

Bernardino Licinio

MADONNA AND CHILD *with Saint Francis* ca. 1540



Bernardino Licinio (1489-1565) painted this touching portrait of the Virgin Mary and Christ with Italy's beloved Saint Francis somewhere around 1540. Licinio was primarily a painter of religious themes and also of portraits. In fact, Licinio created many portraits of women that can still be found in collections around the world. Some are slightly shocking in their inclusion of frontal nudity, which would seem contradictory to the subject matter found here.



This work was recorded in the collection of Grand Duke Ferdinando de' Medici at the Pitti Palace in 1713 and then recorded at the Uffizi Gallery in 1769. Licinio is associated with the High Renaissance period in Italian art. He was born in Poscante near Bergamo in Italy's Lombardy region. In the style of his portraiture and in his use of color, one can see the influence of Titian. Here, he depicts the poignant interaction between Jesus and Saint Francis, who was revered for his love of peace and animals, and for the fact that he taught directly to poor and common people.

Madonna and Child with Saint Francis is obscured by yellowed varnish and there are remnants of areas that have been sloppily retouched. It will need to be cleaned and paint will need to be applied as a touch up and some spots will require putty infilling. The wooden support of the frame has been deformed due to damage by woodworms and so restoration would also involve de-infestation. The entire restoration will be photographed and documented.

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