CATALOGUE ENTRY

Madonna and Child with St. John the Baptist and St. Mary Magdalene

mid–1490s

Neroccio di Bartolommeo de' Landi

Italian, 1447–1500

egg tempera on poplar panel

27-3/4 × 20-11/16 in.

(70.5 × 52.5 cm)

The Clowes Collection

2004.161

Marks, Inscriptions, and Distinguishing Features

Inscription: On the scroll held by St. John the Baptist: “ECE…A” (abbreviation for “Ecce Agnus Dei,” or “Behold the Lamb of God”).

Distinguishing features: Two escutcheons in the spandrels in the upper corners. In the upper left: a lion, outlined in black and with its claws, tongue, and genitalia accented in red, standing on its hind legs and facing the right. In the upper right: a three-chevron design in alternating white (now darkened) and brown.

Entry

1 This intimate picture is dominated by the Virgin, who stands in the foreground at half-length before a pale blue sky. Her light blonde hair is covered by an elegant, translucent veil that frames her face and cascades down her shoulders. She is dressed in her typical blue cloak and red robe, both decorated with mordant gilding to imitate the effects of an embroidered gold hem. Her robe is fashionably slashed at the sleeves, revealing a white blouse beneath. The cloak, lined in green, loops down around her waist and up over her right arm, where it forms an extra support for the Christ child, who squirms in his mother’s grasp. He tilts his head and looks out of the picture, his attention captured by something at the left. The Virgin remains poised, undisturbed by her child’s actions; her attention is fixed outward, toward the viewer, with whom, almost, but not quite, she makes direct eye contact. She appears to be lost in thought, perhaps with the foreknowledge of her son’s death at the Crucifixion.

2 Two saints stand behind the Virgin and Child. To the left is Jesus’s cousin, John the Baptist, wearing an animal-skin shirt in reference to the years he spent living in the wilderness. Traditionally believed to be only slightly older than Christ, he is here depicted as a grown man, carrying a scroll with the phrase that he used to present Christ to the people: “Ecce Agnus Dei,” or “Behold the Lamb of God” (John 1:29). To the right is Mary Magdalene, wearing her customary red cloak and carrying her most common attribute, an ointment jar. Her light blonde hair is partially secured at the back by a hairnet rendered in mordant gilding. Each figure has a thin gold halo, and that of Christ is distinguished by its cruciform design.

3 Since the late nineteenth century, the painting has been unanimously attributed to Neroccio di Bartolommeo de' Landi, one of the foremost artists in Renaissance Siena.[1] Active as a painter, sculptor, and designer, Neroccio almost certainly began his career in the workshop of the painter-sculptor Lorenzo di Pietro, known as Vecchietta (1412–1480), the most important Sienese artist at mid-century. The earliest record of Neroccio’s artistic activity dates to 1461, when he was paid for unspecified work at Siena Cathedral; ten years later he was in a commercial alliance, described in a legal document as a “societatis in arte pictorum” (society in the painters' art), with another of Vecchietta’s pupils, the polymath Francesco di Giorgio Martini (1439–1501).[2] Though the partnership was fruitful—with Neroccio developing an elegant, linear style in dialogue with the elder Francesco’s example—it was dissolved in 1475, apparently with the two artists in conflict. Neroccio and his brother Pietro, a carpenter, inherited Vecchietta’s workshop in 1480, and from there, Neroccio and his team of assistants became prolific in both painting and sculpture.

4 In addition to devotional paintings and sculptures, Neroccio produced secular works, such as *Portrait of a Girl of the Bandini Family* (Washington, DC, National Gallery of Art), and home furnishings, such as *cassoni* (marriage chests), *spalliere* (wainscot panels), and at least one mirror frame (London, Victoria and Albert Museum). He also took on important civic commissions, such as *biccherne* (covers of the Sienese state’s account books) and designs for the famous *commessi* (marble pavements) in Siena Cathedral. His clients were primarily in Siena and its surrounding subject towns, but he also received work in Lucca, about 60 miles to the northwest.[3] Additionally, in 1481, his services were requested in Naples by Alfonso, Duke of Calabria (1448–1495).[4] When Neroccio died in 1500, he left behind a well-stocked workshop, the contents of which are meticulously described in a surviving inventory.

5 Though his most prestigious works were monumental altarpieces and sculptures, the bulk of Neroccio’s output consisted of works like the Clowes picture—small-scale devotional panels of the Madonna and Child. Nearly forty examples by the artist and his workshop survive.[5] One of the most popular forms of domestic decoration in Renaissance Italy, such images were extremely common in Siena, where their formats and compositions were standardized.[6] Painted on arched-top or rectangular panels inserted into tabernacle frames, they most often featured the Madonna and Child at half-length and placed close to the picture plane, a compositional choice designed to emphasize the holy figures' accessibility to the beholder. The two subjects were also typically accompanied by two or more secondary figures, angels and/or saints who served as intercessors and often offered a devotional model for the viewer. The backgrounds were either embellished with gold leaf or a simple, naturalistic blue sky, as here.

6 This formula first became popular in Siena in about 1440, in the workshop of one of Neroccio’s immediate predecessors, Sano di Pietro (1405–1481). It reached its apogee in the second half of the decade, when it was repeated en masse in the most important local workshops, namely those of Neroccio, Francesco di Giorgio, Matteo di Giovanni (about 1430–1497), Benvenuto di Giovanni (1436–after 1518), and Pietro di Francesco degli Orioli (1458–1496), among others. The ubiquity of such works in Siena can be linked to the Virgin’s status as the city’s protectress. According to a legend that was actively promoted in Neroccio’s lifetime, the Virgin’s divine intervention at the Battle of Montaperti in 1260 led the Sienese to victory over their Florentine enemies, thereby securing the city’s independence. The staunch retention of certain Marian compositions was therefore not only a testament to the city’s collective devotion to her, but also the result of the Sienese republic’s careful and concerted use of art to promote a sense of civic identity. Indeed, as the art historians Stephen J. Campbell and Stephen J. Milner have described, “Perhaps nowhere more vividly than in Siena [did] art operate as a powerful form of cultural self-definition.”[7] The Sienese consciously and consistently maintained the most popular iconographies and compositional schemes in the city, modifying them only slightly throughout the centuries to forge a unique and triumphantly local visual language. As the present panel attests, this tendency was in full force at the end of the fifteenth century and deeply informed Neroccio’s practice.

7 The Clowes panel exemplifies Neroccio’s outstanding ability to combine his city’s revered cultural heritage with some of the more recent artistic sources being imported to Siena in the late Quattrocento. In the sinuous and undulating line, the melodic gestures, and the Virgin’s transcendent, almost otherworldly beauty, the picture preserves the legacy of one of Neroccio’s most illustrious Sienese forebears, Simone Martini (active by 1314—died 1344). Esteemed during his lifetime as one of the greatest artists in Italy (if not all of Europe), Simone was responsible for many of the largest and most important public paintings in Siena. His works were thus a strong point of reflection for later generations of Sienese artists. Neroccio’s own response to Simone was so pronounced that the noted critic Bernard Berenson (1865–1959) characterized him as none other than “Simone come to life again.”[8] The lyrical and elegant Clowes Virgin, her cloak pulled modestly over her head, can be read in relation to one of the most famous altarpieces in Siena, Simone’s *Annunciation* (fig. 1), then in the apsidal area of the cathedral (now Florence, Gallerie degli Uffizi), which he completed in 1333 together with his brother-in-law Lippo Memmi (active by 1317—died 1356). At the same time, the Virgin’s tender yet presentational gesture, evocative of the Byzantine type known as the

Hodegetria (pointing Virgin), recalls an even earlier prototype: the *Madonna del Voto* or *Madonna delle Grazie*, a much-venerated thirteenth-century image in Siena Cathedral, the miraculous powers of which were thought to have aided in the Sienese victory at Montaperti.[9]

Figure 1: Simone Martini (active by 1314—died 1344) and Lippo Memmi (active by 1357—died 1356), *Annunciation with Saints Ansanus and Margaret* (detail), 1333, tempera and gold on panel, 184 × 168 cm, Galleria delle Statue e delle Pitture, Gallerie degli Uffizi, Florence.

8 The Clowes painting also registers a strong response to one of the most famous "foreign" artists active in Siena during the late fifteenth century: Luca Signorelli (active by 1470—died 1523). A native of nearby Cortona, Signorelli was active in Siena in about 1490, when he painted a monumental polyptych for the Bichi chapel in the church of Sant'Agostino. Now dismembered and dispersed among various collections, this altarpiece included two painted side panels and a predella, or base, as well as central niche housing a sculpture of St. Christopher executed by Francesco di Giorgio, Neroccio's former partner.[10] In the Clowes panel, the solid modeling of the figures is clearly engaged with Signorelli's example; the Magdalene, for instance, reinterprets the same figure in the left lateral of the Bichi altarpiece (fig. 2), while the vigorously drawn Christ child—his rotund and fleshy body rendered in strong, sculptural contrasts of light and dark—offers a parallel to the nudes in the two fragmentary panels that once formed the backdrop of the altarpiece's central niche (Toledo, Ohio, Museum of Art). Morphologically speaking, the child can also be compared with the infant in Signorelli's tondo at the Galleria Corsini in Florence and the now fragmentary *Madonna and Child* for the church of Santa Lucia in Montepulciano, not far from Siena. Both are roughly contemporary with the Bichi altarpiece.[11]

Figure 2: Luca Signorelli (Italian, active by 1470—died 1523), *Saints Eustochium, Mary Magdalene, and Jerome* (left lateral of the Bichi altarpiece), about 1490, oil on panel, 146.5 × 75.5 cm, Gemäldegalerie der Staatlichen Museen, Berlin.

9 The saturated palette of the Clowes painting, with the "bronze and reddish flesh tones and intense garment colors,"[12] is typical of Neroccio's late phase. It notably departs from the pale, pearlescent color scheme that he preferred in his earlier Madonnas, such as the one at the Pinacoteca in Siena, datable to about 1476 (fig. 3). Taken together with the painting's close stylistic similarities to Neroccio's altarpiece at the church of the Santissima Annunziata in Montisi, dated 1496, these features can be used to confirm the painting's date in the middle of the 1490s, toward the end of the artist's career.[13] A similar date can be applied to several other Madonnas that Neroccio must have also produced at about the same time: these include (but are not limited to) those at the Pinacoteca in Siena (fig. 4), the Palazzo Chigi-Saracini in Siena (fig. 5), and the Museo Horne in Florence (fig. 6). Though the Chigi-Saracini panel was perhaps realized with an assistant, it features a very similar Magdalen (albeit in reverse), a Christ child in an equally dynamic pose, and a Virgin who appears to caress the infant's chest with a similarly tender gesture. The Horne panel includes a Christ child similar to the one in the Clowes panel, but the more elastic and expressive types suggest an even later date in the final years of Neroccio's life.[14]

Figure 3: Neroccio (Italian, active in Siena, 1447–1500), *Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome and Bernardino of Siena*, about 1476, tempera and gold on panel, 98 × 52 cm (including original frame), Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.

Figure 4: Neroccio (Italian, active in Siena, 1447–1500), *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Andrew*, mid- to late 1490s, tempera on panel, 74 × 54 cm, Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena.

Figure 5: Neroccio (Italian, active in Siena, 1447–1500) and Workshop, *Madonna and Child with Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Siena*, mid-1490s, tempera on panel, 80 × 60.5 cm, Palazzo Chigi-Saracini, Siena.

Figure 6: Neroccio (Italian, active in Siena, 1447–1500), *Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome and Mary Magdalene*, mid- to late 1490s, tempera on panel, 71.5 × 51.5 cm, Museo Horne, Florence.

10 As its modest size indicates, the Clowes picture would have originally served as the focus for individual daily prayer, almost certainly in a home. The specific way in which it was intended to appeal to a devotee is indicated by some more peculiar aspects in the design, which become apparent when the panel is compared to the dozens of other examples that Neroccio produced throughout his career (see figs. 3–5).[15] For one, as usual with Neroccio's late works, the poses are far less hieratic than those in his earlier works of the 1470s; they are more relaxed and natural to promote a more intimate and empathetic relationship between the viewer and the Virgin and Child. In addition, the Christ child is depicted bald, an uncommon occurrence in Neroccio's oeuvre, where the infant is usually shown with a full head of blond hair.[16] Most interestingly, he is shown raising his leg, conspicuously revealing his genitals.[17] By depicting him in such a manner, Neroccio seems to be highlighting both Christ's humanity and the sanctity of his flesh. The painting therefore provides an allusion to the Eucharist—the blood and body of Christ—and consequently to Christ's role as redeemer. The artist thus imparts a strong Christological undertone to the traditional Marian image.

11 The painting's Christological message is further enhanced by the two saints. John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene were both early witnesses to Christ's divinity. As told in the New Testament, John baptized Christ in the River Jordan and predicted that he would one day spill his blood for the sake of humanity. His prophecies are plainly illustrated in the painting by the scroll—its message fragmented, inviting the viewer to mentally complete it—and by his foreboding gesture: he is pointing toward the infant, as if to keep the viewer's focus on Christ. The Magdalene, in turn, was not only one of Christ's earliest followers, she was also present at the Crucifixion and was the first to see him after his resurrection, having discovered his empty tomb on Easter morning. Even more, the Baptist and Magdalene were commonly venerated together during the Renaissance as penitential exemplars because of the popular legends claiming that both spent periods of time living as ascetics in the wilderness. The two were thus often depicted as a pair, especially in works intended to act as spiritually charged devotional aids, such as the panel in question.[18]

12 Like most Quattrocento devotional paintings intended for domestic settings, the Clowes picture is undocumented and its original owners hard to establish. The two saints should provide some clues, since they were customarily selected by the client. But in this case the widespread popularity of both the Baptist and Magdalene does not narrow the possibilities. Though direct evidence is ultimately lacking, it may nevertheless be worth considering more closely the figure of Mary Magdalene. As the only figure in the painting to lock eyes with the spectator, she is the one mediating the viewer's access to the divine.[19] She may have therefore held a particular significance to the one who commissioned the work. While the simplest explanation would be that she reflects the patron's name or birthday (i.e., that they were born on her feast day), the dedication of their family chapel, or their local church,[20] she could also indicate an affiliation with the Sienese political party known as the *Nove*. As Luke Syson has observed and Philippa Jackson has explored at length, the *Nove* and their supporters, or *noveschi*, were especially interested in fostering the cult of the Magdalene after their return from exile on her feast day in 1487.[21] They were especially involved with the monastery dedicated to her near the Porta Tufi, for which Neroccio had painted a monumental altarpiece (now lost) in 1484.[22] According to the contract, one of the nuns involved in this commission was the monastery's abbess, Bartolomea, and its payments were to be partly disbursed by her brother, Jacopo. Both belonged to the Bichi, the same *novesco* clan whose chapel in Sant'Agostino was decorated with Signorelli's altarpiece. In light of these connections, it is tempting to wonder if the Clowes panel, with its engaging figure of Mary Magdalene and marked response to Signorelli, could have been made for a *novesco* client, and if Neroccio's interactions with this clientele could underlie his close attention to Signorelli's work in the final decade of his career.

13 It might also be worth asking if the Clowes painting could have been made for a member of one of Siena's many lay confraternities. The pairing of John the Baptist and Mary Magdalene, while common, would no doubt have appealed to a member of a *disciplinati* or flagellant, confraternity. *Disciplinati* members were concerned primarily with practicing penance, so for them, the Baptist and Magdalene were particularly relevant devotional models. Furthermore, as Timothy Dickey has pointed out, the Sienese *disciplinati* followed St. Bernardino of Siena's example in using the Virgin as a vehicle in the meditation on Christ's suffering: "their confraternal songs [were] sung to the Virgin, but she serve[d] more as an aid to a personal visualizing of the suffering Christ."[23] This context could help to explain why, in the Clowes picture, Neroccio has enhanced and amplified the traditional Marian image with strong allusions to Christ's Passion.

14 Whatever the case, it is certain that the coats of arms (or *stemmi*, in Italian) decorating the upper corners of the painting are not original and have nothing to do with the patron. The escutcheons do not appear in the earliest known photograph of the picture, taken sometime before 1908, which instead shows a plain wooden spandrel decorated with two star-shaped wooden studs. Since this type of decoration is atypical of late fifteenth-century Sienese frames, it must have been added in the nineteenth century or earlier, probably when the original frame was removed and discarded.[24] The *stemmi* can consequently be dated to the early twentieth century. Although they have traditionally been identified as those of one of the noblest Sienese families, the Chigi-Saracini, they do not, in fact, correspond to that family's coat of arms, and they do not match the emblems the Chigi and Saracini individually carried before their intermarriage in the nineteenth century.[25] The painting was thus not necessarily commissioned by either family, despite previous assertions that they were the original owners.[26] As later additions to the picture, the emblems should be understood as rather generic neo-Renaissance symbols, most probably added by an early twentieth-century restorer or dealer seeking to provide the painting with the illusion of an illustrious provenance. This factor would have in turn made the painting more attractive to a foreign collector, aiding in its passage through the foreign market.

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Provenance

Probably Counts Chigi-Saracini, Siena, by 1819.[27]

László (Ladislaus) Károlyi, Budapest, by 1913.[28]

(E. and A. Silberman Galleries, New York);

G.H.A. Clowes, Indianapolis, by 1939;[29]

The Clowes Fund, Indianapolis, from 1958–2004, and on long-term loan to the Indianapolis Museum of Art since 1971 (C10058);

Given to the Indianapolis Museum of Art, now the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, in 2004 (2004.161).

Exhibitions

Szépművészéti Muzéum, Budapest, mid-to-late 1910s, on loan;[30]

World's Fair, New York, 1939, *Masterpieces of Art*, no. 265;

California Palace of the Legion of Honor and the M.H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, 1940, *Seven Centuries of Painting*, no. L-8;

John Herron Art Museum, Indianapolis, 1944, on loan;

The Spanish Institute, New York, 1955, *An Exhibition of Paintings for the Benefit of the Research Fund of Art and Archaeology*, no. 7;

John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis, 1959, *Paintings from the Collection of George Henry Alexander Clowes: A Memorial Exhibition*, no. 42;

The Art Gallery, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 1962, *A Lenten Exhibition*, no. 37;

Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, 1962, *Italian and Spanish Paintings from the Clowes Collection*, no. 8;

Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou, China; Hunan Museum, Changsha, China; Chengdu Museum; 2020—2021, *Rembrandt to Monet: 500 Years of European Painting.*

References

Galgano de' Saracini, *Relazione in compendio delle cose più notabili nel Palazzo e Galleria Saracini di Siena* (Siena: Palazzo Chigi Saracini, 1819), 66;

Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (New York and London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1897), 157;

William Heywood and Lucy Olcott, *Guide to Siena* (London: T.F. Unwin, 1903), 222—223;

Emil Jacobsen, *Das Quattrocento in Siena: Studien in der Gemäldegalerie der Akademie* (Strasbourg: J.H. Ed. Heitz, 1908), 83, pl. XLIX, fig. 2;

Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance*, 2nd ed. (New York and London: Putnam, 1909), 207;

Pietro Rossi, "Neroccio di Bartolommeo Landi e la sua più grande tavola," *Rassegna d'arte senese* 5 (1909): 30;

Mary Berenson Logan, "Madonne di Neroccio dei Landi," *Rassegna d'arte* 13 (1913): 73 (reproduced);

Luigi Dami, "Neroccio di Bartolommeo Landi," *Rassegna d'Arte* 13 (1913), 164 (reproduced fig. 14);

John Archer Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in Italy*, ed. Robert Langton Douglas and Tancred Borenius (London: John Murray, 1914), 5:159n6;

Casimir Chledowski, *Siena* (Berlin: B. Cassirer, 1923), 2:225;

William Heywood and Lucy Olcott, *Guide to Siena* (Siena: Libreria Editrice Siena, 1924), 251;

Paul Schubring. "Landi, Neroccio di Bartolomeo dei," in Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker, eds., *Allgemeines Lexicon der Bildenden Künstler von Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, 37 vols. (Leipzig: Seemann, 1907—1950), 22 (1928): 295;

Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 338—390;

Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del Rinascimento* (Milan: Hoepli, 1936), 335;

Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1923—1938), 16 (1937): 312;

George Henry McCall and Wilhelm Valentiner, *Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300—1800: Masterpieces of Art, New York World's Fair, May to October 1939*, exh. cat. (New York: Publishers Print Co., 1939), 128—129, no. 265 (reproduced);

Seven Centuries of Painting, exh. cat. (San Francisco: California Palace of the Legion of Honor and the M.H. De Young Memorial Museum, 1939), 30 (reproduced fig. L-8).

Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan: Hoepli, 1949), 272;

Edna Perkel, *An Exhibition of Paintings for the Benefit of the Research Fund of Art and Archaeology: The Spanish Institute, Inc., October 12 to November 1, 1955*, exh. cat. (New York: E. & A. Silberman Galleries, 1955): 19;

Paintings from the Collection of George Henry Alexander Clowes: A Memorial Exhibition, exh. cat. (Indianapolis: John Herron Art Museum, 1959), no. 42;

Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 103—104, 169—170 (reproduced fig. 87);

Mark Roskill, "Clowes Collection Catalogue" (unpublished typed manuscript, IMA Clowes Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN, 1968);

Anthony F. Janson and A. Ian Fraser, *100 Masterpieces of Painting: Indianapolis Museum of Art* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1980), 38—39 (reproduced);

Laurence Kanter in Keith Christiansen, Laurence B. Kanter, and Carl Brandon Strehlke, eds., *Painting in Renaissance Siena 1420—1500*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988), 334;

Genetta Gardner, "Landi (del Poggio), Neroccio (di Bartolommeo di Benedetto) de'," in Jan Turner, ed., *The Dictionary of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 18:98;

Joan M. Hartman, *Indianapolis Museum of Art: Highlights of the Collections* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Museum of Art, 2005), 91;

Luke Syson in Luciano Bellosi, ed., *La Collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV* (Florence: Centro di, 1988), 1:342;

Carlo Del Bravo, "Significati d'opere di Neroccio," *Artista* (2008): 32;

Stefano G. Casu, *The Pittas Collection: Early Italian Paintings (1200—1530)* (Florence: Mandragora, 2011), 174;

Kjell M. Wangensteen et al., *Rembrandt to Monet: 500 Years of European Painting* (Nanjing: Jiangsu Phoenix Literature and Art Publishing, 2020), 34—37 (reproduced);

Kjell M. Wangensteen et al., *Floating Lights and Shadows: 500 Years of European Painting* (Nanjing: Jiangsu Phoenix Literature and Art Publishing, 2020), 34—37 (reproduced).

Technical Notes and Condition

The painting is composed of a single, arched-top poplar panel that has a slight, convex warp. The spandrels are not original to the picture and were added at a later date, sometime after 1908. The panel retains its original thickness and, despite some insect damage, is in a generally good state. The paint surface is in a fairly good state, though there are some prominent losses (now filled) including an "X" shaped scratch extending across the Madonna's face and cheek, and a two-part loss in John the Baptist's hands. The Madonna's blue robe shows extensive losses and has darkened with age. In addition, most of the mordant gilding of the figures' halos, the Magdalen's hairnet and pyx, and the figures' garments has been lost, with the notable exception of the hems of the Virgin's red robe and most of the Christ child's halo. The contours of the Madonna and Child were incised into the gesso ground; the saints and the rest of the Madonna and Child were then drawn in with a fluid, liquid-based medium, some of which can be seen with the naked eye thanks to the artists' characteristic application of translucent paint layers. Pentimenti are visible in the contour of the Madonna's head, the child's proper left cheek, and his proper right index finger. That only the central figures were incised into the gesso ground suggests that they were begun first, perhaps even before the saints' identities were selected by the patron.

Notes

1. The attribution to Neroccio is due to Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1897), 157. The painting had earlier been assigned to Matteo di Giovanni; see Galgano de' Saracini, *Relazione in compendio delle cose più notabili nel Palazzo e Galleria Saracini di Siena* (Siena: Palazzo Chigi Saracini, 1819), 66. The authoritative work on Neroccio remains Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961). For the most recent biographical overview of the artist, see Dóra Sallay, C*orpus of Sienese Paintings in Hungary 1420—1510* (Florence: Centro Di, 2015), 178—179.

2. Max Seidel, "The 'Societas in arte pictorum' of Francesco di Giorgio and Neroccio de' Landi," in Max Seidel, ed., *Italian Art of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Venice: Marsilio, 2005), 537—558.

3. There has been much confusion about Neroccio's work in Lucca. It was long thought that he completed two works for the city: a large polychrome wooden sculpture, *Death and Assumption of the Virgin*, begun by Vecchietta in 1477 and completed by Neroccio in 1481 (now in a fragmentary state at Lucca, Museo Nazionale di Villa Guinigi); and a now-lost altarpiece of unknown subject, commissioned by Giannino Bernardi, abbot of San Salvatore a Sesto a Moriano, in 1481. A predella with Scenes from the Life of St. Benedict (Florence, Gallerie degli Uffizi, inv. 1890 no. 1602) has occasionally been identified as belonging to this last work. It has, however, recently been established that Neroccio made only one work for Lucca, and the Bernardi commission is actually the *Death and Assumption of the Virgin* begun by Vecchietta. Bernardi commissioned this work for the high altar of Santa Maria del Corso in the Lucchese environs. For further information, see Francesco Caglioti, "Il Vecchietta, Neroccio e l'*Assunta* per l'altar maggiore di Sana Maria del Corso a Lucca," *Studi di Memofonte* 20 (2018): 1—44.

4. Neroccio's work for the duke is now lost. For the documents, see Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 144—145.

5. In addition to the 32 examples catalogued in Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), see the panels in Chambéry (Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. D.81-1-5), Dijon (Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. 4028), Limassol (Pittas Collection), and formerly London (art market; photo: Fototeca Zeri, no. 44611).

6. Luke Syson, "Modernising the Tradition," in Luke Syson, ed., *Renaissance Siena: Art for a City* (London: National Gallery, 2007), 106—107.

7. Stephen J. Campbell and Stephen J. Milner, "Art, Identity, and Cultural Translation in Renaissance Italy," in Stephen J. Campbell and Stephen J. Milner, eds., *Artistic Exchange and Cultural Translation in the Italian Renaissance City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5. For further information, see Keith Christiansen, Laurence B. Kanter, and Carl Brandon Strehlke, eds., *Painting in Renaissance Siena 1420—1500* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988); Luke Syson, ed., *Renaissance Siena: Art for a City* (London: National Gallery, 2007); and Gabriele Fattorini, "La lezione trecentesca e le immagini dell'identità civica," in Max Seidel, ed., *Da Jacopo della Quercia a Donatello* (Milan: Motta, 2010), 142—147.

8. Bernard Berenson, *The Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (London: G. P. Putnam's, 1909), 55—56.

9. Luke Syson, "Stylistic Choices," in Luke Syson, ed., *Renaissance Siena: Art for a City* (London: National Gallery, 2007), 53.

10. On the Bichi altarpiece, see Luke Syson in Luke Syson, ed., *Renaissance Siena: Art for a City* (London: National Gallery, 2007), 222—225.

11. For these works, see Thomas Henry and Laurence Kanter, *Luca Signorelli: The Complete Paintings* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2002), 181—182, 187.

12. Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 103.

13. The painting was dated between 1492 and 1500 by both Luigi Dami, "Neroccio di Bartolommeo Landi," *Rassegna d'Arte* 13 (1913): 164, and Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1923—1938), 16 (1937): 312. Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan: Hoepli, 1949), 272, narrowed the date to about 1496 because of the similarities to the Montisi altarpiece.

14. For the Chigi-Saracini and Horne paintings, see Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 105—106, 166, and 180.

15. On Neroccio's devotional imagery and his approach to iconography, see Carlo Del Bravo, "Significati d'opere di Neroccio," *Artista* (2008): 28—33.

16. The child's unusual baldness was first pointed out by Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447—1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 103. The only other bald Christ child by Neroccio that I have been able to find is in the *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Jerome* (Gazzada Schianno, Villa Cagnola), which is roughly contemporary with the Clowes picture. The Cagnola painting is much abraded, and it seems the child may once have had tufts of hair that have since disappeared.

17. A modified version of the pose recurs in the *Madonna and Child with Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Siena* (see fig. 5). There the child seems to be climbing into his mother's arms, and his genitals are less visible.

18. For other pairings of the two saints in Siena, see the panels by Neroccio and his workshop (Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, inv. ABM s21) or Bernardino Fungai (Siena, Pinacoteca, inv. 375). For a pairing in 1490s Florence, see Filippino Lippi's Valori altarpiece for San Procolo (central panel formerly Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum, inv. 96, destroyed 1945; side panels now Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia, inv. 1890 nos. 8651, 8653). For one in 1490s Lucca, see Sano Ciampanti's so-called Heim altarpiece (sold, Sotheby's, London, 8 December 1993, lot 5).

19. The design of the Magdalene in the Clowes panel was reused in the *Madonna and Child with Saints Sebastian and Catherine of Alexandria* by Neroccio's workshop (Frankfurt, Städel Museum, inv. 1007). In that painting she looks absentmindedly out of the picture field, and it is the Virgin who makes eye contact with the viewer. This difference suggests her engagement with the viewer of the Clowes panel is deliberate.

20. In addition to the monastery of Santa Maria Maddalena near the Porta Tufi, discussed below, there was also the hospital church of Santa Maria Maddalena near the Porta Romana, which belonged to the Cistercians in the fifteenth century and is now destroyed.

21. Syson made the observation specifically in relation to Neroccio's *Madonna and Child with Saints Paul and Mary Magdalen* (Siena, Castello di Gallico, Salini Collection), where the Magdalene also flanks the Virgin and Child and looks out at the viewer; see Luke Syson in Luke Syson, ed., *Renaissance Siena: Art for a City*, exh. cat. (London: National Gallery, 2007), 122; and Luke Syson in Luciano Bellosi, ed., *La Collezione Salini: Dipinti, sculture e oreficerie dei secoli XII, XIII, XIV e XV* (Florence: Centro Di, 2009), 342. He further noted that the Clowes panel and Neroccio's other Madonnas with the Magdalene seem to postdate the *Nove*'s return from exile in 1487 (see the paintings formerly at Brussels, Stoclet collection; Florence, Museo Horne, fig. 6; Limassol, Pittas Collection; Siena, Palazzo Chigi-Saracini; Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, inv. ABM s21). Dóra Sallay, however, rightly noted that Neroccio could have had occasion to paint the Magdalene earlier in his career, given his connections to one of the Sienese convents dedicated to her; Dóra Sallay, *Corpus of Sienese Paintings in Hungary 1420–1510* (Florence: Centro Di, 2015), 192n9. For more on the cult of the Magdalene in late fifteenth-century Siena, see Philippa Jackson, "The Cult of the Magdalen: Politics and Patronage under the Petrucci," in Mario Ascheri, ed., *L'ultimo secolo della Repubblica di Siena: Arti, cultura e società; Atti del convegno internazionale, Siena 28–30 settembre 2003 e 16–18 settembre 2004* (Siena: Accademia Senese degli Intronati, 2008), 391–403.

22. For the contract for Neroccio's altarpiece, see Gertrude Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi 1447–1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 146–147. On the monastery and its *novesco* patronage, see Philippa Jackson, "The Cult of the Magdalen: Politics and Patronage under the Petrucci," in Mario Ascheri, ed., *L'ultimo secolo della Repubblica di Siena: Arti, cultura e società; Atti del convegno internazionale, Siena 28–30 settembre 2003 e 16–18 settembre 2004* (Siena: Accademia Senese degli Intronati, 2008), 395–400.

23. Timothy J. Dickey, "An Undiscovered Sienese *Lauda*, *Adoramus te*, *Christe*, and the Provenance of Domenico di Bartolo's *Madonna of Humility* (1433)," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 34 (2008): 93–94, 98.

24. The original frame was probably similar to that of fig. 3: a simple gold band following the shape of the panel. The panel could have then been inserted into a larger and more elaborate tabernacle frame, such as the type on Sano di Pietro's *Madonna and Child with Angels and Saints* (Siena, Pinacoteca, inv. 228), Neroccio's *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist and Michael* (Siena, Oratorio della Santissima Trinità), or Benvenuto di Giovanni's *Madonna and Child* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 1975.1.54).

25. The Chigi emblem features a mountain with six golden peaks surmounted by an eight-pointed star. The Saracini emblem is the head of a Saracen beneath an eagle. After the families intermarried, these designs were combined. See Girolamo Gigli, *Arme delle famiglie nobili di Siena che al presence si truovano, e godono, o possono godere gli onori del supremo eccelso maestrato* (Siena: n.p., 1706).

26. This assertion first appears in the dossier for the painting compiled by the Silberman Galleries, which sold the painting to the Clowes Collection. It was repeated in George Henry McCall and Wilhelm Valentiner, *Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800: Masterpieces of Art, New York World's Fair, May to October 1939*, exh. cat. (New York: Publishers Print Co., 1939), 129. It was rejected by Cesare Brandi, *Quattrocentisti senesi* (Milan: Hoepli, 1949), 272. The collections of the Palazzo Chigi-Saracini were assembled primarily in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by Galgano de' Saracini, who acquired works from various local sources; see Carlo Sisi, "La Collezione di Galgano Saracini," in Carlo Sisi, ed., *La Collezione Chigi Saracini di Siena: Per una storia del collezionismo italiano*, exh. cat. (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 2000), 21–28. The possibility that the panel was inherited by Galgano from an old family collection should probably not be excluded, since the Saracini were closely involved with the monastery of Santa Maria Maddalena near the Porta Tufi in the late fifteenth century and could thus have been interested in a work like the Clowes panel; see Philippa Jackson, "The Cult of the Magdalen: Politics and Patronage under the Petrucci," in Mario Ascheri, ed., *L'ultimo secolo della Repubblica di Siena: Arti, cultura e società; Atti del convegno internazionale, Siena 28–30 settembre 2003 e 16–18 settembre 2004* (Siena: Accademia Senese degli Intronati, 2008), 396–397.

27. See Galgano de' Saracini, *Relazione in compendio delle cose più notabili nel Palazzo e Galleria Saracini di Siena* (Siena: Bindi, 1819), 66, as cited in Mark Roskill, "Clowes Collection Catalogue" (unpublished typed manuscript, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN, 1968). See also Emil Jacobsen, *Das Quattrocento in Siena: Studien in der Gemäldegalerie der Akademie* (Strassburg: J.H. Ed. Heitz, 1908), 83, plate XLIX.

28. See Silberman dossier on this painting, File C10058, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields. A branded mark ("LK") and a possible inventory number ("123") appear on the back of the panel and are duplicated on the back of the frame.

29. G.H.A. Clowes loaned the painting to the 1939 New York World's Fair, see *Masterpieces of Art, New York World's Fair, May to October 1939: Catalogue of European Paintings and Sculpture from 1300–1800*, exh. cat., (New York: William Bradford Press, 1939), no. 265, plate 6. See also Silberman dossier on this painting, File C10058, Clowes Registration Archive, Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields.

30. *Paintings from the Collection of George Henry Alexander Clowes: A Memorial Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Indianapolis: John Herron Art Museum, 1959), no. 42, reports the loan to the Szépművészéti Muzéum. It was wrongly reported to have entered the Szépművészéti Muzéum as part of the Pálffy bequest by Bernard Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932), 389; Bernard Berenson, *Pitture italiane del Rinascimento* (Milan: Hoepli, 1936), 335; and Raimond van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, 19 vols. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1923–1938), 16 (1937): 312.