



## Birth of Jesus

Two panel paintings from a small winged altarpiece

<b>Artist</b>	Circle of Wolf Traut (previously attributed to Hans Schäuafelin)
<b>Origin date</b>	after 1504
<b>Material</b>	wood
<b>Technique</b>	tempera,
<b>Sizes</b>	magasság: 27 cm szélesség: 15 cm
<b>Inventory No.</b>	56.559



### Description

The two small panels depicting the Birth of Jesus and the Circumcision presumably adorned the wings of a private altar showing scenes from the Infancy of Jesus. Visible all the way around both paintings are margins that indicate the location of the former frames. The original panels were thinned, or the presumably decorated versos of these wing panels were sawed off. When they were restored the panels were transferred to supports that were either new or in secondary use. At the top, both paintings have painted gold leaf and vine ornamentation forming arches decorated with Renaissance forms.

In the scene depicting Jesus' birth, the child lies naked on the ground in front of his mother. Kneeling with her hands clasped in prayer, Mary looks at her son. Joseph stands behind the child, leaning on a staff in his left hand and holding a lamp in his right. The heads of a donkey and ox appear above the barrier in the stone barn; behind the animals is a cursory landscape. Certain elements in the scene were inspired by Dürer's engraving (B 85) of the same theme from his series depicting the Life of Mary.

The earlier literature never questioned the authorship of Hans Schäuafelin, a follower of Dürer, (in fact the paintings were interpreted as the earliest works by the artist). However, Christoph Metzger, who wrote the most recent monograph on Schäuafelin, felt the palette and brushwork, the laconic backdrop, and the strict adherence to Dürer's engraving were not characteristic of the master. In his opinion, the panels now housed in Esztergom could not possibly have been made by Schäuafelin. Instead, he posited that certain details linked the works to those by Wolf Traut and his circle, in particular the high altar in Nuremberg's Church of St. John.

### Proveniencia

Ipolyi collection 243, 246. '243. Circumcision of Christ. Oil painting on a wood panel. The pendant of no. 246 (in chest X).' '246: Birth of Christ. Oil painting on a panel. In the style of 16th c. German masters. On an older slip with older writing: Albrecht Altdorfer.' Ipolyi bought the panel in 1873 in Augsburg.

### Kiállítások

- 2015 St. Pölten, Diözesanmuseum

### Bibliográfia

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(Sarkadi-Nagy)

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## Related works

56.560 The Circumcision of Christ - Two panel paintings from a small winged altarpiece

