

# MADONNA AND CHILD

## with Sts. John the Baptist and Jerome

Artist: Marco Palmezzano

Date: 1510

Dimensions: 295 x 194 cm

Material: Oil on wood panel

Inventory Number: 40273

Total Cost: € 31.175,00

#### STATE OF PRESERVATION:

The work itself is in fair condition though it has deep cracks along the longitudinal axis. The inserts in the panel have since caused some obstruction that does not allow proper flexibility, thus creating new fissures and lesions on the support system and pictorial surface. The entire surface of the painting is coated with a dark layer of final varnish.

#### RESTORATION PROCESS INCLUDES:

- Repair and strengthen the wooden structural supports
- Addition of mechanical support with adjustable springs that permit flexing as needed.
- Cleaning and touching up of the lacunae
- Reintegration of the pictorial surface
- Reapplication and balancing of the varnish
- Photographic documentation
- Reassembly

This painting is a large altar panel painted by Marco Palmezzano of Forlì (1459 - 1539) and was commissioned by the physician Bartolomeo Lombardini (1430-1521) for his family chapel in the church of San Francesco Grande in Forlì (demolished in 1797).

This work was purchased as a painting of Francesco Francia by the Ministry of Public Works in June 1857 and reached the Vatican Painting Gallery, at that time in the Lateran Pinacoteca, towards the end of that year.

From an iconographic point of view, this work is a Madonna and Child with Saints but historically, these works are often referred to as the "Sacred Conversation:" a group of saints and angels surrounding an architectural structure in which Mary is seated in meditation. Here the Madonna is seated on the throne with her Son in her lap. In the background, a curtain separates the foreground from the rocky profile of the horizon.

Below the monumental step of the podium an angel plays the viola, while to his left and right St. Jerome and St. John the Baptist are arranged facing the viewer. The balance of this image is drawn from the pyramidal shape constructed by the saints and Virgin. The fabric of the veil falls in large, rich folds creating continuous waves of changing light and shade. The position and function of the veil do not appear in earlier works by Palmezzano; instead it seems to be the influence of the work of Giovanni Bellini in San Zaccaria in Venice (1505) and the Mountain in San Sebastian in Verona (1507).

