



The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist

Date

ca. 1540-1550

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

oil on wood

Description

The devotional image of the Madonna and Child accompanied by John the Baptist, sometimes with Joseph or Saint Anne or both, was made popular at the beginning of the sixteenth century by High Renaissance masters Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael. Although employing the same imagery as High Renaissance painting, the Mannerist style of The Holy Family with the

Infant Saint John the Baptist locates the work somewhat later in the century. Typically, in a Mannerist painting such as this, the figures are elongated in a graceful manner and their bodies are twisted in a variety of contrapposto postures; they are arranged in an asymmetrical composition and compressed into a shallow space without a clearly defined setting. The unusual combination of intense colors (dark green, bright yellow, pink, and red) together with the unnaturally brilliant lighting further adds to the decorative character of this work, creating the visual effect of a hard, polished surface like that of a finely wrought piece of jewelry.

Dimensions

Sight: 48 3/8 x 36 3/4 in. (122.9 x 93.3 cm) Framed: 59 x 48 x 3 1/2 in. (149.9 x 121.9 x 8.9 cm)