



Christ on the cross between the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist and five Angels

Artist	Master of the Magdalen active in Florence 1265–1295
Origin date	around 1280
Origin place	Florence
Material	wood
Technique	tempera
Sizes	magasság: 43 cm szélesség: 29,5 cm mélység: 4 cm
Inventory No.	55.133



Description

The oldest painting preserved in the Christian Museum still displays the features of the Italo-Byzantine style dominant in thirteenth-century Italy: symmetrically arranged, planar, stylized forms, sharp contours, and strong, expressive highlights. The depiction of the Saviour hanging on the blue cross evokes the painted crosses (croci dipinte) widely disseminated in the period. Above, two angels fluttering in flight mourn Christ, burying their faces in their hands in grief; below, three of their companions collect the redeeming blood streaming from the sacred wounds into narrow-necked vessels. The elongated proportions of Christ's body contrast with the stockier figures of the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Evangelist standing beneath the cross. The expressive gazes of the latter two figures, directed towards the viewer, call for compassio, a compassionate participation in Christ's suffering. The work, which recent scholarship regards as the right wing of a diptych, was produced in the workshop of the Master of the Magdalene Altar in Florence. This anonymous master, whose conventional name derives from the altarpiece preserved in the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, is one of the notable and much-debated figures of thirteenth-century Florentine painting. In his heterogeneous oeuvre, open to new artistic developments, many scholars in fact discern the hands of several masters, or the production of a workshop. (Sallay Dóra)

Provenance

Arnold Ipolyi's Purchase from the Ramboux estate in Cologne, 1867

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