the earliest form of panel painting in Italy. Following the tradition of Byzantine icons, the surface and the frame were carved from a single piece of wood, with the picture plane recessed and the original thickness of the wood forming a flat band around the perimeter. Originally, this small rectangular painting was connected by hinges with another panel, most likely depicting the Madonna and Child. The Crucifixion was a common subject in Byzantine and earlier medieval art, but the dramatic treatment of

the theme, as seen here, originated in the work of Giotto di Bondone (1266-1337). Giotto made the decisive break with Byzantine traditions, then dominant in Italian painting, by combining the expression of human feeling and character with a new attitude toward form in relation to the surrounding space. His stylistic innovations were influential for painters throughout Italy, but above all for the artists working in his native Florence. The unknown Florentine master who painted this Crucifixion belonged to the first generation of Giottesque painters.

Dimensions

Sight: 24 3/4 x 17 in. (62.9 x 43.2 cm) Framed: 28 1/2 x 20 1/2 x 3 in. (72.4 x 52.1 x 7.6 cm)