

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



The Annunciation

Fra Filippo Lippi (Italian, ca. 1406–1469)

Date ca. 1440

Medium Tempera on poplar panel

Dimensions Left Panel: 25 1/8 x 9 7/8 in. (63.8 x 25.1 cm) Right Panel: 25 1/8 x 10 in. (63.8 x 25.4 cm)

Credit Line Purchased by The Frick Collection, 1924

Accession Number 1924.1.85

Currently On View

Second Floor, Room 30, Gold-Grounds Room

Commentary The two panels that compose the Frick painting, now framed together, probably originally formed the wings of a small altarpiece of which the central panel has been lost. Around the middle of the fifteenth century, the subject of the Annunciation had become exceedingly popular in the art of Florence. Fra Filippo, who often depicted the scene, usually placed the figures in elegant and complicated architectural settings, made festive with birds, flowering plants, and sunny landscapes seen in the distant background. The setting of the Frick Annunciation is instead bare and simple, painted in muted terracotta, violet, and gray, with nothing to distract the viewer from the gentle drama being enacted. The lily carried by the angel Gabriel symbolizes the Virgin's purity, while the dove represents the angel's words to her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee." Source: *Art in The Frick Collection: Paintings, Sculpture, Decorative Arts*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996.

Collection History From the seventeenth century, Calcagno family, Palermo. Bought from a member of that family by Langton Douglas in 1924. Frick, 1924. Source: *Paintings in The Frick Collection: French, Italian and Spanish. Volume II*. New York: The Frick Collection, 1968.