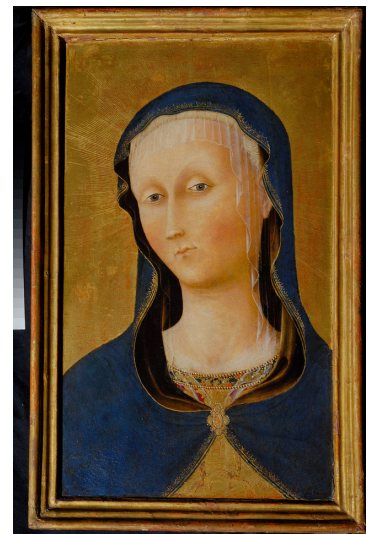




## Portrait of the Virgin

|                      |                                                            |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Artist</b>        | Pietro di Giovanni d'Ambrogio<br>Siena, 1410 – Siena, 1449 |
| <b>Origin date</b>   | around 1444                                                |
| <b>Origin place</b>  | Siena                                                      |
| <b>Type</b>          | painting                                                   |
| <b>Material</b>      | wood                                                       |
| <b>Technique</b>     | tempera                                                    |
| <b>Sizes</b>         | magasság: 47 cm<br>szélesség: 30 cm                        |
| <b>Inventory No.</b> | 55.186                                                     |



### Description

Pietro di Giovanni d'Ambrogio worked in Siena in the first half of the Quattrocento, under the influence of Sassetta, the greatest master of the period. Among his few known works, two are preserved in the Christian Museum. In this image of the Virgin, unusually, neither Mary's hands nor the Christ Child are visible; for this reason, the painting was long thought to be a fragment of a larger work. It has now been established, however, that its present form is original, and that it represents a rare iconographic type. Only one comparable example is known from early Italian painting, attributed to the circle of Lorenzo Monaco and now in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Such paintings should probably be understood as "authentic likenesses of Mary" and are closely connected with those cult images which, according to tradition, were painted of the Madonna by Saint Luke himself. On the reverse of the panel there is a painted imitation of a porphyry roundel set within a green marble frame. Purple porphyry was a symbol of rulership in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, and the decoration of the painting probably alludes to these princely associations. The fact that the panel is painted on both sides indicates that it served a portable function, and may perhaps have been used in processions.

Dóra Sallay, 2002

### Provenance

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

### Restoration

1929 Váli László

### Exhibitions

- 1930 Budapest, Múcsarnok "Őszi kiállítás"
- 1971 Budapest, Szépművészeti Múzeum "A középkor alkonya" [
- 2002 Köln, Kunstmesse

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d'Ambrogio's Painting in the Christian Museum of Esztergom." *Acta Historiae Artium* 39, 1997, 1-18.

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