

18 The MASTER OF PANZANO

Siena, last quarter of the fourteenth century

Triptych

Left Wing, *Saints John and Francis; The Road to Calvary*, above
Centre, *The Virgin and Child with SS. Margaret, Catherine, Paul, Anthony Abbott, Lawrence, Peter, with four Angels; The Annunciation* in the tondos of the frame.

Right Wing, *Saint Nicholas and the Magdalen; The Crucifixion*, above.

Panels:

Left Wing: 55.8×18.6 cm.

Centre: 55.8×41.9 cm.

Right Wing: 55.8×19.1 cm.

Overall: 55.8×79.6 cm.

In 1930, Berenson removed a number of works from Paolo di Giovanni Fei's *œuvre* and by adding a further group of paintings identified the independent hand of a master who had painted a triptych of *The Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine with SS. Peter and Paul* in the Parish Church of San Leolino in Panzano, from which he took the name, Master of Panzano (c.f., Berenson, *Dedalo*, XI, 1930-31, p. 52 ff and *Homeless Paintings of the Renaissance*, London, 1969, pp. 43-46).

This artist was active during the last three decades of the fourteenth century, and all the paintings attributed to his hand show the same characteristics. When at his best, he owes an intense debt to both Luca di Tommè and to Paolo di Giovanni Fei, while some paintings, such as the panel mentioned by Berenson, whereabouts unknown (*op. cit.*, 1930-31, p. 359 or 1959, p. 45), the *Crucifixion* in the Accademia, Ravenna, (no. 192) and several works attributed to the artist by Zeri, including a triptych once attributed to Andrea di Bartolo (cf. *Italian Paintings in the Walters Art Gallery*, Baltimore, 1976, I, p. 48, no. 28) and three panels of St. Ranieri, St. John the Baptist and St. Michael in the Pisa Museum, all still show a conservative and rather rustic quality which derives from the artist's contact with the work of Bartolo di Fredi. These latter works probably stem from early in the artist's career.

A close comparison can be made between the Baltimore triptych (no. 37.728) and the exhibited triptych, which is particularly crowded with imagery, including a *Christ on the Road to Calvary* which is rarely represented in a *Maestà* triptych of this kind. One may also see both a pleasing intermixture of styles and the use which the artist has made of Lorenzetti and Simone Martini prototypes: the *Way to Calvary* derives from Pietro Lorenzetti, while the St. Paul draws on Ambrogio, and the paired saints in the wings reflect the ever present influence of Simone Martini.

A clue confirms what previous scholars, and particularly Zeri, have proposed regarding the period of activity of this rather humorous but graceful anonymous artist. A panel of the *Virgin with St. Ansano and St. Lawrence* in the Montalcino Museum, attributed to the Circle of Luca di Tommè, but clearly by the hand of the Master of Panzano, is dated 1382. (For a further discussion of works by this artist see also D. Boucher de Lapparent, 'Le Maître de Panzano,' *Revue du Louvre*, March 1978).

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