

BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI
GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO

Their Altarpieces in the

J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM

and

*A Summary Catalogue of
Their Paintings in America*

by

BURTON B. FREDERICKSEN

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INTRODUCTION

The late Quattrocento in Siena cannot be called a neglected period in the history of American collecting, and though more time and attention have been devoted to the Siennese Trecento and the interval spanning Sassetta, the Osservanza Master and Giovanni di Paolo, the later generation certainly did not lack brilliant painters. This school (including roughly the last three decades of the 15th century and the first one and one-half decades of the next) could, however, be said to have lacked a figurehead, though Francesco di Giorgio is sometimes taken as such; and its practical founder, Vecchietta, is hardly familiar to the museum-goer outside of Italy because his works are scarce. But the best of the group, Neroccio, Matteo di Giovanni, Benvenuto di Giovanni, and the already-mentioned Francesco di Giorgio are well known and have suffered neither eclipse nor sudden popularity since the turn of the century. Even masters such as Cozzarelli, Girolamo di Benvenuto, Pietro di Domenico, Pacchiarotto, and Andrea di Niccolo are lesser-known primarily because they have never been (and probably never will be) well represented in America. Taken as a whole, the school shows a remarkable affinity of style between all of its members and its high and low points are individual works rather than individuals.

By now the major large altarpieces of the school (secular works by these artists are relatively rare) that have left Italy have also found their final sanctuaries—almost always a museum—and one can now take stock and better evaluate what has managed to reach us. It will always be necessary to put the paintings in America in the perspective of the works that remain in Italy because the vast majority of signed or dated pieces are still there; but on the other hand, American collections now contain as many works from the school (or almost any pre-19th-century Italian school, for that matter) as any country outside of Italy, and it is no longer possible to consider an artist's *œuvre* without them.

Benvenuto di Giovanni, as much as any of the late Siennese *Quat-*

trocentisti, has been represented in the United States by not only a good number of works, but also a few important ones. Benvenuto's *œuvre* has always been inextricably bound together with that of his son, Girolamo, and works in American collections have figured prominently in the period of their production that has caused the most confusion among art historians, especially those works dating between 1498 and 1509—the dates of Girolamo's earliest dated painting and Benvenuto's last. The fact that the two must have been working together complicates the problem, and since the lists published by Berenson and Van Marle in the 1930's, no thorough attempt has been made to extricate Girolamo's personality from that of his father, problematical works being sometimes labelled as by either artist, or sometimes by both. Recent articles (by scholars such as Federico Zeri) have contradicted earlier datings and have also reversed some attributions, making a reassessment of some value.

Berenson's statement in his 1932 lists that Girolamo's best could not be easily distinguished from Benvenuto's worst is perhaps a sign that he (and others after him) was content to dismiss the lesser works as Girolamo's and to give the best to Benvenuto. Nonetheless, following Zeri's lead, I feel it possible to more accurately date many undated pieces that were previously merely allocated to various decades with insufficient reason. The only way I have of going about this is stylistic analysis, and perhaps the wider number of works that have come to light in the years since Van Marle. But I do not pretend to be able to throw much additional light on the critical period mentioned above, 1498 through 1509. At best, one can determine which of the works are clearly not late enough to date from Girolamo's activity in his father's workshop and place them in the appropriate periods prior to this. What is left will be juggled back and forth by art historians for years to come, until more documentary proof is forthcoming.

The starting points for this reassessment will be two paintings owned by Mr. Getty and now in the museum founded by him in Malibu. One of them, the larger, has been known in the literature since 1922 (and probably already in 1897—see below) and has always been referred to as by Benvenuto. The other piece, much

smaller in scale, has hardly figured in the literature at all, but the few times it has, it was called Girolamo's work. After they came together in the museum, it was an easy thing to continue to refer to the larger painting as the father's, and because dated or signed paintings by Girolamo do not exist in America, there was no immediate reason for question.

This writer's first doubts were raised some six years ago by a painting in Tulsa attributed to Girolamo which corresponded stylistically to the Benvenuto in Mr. Getty's collection. The same thing happened in reverse in respect to two small predella medallions in Kansas City and the Girolamo in Mr. Getty's collection; so when Mr. Zeri's opinions came to light, it seemed research on the question would be rewarding.

This might have been an appropriate place to re-evaluate the entire *œuvre* of both painters because it is unlikely that a full-scale book will soon be devoted to the subject. Such a task is difficult, however, in this part of the world, lacking the necessary bibliographical resources, and the project will benefit by waiting for someone else. Nonetheless a large number of the pieces by both artists found in American collections are either unpublished or little-known, and it is still possible to speak with some, though limited, authority on these.

This then, is the reasoning behind concentration on a group of works that just happen to find themselves within the borders of one country (and that virtually the last to enter the arena of collecting). It is an artificial chapter that only the present state of our "science" could justify.

The following section on the iconography of the two Nativities in the Getty collection is by Mr. Darrell Davisson of Colorado College. The remainder has been my responsibility.

BURTON B. FREDERICKSEN

Malibu, October, 1966.

DESCRIPTION AND ICONOGRAPHY

The larger Nativity in the Getty Museum (A54.P-10) (fig. 1) measures 78½ inches (1,99 m.) in height and 63 inches (1,60 m.) in width. Its frame, though possibly old, is not the original, and old photographs show a completely different kind, albeit with the same shape. The panel itself has two prominent vertical breaks along which there has been some flaking. Various other patches of retouching (which have now darkened) are scattered about the surface, though the original character of the handling is only in one or two places impaired. The colors are a little faded, and the blue of the fallen mantel of the Virgin has flattened out and lost its volume.

The smaller Nativity (Getty Museum G-29) (fig. 5) is a now slightly convex panel that measures 22½ inches (57 cm.) in height and 15½ inches (41 cm.) in width. It is in a very good state of preservation and has been recently cleaned. Its frame is new.

The first of these two paintings shows the Virgin and Joseph kneeling in the right and left foreground space with the Infant between them, surrounded by an almost invisible mandorla of light. Behind, in the middle-ground, is a cave containing the ox and the ass, which encloses them within its interior. Directly above and in front of the cave is the bust of God-the-Father with the Dove of the Holy Ghost, establishing the hierarchy of the Trinity on the central axis of the painting. Behind the Virgin, to the right, are two of the shepherds receiving the annunciation of the birth from an angel, and farther in the background, the city of Bethlehem. The space is carefully defined, the figures massive, columnar, the cave architectonic, but the effect of the whole is that of the human and concrete placed in a realm of the other-worldly.

One of the most apparent and disturbing elements for the viewer seeking a consistent rationale in the scene is the position of the Child. At first glance the Child seems to be lying on the ground, since the ground surrounds Him on all sides. But if He were lying on the

ground, He would be too far back in space, and the Virgin and Joseph would be bowing over bare ground. Also, the Child would be proportionately too large. The only other alternative is that He is floating between Joseph and Mary, as if on this translucent aureole of light. This is a clear departure from the smaller Nativity in the Getty collection which is more rational in its definition of form and space, and more narrative in content. Equally unusual is the cave in which the illogical formations of the rocks of the cave emphasize its unnatural and symbolic role, as does the lone broken column on the right side of the entrance. I know of no other Siense Nativities where precisely this same combination can be found.

These unusual elements give the panel its distinctive character, not only from a stylistic point of view, but from an iconographic one as well. The Nativity represented in this fashion is characteristic of a type which became well known in the fifteenth century, but was never as popular as the traditional types. This version of the Nativity is a variation based on the mystical vision of St. Bridget of Sweden who saw the mysteries of the Birth take place before her eyes in a vision she experienced sometime before 1370:¹

“When I was present by the manger of the Lord in Bethlehem. A. I beheld a virgin of extreme beauty... well wrapped in a white mantle and a delicate tunic, through which I clearly perceived her body.... With her was an old man of great honesty, and they brought with them an ox and an ass. These entered the cave, and the man, after having tied them to the manger, went outside and brought to the virgin a burning candle; having attached this to the wall he went outside, so that he might not be present at the birth. Then the virgin pulled off the shoes from her feet, drew off the white mantle that enveloped her, removed the veil from her head, laying it by her side, thus remaining in her tunic alone with her beautiful golden hair falling loosely down her shoulders.... B. And when all was thus prepared, the virgin knelt down with great veneration in an attitude of prayer, and her

[¹] For the sources discussing the evolution of the Bridgetine Nativity, see Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, 1953), p. 46, n. 46; and Hendrik Cornell, *Iconography of the Nativity of Christ*, Upsala Universitets Arsskrift; filosofi, sprakvetenskap och historiska vetenskaper, 3 (1924), for the most comprehensive survey of the Bridgetine type.

back was turned to the manger, but her face was lifted up to heaven, towards the east. Thus with her hands extended and her eyes fixed on the sky she was standing as in ecstasy, lost in contemplation, in a rapture of divine sweetness. And while she was standing thus in prayer, I beheld the child in her womb move and suddenly in a moment she gave birth to her son, from whom radiated such an ineffable light and splendour, that the sun was not comparable to it, nor did the candle, that St. Joseph had put there, give any light at all, the divine light totally annihilating the material light of the candle, and so sudden and instantaneous was this way of bringing forth, that I could neither discover nor discern how, or by means of which member, she gave birth. Verily though, all of a sudden, I saw the glorious infant lying on the ground naked and shining. His body was pure from any kind of soil and impurity. Then I heard also the singing of the angels, which was of miraculous sweetness and great beauty. C. When therefore the virgin felt, that she already had born her child, she immediately worshipped Him, her head bent down and her hands clasped, with great honour and reverence and said unto him, Be welcome my God, my Lord an my Son.”¹

The painter’s references to the Bridgetine vision are numerous. The Child, newborn, is radiating “an ineffable light and splendour.” He is being worshipped by Mary “...head bent down and hands clasped, with great honour and reverence...” The setting is related to the cave and the Virgin is properly identified as kneeling on the ground, her mantle around her knees “...with her beautiful golden hair falling loosely around her shoulders...” The other Nativity in the Getty Museum also follows a similar formula.

It is clear that in both Nativities the painters (or painter) have taken liberties in not following the vision exactly as recorded. But once the *typus* for the Bridgetine Nativity had been established, such liberties were often taken as long as they did not destroy the religious significance of the vision. In the earliest paintings of this subject (at Santa Maria Novella, Florence, of 1370-80; and the panel at Yale attributed to the Florentine workshop of Niccolò di Tommaso of about the same time) the visionary description is followed quite

[¹] This translation is a segment of the text given by Cornell, pp. 11-13.

literally, with the event taking place inside the cave and St. Bridget shown witnessing the birth.¹ But even in these early examples the artists make a synopsis of the text. We see at once two separate episodes, the Birth of the Child, floating to earth on a mandorla of light, and the adoration of the Child by the Virgin (who has already bowed her head and clasped her hands in humility), and by Joseph who has already returned to the cave. In subsequent Bridgetine Nativities, such as the predella in the Vatican by Lorenzo Monaco, more radical departures are made. Here the Byzantine concept of the Nativity taking place in the cave is combined with the purely Western formula, with a shed projecting out from the mouth of the cave.² The adoration also takes place outside the cave and narrative detail of the annunciation to the shepherds added. Joseph is now shown in his usual befuddled state, and the presence of St. Bridget eliminated.³ The painting retains references to its Bridgetine source only through the combination of the Child lying on the ground before a cave, facing in the direction of the Virgin who is kneeling on the ground in a state of adoration. These characteristics separate the Bridgetine type from the Byzantine and give it its distinctive meaning.⁴

[¹] For a discussion of the S. Maria Novella fresco, see Cornell, p. 6, fig. 12, and for the panel at Yale University (# 1943.236), see Richard Offner, *Studies of the Italian Primitives at Yale University* (New Haven, 1927), pp. 114, 116. The earliest known panel (lost) of the Bridgetine vision is mentioned by Niccolò Orisini in the church of S. Antonio, Naples, but the iconography was more fully developed in Germany and Flanders, spreading to the central Italian painters where numerous examples appear in the region of Tuscany (cf. also Turino Vanni's *Vision of St Bridget*; Pisa, Museo Civico, c. 1400-1410). By the late 15th century in Italy the subject is more frequently found in Siena than in Florence, although slightly transformed.

[²] For a discussion of the motif of the cave, see Panofsky, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

[³] Joseph, as a dottering, feeble, old man, follows the tradition of S. Bernard of Clairvaux (*Meditations*) rather than the Bridgetine version where he is a "very honest old man... appearing as God's confidant in the miracle" (Cornell, p. 36).

[⁴] The Byzantine type usually shows the Virgin and Child near or in a cave, the mother lying on a couch with the Child near her in a crib. The kneeling position is not part of the Byzantine iconography, according to Cornell (pp. 4 f.) until the 16th century, and already by this time Siense painters were representing her in this fashion. Something similar to the Bridgetine type had already been achieved in Tuscan painting in the early 14th century, but it was not identical with the Bridgetine formula. For example, Bernardo Daddi's Nativity at Dijon (c. 1335) shows the Madonna off her couch and seated directly on the

In each of the Bridgetine Nativities the center of interest in the composition is always the Child, and often this emphasis is stressed by placing the Infant on the central axis of the panel in the lower foreground space. That the viewer witnesses the moment of birth as well as the adoration seems to be the main objective of these paintings. For, by portraying the Child at an angle and floating Him on an aureole, the painters imply that the Child has just emanated from the mother's womb, that we, outsiders like Joseph, may re-experience the mystical Nativity.

Separation of the Child from the mother, both narratively and compositionally, arises from the theological idea of the independent nature of Christ (god-man) from the Theotokos (god bearer).¹ Once Christ has assumed human form, the cycle of human salvation actively begins. The relationship between the Child and mother is no longer mutual but commemorative, and the feeling of intimate affection is sublimated by their joyless expressions, their stiff columnar poses, which add a sense of remoteness. In most 15th-century Bridgetine Nativities the Child is clearly separated from his parents, surrounded only by the bare ground (*humus*) and neither overlaps Joseph nor Mary. Moreover, the Infant is unmistakably human and corporeal. His materiality cannot be entirely dismissed by the artist's comprehension of child anatomy or even "Renaissance realism," but must be taken into the context of the exegesis surrounding the two natures of Christ, and into context with the composition and function of the altarpiece as well.

The Getty Nativity was most likely designed to be placed over an altar which traditionally signified the sacrifice of Christ, the vault of His tomb, and the *mensa* over which the transubstantiation of the Host takes place. The Nativity refers to the beginning of the cycle of redemption. At this time God is made incarnate, manifesting His third nature. Through His earthly body Christ suffers human

ground. She is also shown off her couch in the Nativity with the adoration of the shepherds by the so-called Ovile Master in the Fogg Museum. Nonetheless, the Child is never found on the ground nor is the Virgin shown kneeling, head bowed and hands clasped in prayer as described in the Bridgetine vision. See also Panofsky, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

[¹] Yrjö Hirn, *The Sacred Shrine: A Study of the Poetry and Art of the Catholic Church* (London, 1912), pp. 37of.

death, but conquers death through the resurrection of His human body.

If the central theme in a Christian altarpiece is that of the manifestation of the divine in a mortal body which conquers mortal death, it would appear that all of the elements in the panel contribute to this concept. Indeed, the Getty Nativity is almost unique in its consistency with the concept of the Eucharist and the promise of triumph over death. The panel is a departure, in this respect, from the more strictly humanistic and mariological emphasis in the usual Bridgetine Nativity. Nonetheless, the Bridgetine vision coincides with the eschatological function expressed in this altarpiece through references to the birth, death and resurrection of Christ.

This incarnation is, obviously, the major theme in the Getty altarpiece, and its theological significance is stressed by the inclusion of the Trinity. The predella in the lowest register shows Christ as the Man of Sorrows in the central medallion, as if rising from His tomb. Related ideas are expressed by St. John Baptist (fig. 3) in the medallion to the right of Christ, holding an apocalyptic reference to the sacrificial lamb of God. The phylacterie declares *Ecce Agnus...* "This is the Lamb [of God who erases the sins of the world]" (John I: 29). Even the moulding of the "marble" predella repeats that on the sarcophagus containing the martyred Christ, formally restating the theme of His mortal death.

Certainly the most relevant phases of the cycle of redemption are included in the painting, but references to the materiality of Christ through the event of the Nativity seem to be given emphasis and have the most direct relevance to the eucharistic function of the altar on which the panel would have stood. Christ is even raised slightly higher than in comparable panels of this subject.¹ Thus, the Child's position would be about equal in height to the raised wafer (Host) at the moment of transubstantiation during the mass.

[¹] Several panels show the Child at a proportionate height from the base of the composition, but these panels are small in size and were, in some cases, designed only as predellas to larger altars. The one Siennese exception of which I am aware is the Volterra Nativity by Benvenuto. The reason for this suspension of the Child in other panels does not arise solely from its source in the Bridgetine Nativity, but has been traced to Walafrid Strabo: "Ponitur Christus in praesepio, id est corpus Christi super altare" (Panofsky, *op. cit.*, n. 46).

This synthesis of eschatological meaning with the mariological iconography of the Bridgetine vision is most clearly borne out in the similitude of content and subject-matter in the Volterra Nativity of 1470, signed by Benvenuto di Giovanni (fig. 2). Here also the Nativity takes place before a cave, and the Child is on the ground surrounded by an aureole, with Joseph and Mary kneeling in adoration. In addition to these three figures are the shepherds already in adoration with the genre detail of their sheep-dog coyly added. The predella, which is a separate section, is also punctuated by three roundels, the central one of which also shows the half-length figure of Christ rising from a strigilated sarcophagus. At the top of the main panel descends God-the-Father surrounded by the heavenly hosts. In these main features the panels are quite similar, but other motifs appear in the Volterra panel which are departures. The cave is more open, and the manger is attached to the back wall of the cave and shown beneath a small niche. Behind the Virgin is a dry tree and the ruined Temple of Peace, popularly known in the Renaissance through the *Legenda Aurea*.¹

These few alterations shed light on the meaning of the cave, the broken column and the dead branches emerging from the cave in the Getty altarpiece. From the 12th century and possibly earlier, the manger was considered identical with the sacrificial altar, and the straw symbolic of the sacrificial body, or the wheat of the "bread of life."² In the Volterra panel the raised position of the manger and the apse-like niche behind it emphasize the function of the manger as an altar. Thus, the cave establishes a direct reference to the death of Christ as well as to His birth. As Hirn points out, "the grotto or shed becomes a temple with the manger as an altar at which the first Christian service is held."³ In addition, the Child

[¹] Jacobus da Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, ed. Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger (London, 1941), pt. I, p. 48. The difference in the position of the Virgin from the larger panel in the Getty Museum seems to have no special significance as her position is frequently interchanged.

[²] Hirn, pp. 371, n. 52, 473; Panofsky, p. 46.

[³] Hirn, p. 359. The function of the grotto as a sacrificial chamber was perhaps suggested by Pseudo-Matthew who relates that after three days the mother and child came out of the cave and moved to the manger. Since the birth of the incarnated Christ is inextricably associated with his human suffering

is not shown in the cave in either panel, but in front of it. He is, therefore, out of the realm of death, but placed in conjunction with it. In the dormant tree behind Mary in the Volterra altarpiece is a further reference to human mortality and the forthcoming sacrifice of Christ. This tree is not just a reference to the winter date of Christ's birth.

During the 15th and early 16th centuries the dry tree was a popular metaphor for the fall of man and his hope of regeneration.¹ The tree symbolizes the Tree of Original Sin which was struck dry when Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit. The tree was purged of its evil by its use as the cross in the Crucifixion, and was thereby transformed into the Tree of Life. Thus the pruned tree became symbolic of man purged (pruned) of his earthly body by death in the hope that he would bud into new life, just as the Tree of Death was transformed into the Tree of Life. In Andrea di Niccolò's Nativity in Siena where this symbolism is used in connection with a Bridgetine Nativity, Joseph is shown sleeping against the dry Tree. Here the tree is not pruned but the metaphor is no less applicable. Sleeping Joseph is symbolic of humanity, ignorant of the restorative power of Christ, a power which is already "proven" by the verdant and fruitbearing trees of paradise in the background.² The contrast between the dry branches of the tree in the foreground and the verdant ones in the background stresses the symbolic idea. A similar arrangement is found in the larger Getty altar panel, conveying an identical concept.

Human mortality, implied by the dead branches around the cave, is a theme also connected with the cave itself, which occupies a dominant position in the composition. But rather than embracing all of the figures, as in the Volterra panel, the cave in the Getty

and death, so the cave of the Nativity could become identical with His future tomb. Cf. Marianne Elissagaray, *La legende des Rois Mages* (Paris, 1965), p. 19.

[¹] See Rose J. Peebles, "The Dry Tree: Symbol of Death," *Vassar Medieval Studies*, ed. Christabel F. Fiske (New Haven, 1923), pp. 72ff.; and Gerhart B. Ladner, "Vegetation Symbolism and the Concept of the Renaissance," in *De Artibus Opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss (New York, 1961), pp. 304ff.

[²] For other uses of vegetative symbolism with the Bridgetine Nativity, see Cornell, *op. cit.*, pp. 58f.

panel is enclosing only the ox and the ass and the manger. Since the legs of the animals are disguised by the rock ledge, the usual inclusion of the ox kneeling and the ass standing as symbols of the Gentiles and the Jews, the wise and the foolish, the humble and the cupid, cannot apply.¹ As the ox and the ass are also the traditional symbols of humanity,² and as such are shown locked in this tomb-like structure with the vegetative symbols of death surrounding them, they must refer to all humanity faced with mortality.³ They have hope for salvation, however, as conveyed by the motif of the animals eating the wheat of the manger. The wheat is described in the Homilies of St. Gregory Nazianzus as "the grain of His flesh" which refreshes the faithful.⁴ By eating the sacrificial Bread of Life, man has the hope for escape. Man's hope for regeneration is again repeated by the angel who announces to the shepherds the birth of the Saviour, and carries a green branch symbolic of this new life.⁵ Bethlehem, farther in the background, has been described as being appropriate for Christ's birth as it means the "city of bread."⁶ Equally relevant is the broken column which is illogically attached to the "natural form" of the cave. It conveys the double connotation of symbolizing the fall of paganism (the fallen Temple of Peace built by Augustus Caesar⁷ or the end of the Era under

[1] The animals symbolize the Gentiles and the Jews only when the ox is kneeling and the ass is standing, as in the Nativity by Giovanni di Paolo (Rome, Pinacoteca vaticana). In these instances, only the ass is usually shown eating from the crib. In other instances there are less consistent patterns (cf. the Nativities by Girolamo di Benvenuto in Montepulciano and the Pinacoteca, Siena; and the Lorenzo Monaco predella at Rome, Pinacoteca vaticana).

[2] Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, pp. 277f., n. 278; and Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral* (Baltimore, 1959), p. 14, n. 37.

[3] The earth as a symbolic tomb is stressed by Hirn; "The altar... is conceived of as a grave, while the Madonna stands for the earth, which according to the universal mythological conceptions, is at the same time the mother of man in the tomb of men." See also p. 9, n. 2 *supra*.

[4] *Pat. Lat.* LXXVI, col. 1104. "Unde et natus in presepio reclinatur, ut fideles omnes, videlicet sancta animalia, carnis suae frumento reficeret."

[5] The angel carrying the green branch does not become common until after 1445 in Siena, but is found frequently thereafter.

[6] Katzenellenbogen, *op. cit.*, n. 21.

[7] *Supra* p. 12, n. 1.

Law with the beginning of the Era under Grace), and the flagellation which refers to the sacrificial redemption of man through the Passion.¹

While these symbols may seem obscure to the modern observer who is not used to seeing in natural forms allegories of Christian salvation, this habit of thinking and the symbols used were commonly understood in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Each element additively contributes to the meaning of the whole; and the composition, the symmetry and disposition of the figures also amplify the content – the means and the process of human redemption.

[1] A further reference to the Passion is possibly implied by the outstretched arms of the Child, forming the shape of the Cross with His body (Hirn, *op. cit.*, n. 52, p. 371). This motif is also found in the Nativity by Girolamo di Benvenuto, Yale University, # 1943.259 (fig. 31).

ATTRIBUTIONS, DATES AND PROVENANCE

The signed and dated paintings by Benvenuto di Giovanni (1436-1518?) are plentiful and conveniently spaced. It is not easy to speak of an obvious evolution in his style, but what there is can be followed in major works from the time he was 30 (1466) to the age 73 (1509). The principal dated paintings are as follows:

1466	Volterra, S Girolamo	Annunciation
1470	Volterra, Duomo (now Pinacoteca)	Nativity
1470	Sinalunga, S Bernardino	Annunciation
1475	Montepertuso, S Michele Arcangelo	Madonna triptych
1479	London, National Gallery	Madonna & 2 Saints
1481	Siena, Monte dei Paschi	Madonna of Mercy
1483	Siena, S Domenico	Madonna & 4 Saints
1491	Siena, S Eugenio (now Pinacoteca)	Ascension
1497	Torrta, S Flora e Lucilla	Madonna & 2 Saints
1498	New York, Metropolitan (from Grosseto)	Ascension
1509	Sinalunga, S Lucia	Madonna & 2 Saints

Girolamo's dated paintings are the following:

1498	Montalcino, Museo (from Osservanza)	Ascension
1508	Siena, S Domenico (now Pinacoteca)	Madonna & 4 Saints
1515	Siena, Fontegiusta	Assumption of the Virgin

As can be seen from the column of dated works by Girolamo (1470-1524), the span of time covered by those of the son is not large and the certain works are few. Girolamo was not born until his father's 33rd year, and outlived him by only six years. It can be assumed that he worked with his father in his early years, from about 1490 (or possibly earlier) on, but his first dated painting is from

1498, when his father is already 62 years of age. A relatively simple situation is complicated by the general assumption that Girolamo continued to work with his father, and in fact the last two dated and signed paintings by Benvenuto (and the only ones subsequent to Girolamo's first) are generally thought to betray the collaboration of Girolamo. Since the degree or kind of collaboration between the two is indeterminable, it would seem as if the individual styles of both men after 1490 can never be certain. Also, because there are no smaller works, such as predellas, that can be conclusively dated between 1475 and 1508,¹ such paintings, simply because of their difference in scale and finish, become the most precarious to date.

Nonetheless, the helpful coincidence in 1498 of two signed paintings, one by each artist, of the same subject, the Assumption of the Virgin, enables one to distinguish at least general stylistic differences between the two. Girolamo achieves slightly more *contraposto* and simultaneously he simplifies most forms, notably the heads and hands of the figures. Benvenuto does not attempt to group his forms but places them with more symmetry, and tends to elaborate details such as hair, hands, etc. Altogether, details play a more important role with Benvenuto than Girolamo, while the latter has begun to vary the movement from one part of the composition to another in the process of which he must sacrifice elaboration of detail.

The difference is not great but detectable. And in any case, confusion is only permissible from the 1490's on, because Benvenuto's style before the advent of Girolamo's collaboration can be fairly well distinguished.

It is not feasible to demonstrate here the evolution of either man's style with reproductions, but a study of the dated paintings clearly shows, as Zeri has already noticed, that the smaller of the two paintings in the Getty collection cannot date from this latter period, nor be from the hand of Girolamo.² The Morellian characteristics,

[¹] For the predella fragments that have been connected with the S Domenico altarpiece of 1508, see Franco Russoli, *The Berenson Collection* (Milano, 1964), p. LV.

[²] Opinion quoted in J. Paul Getty, *The Joys of Collecting* (New York, 1965), p. 88.

especially the very angular faces and the prominently highlighted notches of the upper lips, are those of works datable in the 1480's, the period when Benvenuto shows a more expressive and "Paduan" tendency.¹ The carved hands of Joseph, the schematized "scallop clouds" (which Girolamo renders as increasingly more naturalistic and fleecy), and numerous other details are not attributable to the son, and point to a date between 1480 and 1485. The only difficulty with this dating is the stall with the two animals, which one finds with just the slightest variation throughout the works of both Benvenuto and Girolamo well into the first and second decades of the next century. They seem to be most prevalent in, and closest in style to, the works of Girolamo. Perhaps something like a workshop model was used that could account for the amazingly consistent quality to be found in the animals. The many relatively late small Nativities, probably all from the hand of Girolamo, repeat with aggravating monotony such motifs, and probably their origin goes back to compositions of thirty years earlier.

It is interesting to note that another version of the composition in the Platt collection (see p. 25 and fig. 7) has always been given to Benvenuto, but evidently no one has ever compared the two paintings—at least not in print.

The modern history of this panel begins in the collection of Sir Philip Burne-Jones (1861-1926), son of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, the painter.² It was later in the Untermeyer collection in New York, from which it was sold at Parke-Bernet in May, 1940.³ Mr. Getty acquired it through Duveen from this sale.

More difficult, in spite of its greater size and importance, is the

[1] See also Ferdinando Bologna, "Miniature di Benvenuto di Giovanni," *Paragone*, 51 (1954), pp. 15-19. Bologna dates the "Paduan" phase of Benvenuto's activity between 1475 and 1483.

[2] The paintings from this collection were auctioned in November and December of 1926 at Sotheby's, but the Malibu Nativity is not among them. Up to this moment I have found no proof of its having come from the Burne-Jones collection further than the statement in the Untermeyer collection catalogue (see note 3).

[3] *The Untermeyer collection, owned by the late Samuel Untermeyer and his children*, public sale, May 10 and 11, 1940. Part one at the Parke-Bernet Galleries (New York, 1940), no. 48, p. 46, illus.

larger Getty altarpiece. That it falls into the disputed period after 1490 is certain, and one could easily attribute it to either man.¹ Though the severe lack of contraposto would logically point to the father, it cannot be from the 1480's as Van Marle implies,² and the round heads and the simplified forms probably indicate the son. The all-over impression is that of Girolamo, though it might feasibly be a joint effort. In date it could be placed anywhere between 1495 and 1510, and I cannot tell for the moment which is nearer. The landscape is very close to the landscape in the New York Assumption of 1498 (fig. 26). The facial types approach those of the Torrita altarpiece of 1497 and Girolamo's S Domenico altarpiece of 1508. I do not know, however, if they pre- or ante-date them.

Of unquestionable importance for the origin of the piece is the saint in the right medallion of the predella (fig. 4). He has not previously been identified by any writer who has mentioned the painting, and he is evidently not a saint, but rather a beatified monk, because, in contrast to John in the other medallion (fig. 3), rays are emanating from his head instead of a halo. He is in a light habit and his only attribute is a rosary. He is clean-shaven and young.

Because of his habit, this monk has previously been referred to at the Museum as Dominican or Carthusian, and this writer had decided upon his identification with the Blessed Peter Petroni (1311-1361) of Siena who is sometimes shown with a rosary, who was the only Carthusian represented in Tuscan art,³ and who could fit his description in the medallion. In fact, Kaftal's valuable index has no other logical candidates.

However the search for the original location of the altarpiece among the places connected with the Blessed Peter Petroni (such as the Certose at Maggiano and Pontignano) yielded no fruit, and quite unexpectedly the inventory of Francesco Brogi of 1860-65 (but published in 1897) was found to list what is evidently our panel

[¹] See also Ferdinando Bologna, *op. cit.*, p. 18; and Zeri's attribution to Girolamo in J. Paul Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

[²] Raimond Van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, XVI (The Hague, 1937), p. 407.

[³] George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence, 1952), p. 835.

in the Convento di S Francesco near Cetona, naming its author Benvenuto, and referring to the "saint" as a Franciscan!¹

The description in Brogi's inventory is so exact in every other respect that there seems very little chance he could be writing about another work. It reads:

Quadri nelle pareti—La Madonna e S Giuseppe genuflessi adorano Gesù Bambino posato in terra. Nella gloria vi è il Padre Eterno. Nell'indietro a destra l'Angelo avvisa due pastori. Nella parte inferiore vi sono in tre formelle circolari, La Pietà, S Giovanni e un Santo Franciscano. Tavola colma nel lato superiore con figure un poco sotto il vero, alta 2,00 larga 1,72.—Secolo XV. Benvenuto di Giovanni del Guasta.

To which he adds the following footnote:

10. In mediocre stato di conservazione, perché le assi tentano di sciogliersi.

In spite of his extremely light habit (and my own initial reservations about calling him a Franciscan), there is good reason for believing he is indeed what Brogi says he is.

The signed Assumption in New York (fig. 26) contains both St. Francis (?) and St. Anthony of Padua, each of them shown in a very light habit, one very light gray, the other virtually white²; the picture comes originally from the Franciscan Convento della Grancia near Grosseto. Since this work was almost certainly painted within five years of the Getty altarpiece, the identification of the monk in the medallion with a Franciscan becomes entirely plausible. In fact, the habit, the scapular, and the cord are so obviously identical in kind, that one is left with virtually no further doubts on the matter, and consequently with no serious reservations about the picture's identification with that seen by Brogi.³

[¹] Francesco Brogi, *Inventario generale degli oggetti d'Arte della Provincia di Siena* (Siena, 1897), p. 107.

[²] I am indebted to Mrs. Elizabeth Gardner of the Metropolitan Museum for looking at their altarpiece for me and confirming the exact colors of the habits.

[³] Note, however, that the lateral dimension given by Brogi is 12 cm. more than the present measurement, while the height is virtually identical. Perhaps this discrepancy was due to the frame.

Efforts to find relevant documents from the convent have so far been without success, but it is worthwhile to note that Benvenuto's wife, Jacopa di Tommaso, came from Cetona, and that the convent still contains another painting attributed to Benvenuto, a panel representing the enthroned Madonna and Child (fig. 7). Though this painting is also called Benvenuto's by Brogi, it is probably by Girolamo, and in any case would appear to be of slightly later date than the Getty altarpiece.

The Cetona archives from the critical 15th and 16th centuries have been destroyed,¹ but the convent itself, though not large, and even abandoned at intervals, is nonetheless important enough to appear often in Franciscan records. The edifice was founded as early as 1212 by Francis himself, and has remained Franciscan till the present time. Works of art have been exchanged with a sister convent on a nearby hill, Sta Maria Belvedere, but this building was also Franciscan. Evidently the Convent of S Francesco experienced extensive construction around 1500² which coincides perfectly with the probable date of the Getty altarpiece.

Brogi inventories the altarpiece in the "cappella" of the Blessed Egidio, which still stands separately from and just behind the convent itself. The beato in the predella medallion of the Getty panel, however, is evidently not intended to be Egidio, one of St Francis' most important disciples, since a rosary was not one of his usual attributes,³ and Brogi, though identifying other likenesses in the building as Egidio's, does not call this one his. A case might be made for identifying him with the Blessed Pietro da Trequanda (or Travanda) who is buried at the Convent, and who died in 1492 (i.e. a few years before the supposed date of the altarpiece), but I know of no other representations of this beato. Unpublished manuscripts dealing with his life and the convent are in the Cetona and Siena archives, and possibly an eventual study of these late sources

[¹] The only source of general information on Cetona is Carlo Corticelli, *Notizie e Documenti sulla storia di Cetona* (Florence, 1926).

[²] Corticelli, *ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

[³] See George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Central and South Italian Schools of Painting* (Florence, 1965), pp. 527-530. Also the representation of Egidio in a work at Montalcino (Municipio) depicting The Precious Blood (given to Benvenuto by both Van Marle and Berenson) shows him as a bishop.

will shed additional light on the question, and also on the date of the work's installation, its painter, etc.¹

So far I have not been able to learn when the painting left Cetona (assuming this is the one described by Brogi), though there are probably guides of the region published between 1865 and 1922 that would help pinpoint the date. None of those I have yet found mention the work, nor are sufficiently detailed to make its absence apparent.

In modern times the piece first came again to view in the Michel Van Gelder collection in Brussels where it was exhibited in 1922 and published by Adolfo Venturi.² It was acquired from Madame Van Gelder by Thomas Agnew's, and purchased from them in London in 1954 by Mr. Getty.

[1] For a brief history of the convent, as well as a short biography of Pietro da Trequanda, see Dionisio Pulinari (d. 1582), *Cronache dei Frati Minori della Provincia di Toscana, secondo l'autografo d'Ognissanti, edite dal P. Saturnino Mencherini* (Arezzo, 1913), pp. 388-399. A valuable resumé of the sources is also given in the notes.

[2] Adolfo Venturi, "Esposizione dei primitivi italiani a Bruxelles," *L'Arte*, XXV (1922), p. 168.

OTHER PAINTINGS BY OR ATTRIBUTED
TO BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI
IN AMERICA

The notes are only what were considered to be the most convenient or those which were accompanied by further literature, and are not intended to be a thorough bibliography.

Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery (37.1035)

Madonna and Child with two Saints ($28\frac{1}{2} \times 18\frac{1}{2}$). This painting is unpublished and is held by Zeri (and now by the museum) to be a modern forgery. I have not seen it except in reproduction, but its appearance is indeed very peculiar. I am not absolutely convinced it is a forgery, and one can find a few parallels in Benvenuto's style of 1483-1491, but it seems unlikely to be by Benvenuto himself, and is probably what Zeri says it is.

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (56.512) (fig. 17).

Expulsion from Paradise ($10 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$) from the Paravicini collection.* The landscape is similar to that in the composition with St. Jerome in Los Angeles. The posture of the angel Jophiel is like that of the resurrected Christ in Washington, and the panel was probably painted about the same time, i.e. *c.* 1483. It is an unusual subject for a predella, though not unknown, and may be a fragment. Its composition also suggests this, and on inspection, all four sides were found to be cut, though it is impossible to say how much.

Notes: *See Thomas N. Maytham, "An Expulsion from Paradise by Benvenuto di Giovanni," *Boston Museum of Fine Arts Bulletin*, LV (1957), p. 45.

Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University (1941.132)
(fig. 24)

Madonna and Child with two angels, from the Felix Warburg collection. Attributed by Berenson* to Girolamo as an early work, and still given to him at Harvard. I find it a very enigmatic painting and cannot even decide to which decade it belongs, but it seems to me more likely by Benvenuto and possibly even before Girolamo's

activity (i.e. from the 1470's or 1480's), though the question is a very difficult one.

Notes: *B. Berenson, "Quadri senza casa," *Dedalo*, XI (1931), p. 645.

Columbus (Ohio), Gallery of Fine Arts (1938.15) (fig. 16)

Rape of Persephone (15 × 39), a cassone panel, with an allegorical figure on either end, probably by a different hand. Attributed to Girolamo da Santacroce (as a scene from Ariosto) at the museum since its acquisition in 1938 from the Schumacher collection. It is in rather poor condition, but is clearly by Benvenuto, probably from between 1475 and 1480. Since it is unpublished, and of more than usual interest, I hope to discuss it in greater detail at a later date.

Detroit, Institute of Arts (1924.95)

Madonna and Child with two angels (25½ × 18½). Dated by the museum as c. 1500. It must be much earlier and very close to the undated London Madonna. I find myself unable to date these pieces with any certainty, and though they could be from the 1470's, I am inclined to believe they are from the following decade.

Reproduced: Detroit Institute of Arts, *Catalogue of Paintings* (Detroit, 1930), no. 10.

Detroit, Institute of Arts (1940.128) (fig. 15)

A Poet (possibly Petrarch) seated by a fountain listening to Apollo and the Muses (12½ × 41⅔), a cassone panel which has been cut by almost a quarter on the right side. This panel has been attributed to Neroccio at Detroit since its acquisition in 1940, but was recognized by Gertrude Coor* as an early work by Benvenuto and dated in the early 1470's, which appears correct. She also points to a mutual influence between Benvenuto and Neroccio during this period.** The style is certainly frailer than in the cassone at Columbus which must have been done within 10 years of it.

Notes: *G. Coor, "Quattrocento-Gemälde aus der Sammlung Ramboux," in *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch*, XXI (1959), pp. 91-92. **G. Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi* (Princeton, 1961), p. 201.

Englewood (N.J.), Mrs. Dan Fellows Platt collection (fig. 6)

Nativity. Listed in Berenson* and dated by Van Marle** as c. 1470. It is identical in composition with the small Nativity in the Getty collection (see p. 18, fig. 5). I know of no other instance in Benvenuto's *œuvre* where two panels were done in such close imitation of each other, and although by itself the Platt picture could easily be taken as Benvenuto's work, comparison with the Getty painting shows the Platt panel to be decidedly the weaker of the two. It must be a replica, either from the workshop or of modern date. I have not seen the painting, but in reproduction the frame appears to be original, and this would support at least its authenticity.

Notes: *B. Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance* (Oxford, 1932), p. 76.
**R. Van Marle, *Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, XVI (The Hague, 1937), p. 396.

Kansas City, Wm. R. Nelson Gallery & Atkins Museum (45-54/1-2)
(figs. 10-11)

The Blessing Christ and St. Dominic, two engaged roundels (each approx. 9 × 10) framed in raised garlands of fruit and leaves. These are companion pieces to Yale 1946.316, St. Peter Martyr, and a fourth, showing St. Bernardino, still in the Lehman collection, from which the others also came. There was likely yet a fifth, as they were probably symmetrically placed flanking the Christ, possibly in a predella. They are closely related in style to the Biccherna panel of 1474 in the Archivio di Stato in Siena representing the Allegory of Good Government.

Lewisburg (Pa.), Bucknell University

SS Augustine?, Jerome and Albertus Magnus? (each 15 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 7 $\frac{1}{8}$) from the Kress collection (K 1744), and still earlier from the Chigi collection. These three little figures belong with three others in New Orleans (representing SS John Baptist, Margaret, and the Blessed Ambrogio Sansedoni), as well as seven others by Cozzarelli in the museums at Tulsa and Columbia (S.C.), also from the Kress collection (K 1743).* The six figures at Lewisburg and New Orleans were dated about 1490 and attributed to Girolamo by Longhi**,

as they still are in the new Kress catalogue. To this writer, the only direct parallels are to be found in the earlier works of Benvenuto, especially the pilasters on the Montepertuso altar of 1475; and indeed, Zeri informs me that they belong to the frame of the S Domenico altarpiece of 1483. He will undoubtedly have some novel proof of this.

Notes: *See Fern R. Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection; Italian Schools, XIII-XV century* (London, 1966), p. 161. If all thirteen of them belong together, as their format and provenance seem to confirm, then a reappraisal of Cozzarelli's early formation will be necessary. In fact, this collaboration in itself would militate toward a date in the 1480's (see also above) rather than later when Cozzarelli was already established on his own. **Opinion quoted in Shapley, *ibid.*, p. 161.

Reproduced: Shapley, *ibid.*, figs. 441-446. The portions by Cozzarelli are illustrated in figs. 436-437.

Los Angeles, County Museum of Art (1953.44) (fig. 18)

St. Jerome penitent in the wilderness (12½ × 15½), gift of Thomas Agnew & Sons. Stylistically close to the small Nativity in the Getty Museum, and also to the St. John Gualbertus in Raleigh (i.e. probably of the 1480's). Its fairly rough handling and its size would indicate it is a portion of a predella. So far it has not been connected with any other fragments or known altars.

Memphis, Brooks Memorial Gallery (61.192)

Lamentation (20½ × 16½) from the Kress collection (K 290). This painting was for some time attributed to Vecchietta by most experts, and finally by Meiss to Andrea di Niccolo*, under whose name it is now exhibited. It bears very little resemblance to Andrea's signed works, however, and is certainly much closer to Benvenuto, an opinion also reached by Gertrude Coor** and shared by Zeri***. Similar faces can be found in works between 1466 and 1475, and I would tentatively place the present work in the early 1470's.

Notes: *Opinion quoted in *The Samuel H. Kress Collection, Brooks Memorial Art Gallery* (Memphis, 1958), p. 12. **G. Coor, *Neroccio de' Landi* (Princeton, 1961), pp. 202-203. ***F. Zeri, "Appunti sul Lindenau-Museum di Altenburg," *Bollettino d'Arte*, XLIX (1964), p. 48.

Reproduced: *The Samuel H. Kress Collection, op. cit.*, p. 13.

New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery (1871.64)

Madonna and Child with two angels (29 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 17 $\frac{1}{4}$) from the Jarves collection. Justifiably compared by Siren* to the San Domenico altar of 1483, this fairly rigid composition is also stylistically close to the Clark Madonna in Williamstown.

Notes: *Osvald Siren, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the pictures in the Jarves Collection belonging to the Yale University* (New Haven, 1916), pp. 163-164.

Reproduced: Osvald Siren, *ibid.*

New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery (1943.256) (fig. 13)

Madonna and Child with SS Jerome and a deacon (St. Leonard?) and two angels (27 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 15) from the Maitland Griggs collection. A recent cleaning has revealed extensive losses of paint. Attributed by Berenson* and Van Marle** to Girolamo, and by Offner*** to Benvenuto. Stylistically it must date from the 1470's, just before the London Madonna of 1479.

Notes: *B. Berenson, *op. cit.*, p. 253. **R. Van Marle, *op. cit.*, pp. 421-422. ***Opinion in the Yale files.

New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery (1946.316) (fig. 12)

St. Peter Martyr. See under Kansas City, p. 25.

New Orleans, Isaac Delgado Museum (61.69)

SS John Baptist, Margaret and the Blessed Ambrose Sansedoni, from the Kress collection (K 1744). See under Lewisburg, p. 25.

Reproduced: *The Samuel H. Kress collection in the Isaac Delgado Museum of Art* (New Orleans, 1953), pp. 24-25.

New York, Robert Lehman collection (fig. 9)

St. Bernardino. See under Kansas City, p. 25.

New York, Robert Lehman collection (fig. 25)

Madonna and Child (24 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 14 $\frac{7}{8}$). This fine work can with little difficulty be placed close to the Ascension of 1491. The Christ Child's features can be found on many of the putti in the upper portion of the Siena picture.

New York, Metropolitan Museum (1910.148) (fig. 26)

Assumption of the Virgin, with St. Thomas receiving the girdle (116½ × 86½), signed and dated 1498. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan. From the Convento della Grancia near Grosseto. A major work, possibly with some participation by Girolamo, it is the only signed or dated painting by either painter in America. See also pp. 19-20.

New York, art market (fig. 14)

The Dead Christ supported by two angels, a small lunette from an undetermined altarpiece. Stylistically it is very close to the London Madonna of 1479 and certainly should be dated within a few years of it. It was originally in a private collection in Santa Barbara, California.

Phoenix, Art Museum

Madonna and Child with SS John Baptist and Jerome. This painting, though attributed to Benvenuto at the museum (but not exhibited), is unrelated to him. It is a poor pastiche of Florentine motifs, either forged or repainted.

Raleigh, North Carolina Museum (60.17.31)

St. John Gualbertus before the Crucifix (13½ × 7½) from the Kress collection (K 1833), and earlier from the Kaufmann collection. Dated in the 1960 Raleigh catalogue* as c. 1500, and presently as 1485/90.** The crucifix very much resembles that in the Los Angeles predella, and it seems also stylistically close to the Boston Expulsion—therefore from the 1480's.

Notes: **The Samuel H. Kress Collection, North Carolina Museum of Art* (Raleigh, 1960), pp. 70-71. **Fern R. Shapley, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

Reproduced: Shapley, *op. cit.*, fig. 433.

Washington, National Gallery (10) (fig. 8)

Adoration of the Magi (71½ × 54½) from the Mellon collection. A very large and important work, earlier attributed to Matteo di Giovanni. Probably from the 1470's, between the Volterra and London altarpieces (though it is difficult to say which is nearer),

and the only major painting by Benvenuto from his early period to be found in this country.

Washington, National Gallery (599)

Madonna and Child with SS Bernardino and Jerome (27 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 19) from the Widener collection. Dated by Van Marle* as before 1466. This date is entirely possible but so also would a date in the 1470's be reasonable. This work might be Benvenuto's earliest in the United States.

Notes: *R. Van Marle, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

Reproduced: *Paintings and sculpture from the Widener Collection, National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1948), p. 4.

Washington, National Gallery (429, 1131-1134) (figs. 19-23)

Five scenes from the Passion: Christ at Gethsemane, Christ carrying the cross, the Crucifixion, Christ in Limbo, and the Resurrection (each 17 × 19, except the Crucifixion which is 17 × 21 $\frac{1}{2}$). The latter four are from the Cook collection. Dated by Longhi* at about the time of the S Domenico altar of 1483 which seems certainly correct, and thought by at least one writer** to actually have been the S Domenico altar's own predella. They are among the most expressive of Benvenuto's works, and are unequalled in quality by any other of his predella paintings, whatever the period. The altarpiece to which they were attached must have been very large, and at least as important as that of 1483, but so far no one has advanced any proof of their connection to that work.

Notes: *Opinion in the files of the Kress Foundation. ***De Giotto à Bellini*, exhibition in the Orangerie (Paris, 1956), p. 35.

Williamstown, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute (419)

Madonna and Child (13 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 9 $\frac{3}{8}$). This small composition is dated c. 1470 by the museum, and is a bit more archaic than Benvenuto's usual; but stylistically it seems later, possibly as late as the 1480's, and close to the Jarves Madonna. Federico Zeri informs me he feels it might be by an anonymous follower, who, in any case, would have to have been in Benvenuto's workshop.

Reproduced: *Italian Paintings and Drawings, Exhibit 15, Sterling & Francine Clark Art Institute* (Williamstown, 1961), pl. 13.

OTHER PAINTINGS BY OR ATTRIBUTED
TO GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO
IN AMERICA

Note: The list of Girolamo's paintings should be taken with the understanding that these are probably the products of a workshop and that their quality varies widely. I have attributed no post-1500 works specifically to Benvenuto, so all of these paintings should be thought of as their joint production, and in some cases done merely by assistants. Girolamo di Benvenuto, therefore, becomes a name to cover everything done in their style after *c.* 1500. See pp. 16-17.

Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery (721, 732)

St. Lucy and a hermit Saint with rosary (each $21\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$). Minor works of very little refinement, from the frame of some larger work (such as the frame of the Montepertuso altar). The attribution is not certain, but they are possibly by Girolamo, of fairly early date, probably the 1490's.

Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery (743) (fig. 32)

Nativity, with three figures of SS Francis, Jerome, and Bernardino in the predella ($18\frac{3}{8} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$). Almost certainly cut at the top.* It is presently attributed to Benvenuto at the museum, and also listed as such by Berenson**, with the notation as a late work. It is typical of a group of Nativities (usually attributed to Girolamo) done probably between 1500 and 1520 which exhibit very little variation from one to the next. A superior version was formerly in the collection of Mrs. A. E. Goodhart, New York; another was sold at Christie's, May 24, 1963.

Notes: *For the probable appearance of the original composition before it was cut, see the similar Nativity sold at Christie's May 24, 1963, from the Filangeri collection, illustrated in *International Art Market, III* (1963), p. 166. **B. Berenson, *op. cit.*, p. 76 (erroneously given as no. 728).

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (44.831-2) (figs. 27-28)

An unknown (Carmelite?) saint and St. Vincent Ferrer (each

11½ square), until now referred to as SS Augustine and Thomas Aquinas (or a Dominican saint). The identification of Vincent Ferrer is above question, however, since his book displays his familiar motto TIMETE DEVM ET DATE ILLI HONOREM QVIA VENIT ORA IVDICII EJVS. These two roundels have so far not been connected with any known altarpiece. They very much resemble the two saints in Benvenuto's Assumption of 1498 in New York (fig. 26), and are probably of that period.

Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University (1927.206) (fig. 30)

Madonna and Child with four Saints (73 × 91). One of the four most important works by either Benvenuto or Girolamo in America. It was shown by Zeri* to have come from the Duomo (S Agostino?) in Acquapendente, where the lunette showing the dead Christ with angels is still to be found. Attributed by Zeri to Girolamo and dated c. 1505. The question of father or son is insoluble (although the lunette looks much more like Girolamo), but the dating is probably correct.

Notes: *Zeri, "La Mostra della Pittura Viterbese," *Bollettino d'Arte*, XL (1955), p. 90.

Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University (1947.25)

Miracle of St. Catherine of Siena (12¾ × 21¾). This predella fragment belongs with a section of the same size from the Kress collection in Denver which shows the same saint performing another miracle. They are probably the best of the extant predella compositions by Girolamo, and are decidedly stronger than the predella fragments of 1508. They have been connected by Van Marle* with Fungai's altarpiece of St. Catherine Receiving the Stigmata in the home of St. Catherine in Siena (which seems possible), and dated before 1498 (which seems very improbable). Mrs. Shapley** now dates them about 1505, during what she calls Girolamo's "virile period," and this seems like the safest guess, although one could

Notes: *Van Marle, *op. cit.*, XVI, pp. 424f. **Fern R. Shapley, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

Reproduced: *Collection of Mediaeval and Renaissance paintings, Fogg Art Museum (Cambridge, 1919)*, pp. 137-139.

put them both much later or earlier. Their lack of resemblance to the 1508 predella is reason enough to want to.

Denver, Art Museum (E-942)

St. Catherine of Siena and the possessed woman (12¼ × 21⅞) from the Kress collection (K 1295). See under Cambridge p. 31.

Reproduced: *Paintings and Sculpture of the Samuel H. Kress collection, Denver Art Museum* (Denver, 1954), pp. 44-45.

Denver, Art Museum (E-943)

Venus and Cupid (wedding salver, 20 inches in diameter) from the Kress collection (K 222). Attributed only by Perkins to Girolamo, and subsequently by the Kress Foundation and the museum. Attributed by all other scholars, and with far more plausibility, to Matteo Balducci.

Reproduced: *Paintings... Denver Art Museum*, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum (1953.236) (fig. 34)

Madonna and Child with SS Michael and Catherine of Alexandria. Earlier attributed to Matteo di Giovanni, but given to Girolamo by Berenson.* It is a late work, datable after 1510.

Notes: *Letter to the museum, mid 1950's.

New Brunswick (N.J.), Rutgers University (fig. 33)

Madonna and Child with SS George and Bernardino. Probably the painting formerly in the Lehman collection. When compared with the Madonna at Hartford, some difference in style is apparent, and I believe this must represent Girolamo's style c. 1505-1510, the other the following decade.

New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery (1871.65)

Cupid bound by maidens (wedding salver, 25¼ inches in diameter) from the Jarves collection. It has the arms of the Piccolimini and another family. A very fine work by Girolamo, probably a bit earlier than the Denver/Fogg predella, therefore c. 1505-10.

Reproduced: *Osvold Siren*, op. cit., pp. 165-166.

New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery (1943.259) (fig. 31)

Nativity (20 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 15) from the Maitland Griggs collection. A late work, probably after 1510. Similar to, but not so strong as, the Nativity formerly in the Filangeri collection (see under Baltimore 743, p. 30).

San Antonio, Marion Koogler McNay Art Institute (on loan to the Witte Memorial Museum of San Antonio)

Madonna and Child. This rather poor painting is attributed to Giovanni da Milano by the museum that exhibits it. It is closer to Luca Giordano, but is in fact a careful copy of the center portion of Girolamo's S Domenico altar of 1508, and is probably a modern forgery.

Tulsa, Philbrook Art Center (fig. 29)

Nativity with St. Jerome (25 × 17) from the Kress collection (K 1287). Compositionally and stylistically very close to the large Nativity in the Getty Museum (though much smaller) and datable about 1495-1510.*

Notes: *See also *Paintings and Sculpture of the Samuel H. Kress Collection, Philbrook Art Center* (Tulsa, 1953), pp. 34-35.

Washington, National Gallery (446)

Portrait of a woman (23 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 17 $\frac{7}{8}$) from the Kress collection (K 1078). Usually dated about 1508 because of its resemblance to the St. Catherine in the S Domenico altar of that year.

Reproduced: *Paintings and Sculpture from the Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art* (Washington, 1959), p. 85.

With the exception of the lunette by Benvenuto which was recently on the New York art market (see p. 28, fig. 14), I have not included works whose present location I did not know. A number of pieces which I am not able to trace probably remain in private collections in this country, but of those I have seen in reproduction, only two are of more than average importance. The Adoration by Girolamo formerly in the Goodhart collection in New York (see p. 30) has more figures and greater refinement than Girolamo's usual Nativity

scenes and stands out well among his latest works. The Madonna and Child by Benvenuto formerly in the Platt collection (Van Marle, XVI, p. 394, illus.) is a very early work from around 1470 and for that reason is of more than average interest.

APPENDIX I

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE WORKS IN AMERICA

- | | | |
|--------|---|---|
| 1470 — | c. 1470
early 1470's
early 1470's | Washington, Widener Madonna
Memphis, Kress Lamentation
Detroit, Cassone with Apollo & Muses |
| | c. 1474
1470's
1475-1480
c. 1475-1478
1475-1480
c. 1479 | Kansas City/Yale/Lehman roundels
Washington, Mellon Adoration
Columbus, Cassone with Rape of Persephone
New Haven, Griggs Madonna
Lewisburg/New Orleans, Kress Saints
New York, art market, Pieta lunette |
| 1480 — | 1480's
early 1480's
1480-1485
c. 1483
c. 1483
c. 1483
1480's
1480's | Williamstown, Clark Madonna
Detroit, Madonna
Malibu, Getty Nativity
New Haven, Jarves Madonna
Boston Expulsion
Washington, Kress passion series
Raleigh, Kress St. John Gualbertus
Los Angeles, St. Jerome |
| 1490 — | 1490?
1491

1490's?
c. 1498
1498 | Cambridge, Harvard, Warburg Madonna
New York, Lehman Madonna

Baltimore, Walters Saints
Boston, Saints
New York, Metropolitan, Morgan Assumption |
| 1500 — | 1495-1510
1495-1510

c. 1505?
c. 1505

1505-1510
1505-1510?
c. 1508 | Malibu, Getty Nativity
Tulsa, Kress Nativity

Cambridge/Denver, Predella
Cambridge, Harvard, Acquapendente
Madonna
New Haven, Jarves salver
New Brunswick, Rutgers Madonna
Washington, Kress portrait |
| 1510 — | 1510's
after 1510
after 1510 | Baltimore, Walters Nativity
New Haven, Griggs Nativity
Hartford, Madonna |



Map of Southern Tuscany showing the principal towns where Benvenuto di Giovanni and Girolamo di Benvenuto were active.
(The small dotted lines are the present-day roads.)

Illustrations

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1. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO AND/OR BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Nativity*.
Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum.



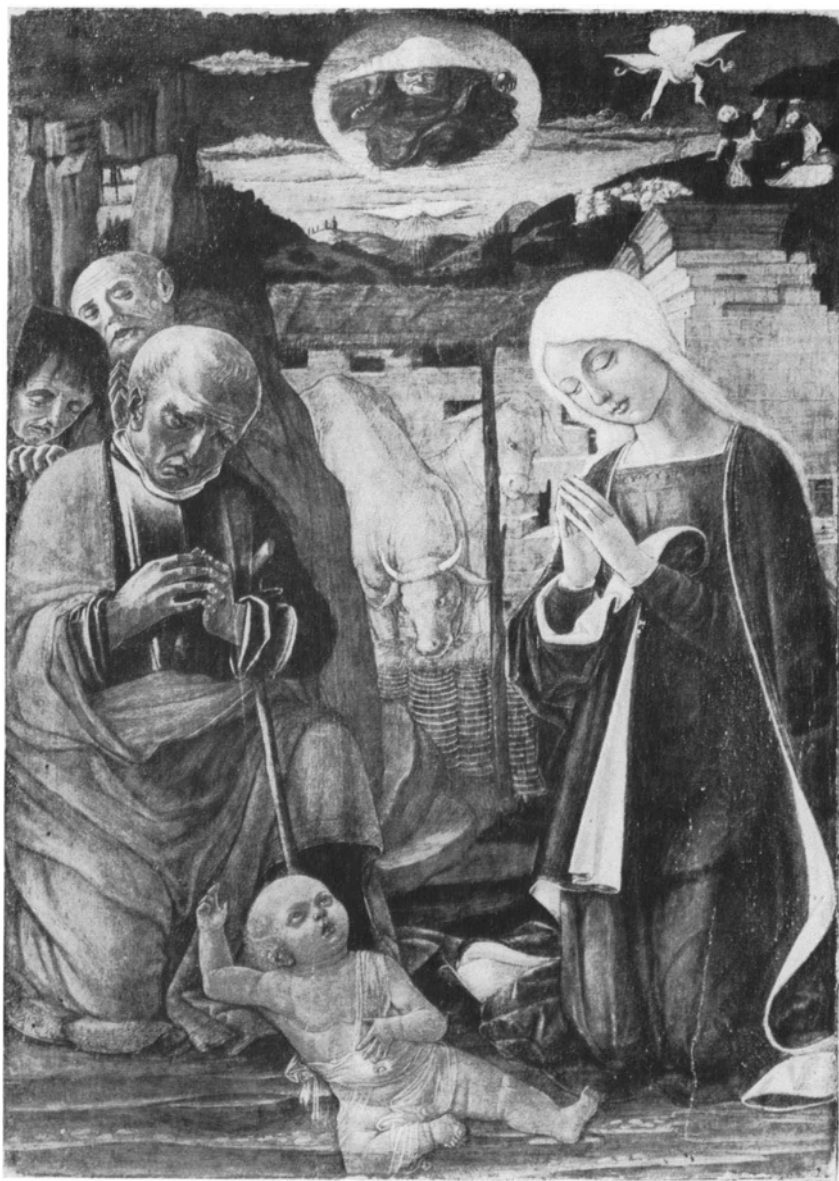
2. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Nativity*, 1470 (heavily restored). Volterra, Pinacoteca.



3. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO AND/OR BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *St. John Baptist* (detail of fig. 1).



4. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO AND/OR BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *A beatified monk* (detail of fig. 1).



5. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Nativity*. Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum.



6. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI?**: *Nativity*. Englewood, D. F. Platt Estate
(Photo: Frick Art Reference Library).



7. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO: *Madonna and Child*.
Cetona, Convento di S. Francesco.
(Photo: Frick Art Reference Library)



8. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:** *Adoration of the Magi.*
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Andrew Mellon Collection.



9. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:**
St. Bernardino. New York,
Robert Lehman Collection.



10. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:**
St. Dominic. Kansas City,
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art,
Atkins Museum of Fine Arts.



11. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:**
Christ blessing. Kansas City,
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art,
Atkins Museum of Fine Arts.



12. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:**
St. Peter Martyr. New Haven,
Yale University Art Gallery.



13. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:
Madonna and Child with two saints and two angels.
New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery.



14. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Dead Christ with two angels.*
New York Art Market.



15. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Poet (Petrarch?) listening to Apollo and the Muses*.
Detroit, Institute of Arts.



16. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Rape of Persephone*. Columbus, Gallery of Fine Arts.



17. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:
Expulsion from Paradise. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.



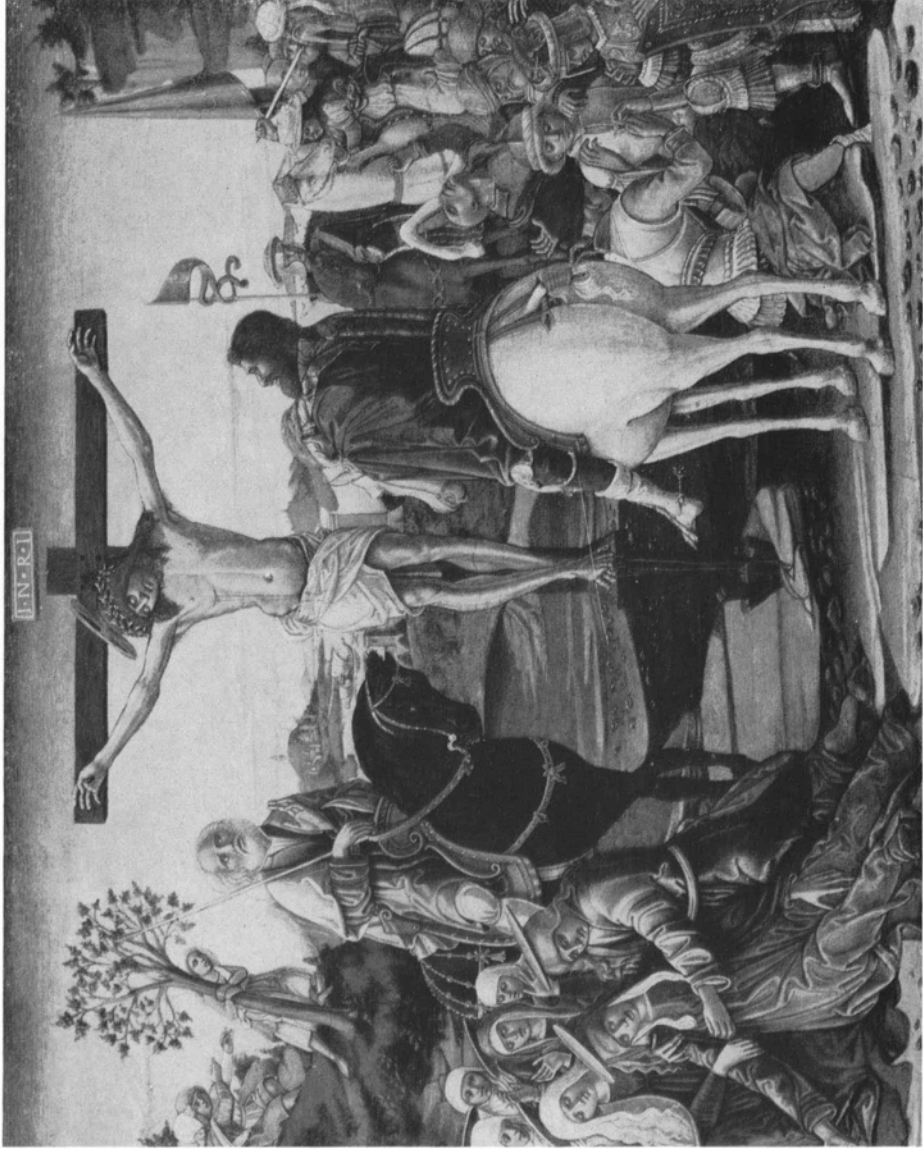
18. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *St. Jerome in penitence.*
Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



19. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Christ at Gethsemane*.
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



20. BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Christ carrying the cross*.
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



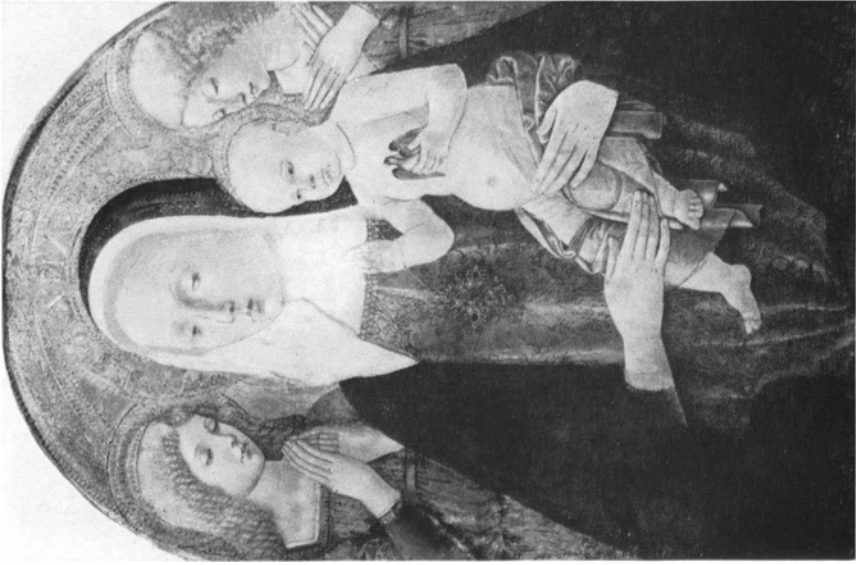
21. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Crucifixion*.** Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



22. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:** *Christ in Limbo.*
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



23. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:** *Resurrection.*
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



24. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:** *Madonna and Child with two angels.* Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.



25. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:** *Madonna and Child.* New York, Robert Lehman Collection.



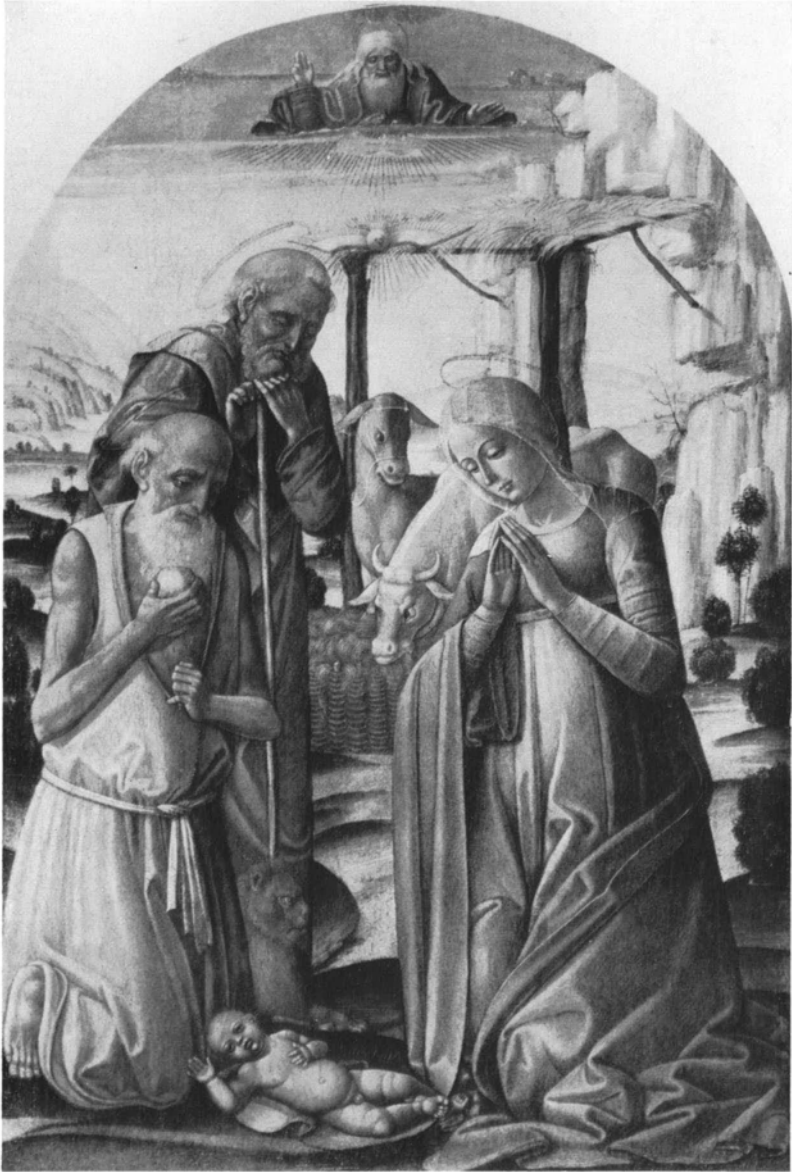
26. **BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI:** *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1498.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



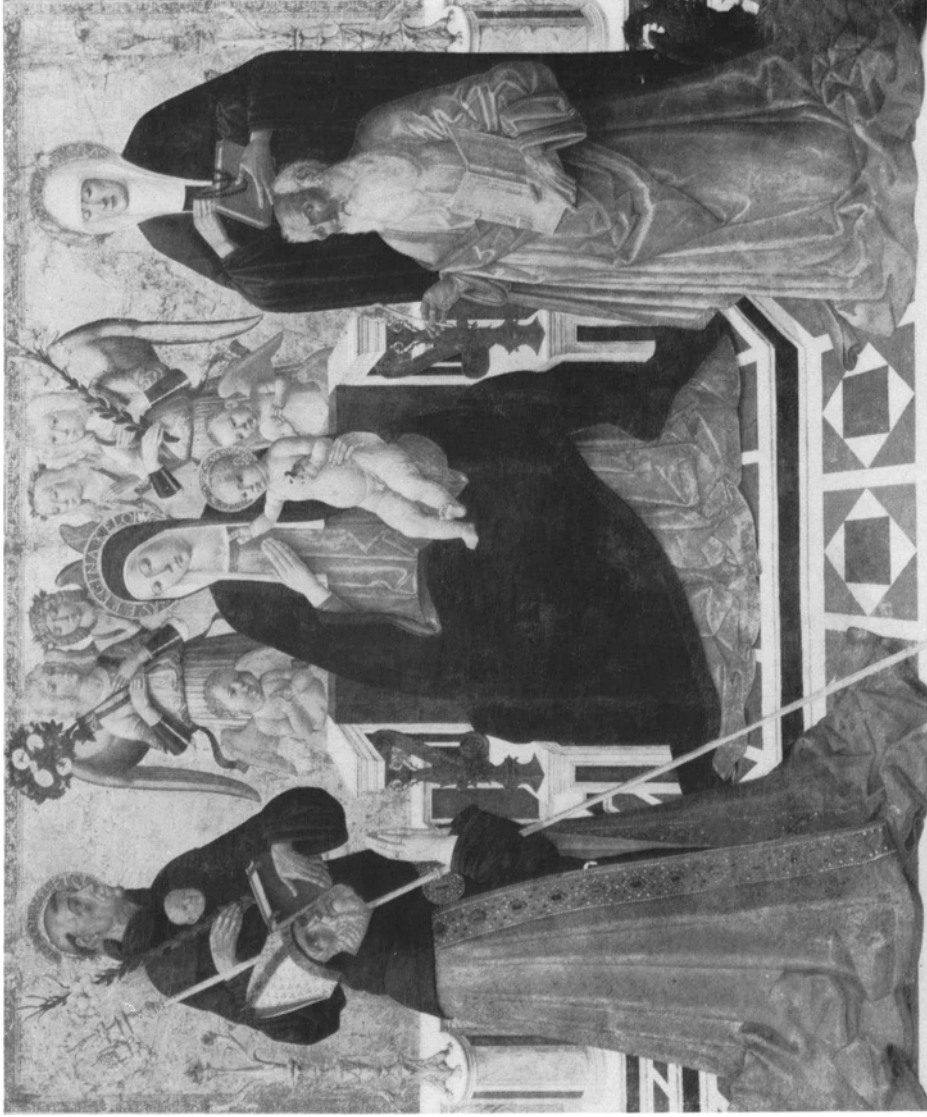
27. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO:
An unknown (Carmelite?) saint.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.



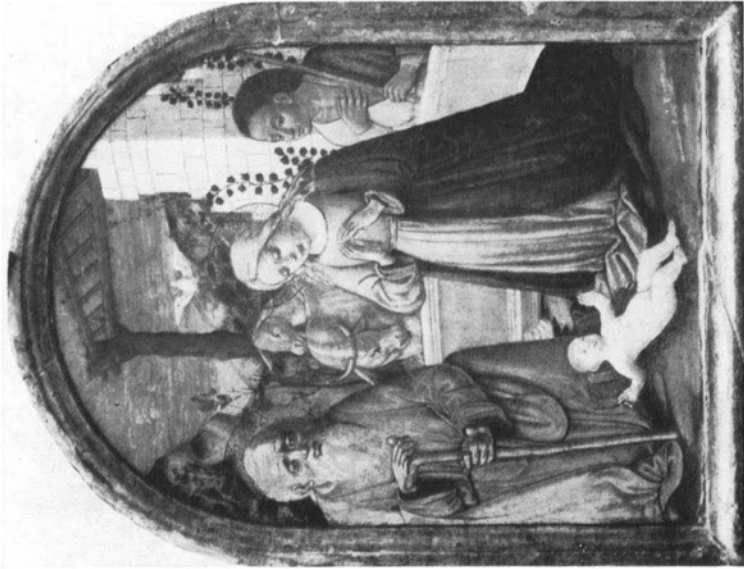
28. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO:
St. Vincent Ferrer.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.



29. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO: *Nativity with St. Jerome*.
Tulsa, Philbrook Art Center, Samuel H. Kress Collection.



30. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO AND/OR BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI: *Madonna and Child with four saints*. Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.



31. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO: *Nativity*.
New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery.



32. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO:
Nativity; three saints.
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery.



33. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO:
Madonna and Child with SS George and Bernardino.
New Brunswick, Rutgers University.



34. GIROLAMO DI BENVENUTO:
Madonna and Child with SS Michael and Catherine.
Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum.

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Publications of the J. Paul Getty Museum (edited by Burton B. Fredericksen):

1. Howard, Seymour. *The Lansdowne Herakles* (1966) \$ 1.00
2. Fredericksen, Burton; & Davisson, Darrell. *Benvenuto di Giovanni and Girolamo di Benvenuto* (1966)

Miscellaneous publications available through the J. Paul Getty Museum:

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Stothart, Herbert. *A Handbook of the Sculpture in the J. Paul Getty Museum* (1965) \$.50

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