



Adoration of the Magi

Artist	Lorenzo Veneziano documented 1356-1372
Origin date	middle of 14th century
Material	wood
Technique	tempera
Inventory No.	55.137



Description

The painting is pervaded by a dynamic sense of movement, further intensified by the diagonal axis of the rocky hillside. This diagonal is intersected by the group of the Holy Family, which is linked in a semicircular arc with the old Magus and the angels in the sky. The figure of the Child, appearing on the vertical axis of the composition, is also emphasized by the golden ray of light from the Star of Bethlehem. The painter, who is connected to Byzantine tradition chiefly through his colours and through the depiction of the setting and surroundings, already follows the iconography of Gothic art. According to this tradition, Saint Joseph also stands beside Mary, who presents her Child—no longer quite an infant—to the aged ruler. His companions and attendants marvel at the scene, while others observe it with curiosity. The different states of mind are reflected not only in the faces, but also permeate the gestures of the figures. This profound expressive power—which was to become one of the most characteristic features of Italian Trecento art—most clearly indicates the influence of Western Gothic art. The painter, who was not a Byzantine but a distinctly Trecento artist, probably worked in Venice; in nearby Padua he became acquainted with the art of Giotto and Giovanni Pisano, and may also have seen works by Tommaso da Modena and Vitale da Bologna. Integrating these new artistic influences organically, he nevertheless preserved the Byzantine pictorial type and certain Late Antique elements. (Prokopp Mária, 1993)

Provenance

Ipolyi collection

Restoration

1969 Varga Dezső

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