The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John

Oil on canvas, Italian School, 16th century

An illustrated study for Atlantiques

20 November 2026 | Ref. CA–ATL–HOLYFAMILY–2026–11



Figure 1: *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John*, after conservation (October 2026), in its 19th-century gilt frame.

Italian School, 16th century, probably Florentine, in the manner of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto
The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist
Oil on canvas, lined; 101.6 × 74.9 cm; 125.1 × 98.4 cm framed.
Formerly attributed to Bernardino Luini. Conserved by Francis W. Downing Ltd, Harrogate, 2026.

The Virgin, the Christ Child, the infant Saint John and Saint Joseph, seen at half length against a dark ground: the two children embrace while the Christ Child turns to look at the viewer. This study describes the painting, its condition and recent conservation, examines its old attribution to Bernardino Luini and its relationship to Florentine painting after Andrea del Sarto, proposes a date and origin, and places it in today's market.

1 The work at a glance

Subject	The Holy Family with the infant Saint John the Baptist: the Virgin, the Christ Child embracing St John, and St Joseph in profile.
School and date	Italian School, probably Florentine; second half of the 16th century, c. 1550–1600 (Sections 3 and 6).
Attribution	Anonymous. Figure types and handling follow the Florentine Holy Families of Domenico Puligo (1492–1527) and Andrea del Sarto (1486–1530). Formerly attributed to Bernardino Luini; the attribution is not supported. No other version of the composition is known.
Medium	Oil on canvas, lined twice (old glue-paste lining; new lining 2026).
Dimensions	101.6 × 74.9 cm; frame 125.1 × 98.4 cm.[M1]
Inscriptions	None on the front. “B. Luini” formerly on the reverse of the old lining canvas (19th-century attribution).
Condition	Stable after the 2026 treatment. Worn: abraded flesh, extensive old losses in the background and along the upper edge, a repaired tear of c. 29 × 18 cm; losses toned with visible *tratteggio* (Section 4).[D1]
Frame	Swept Louis XV revival gilt composition frame, c. 1840–1880, restored 2026.
Provenance	Estate of Arthur Savarin Cohen, Maryland; Potomack Company, Alexandria, Virginia, 25 June 2026, lot 2015, as “Northern Italian School after Bernardino Luini, 16th century”; Atlantiques, London.[M1]
Valuation	£12,500, gallery valuation, November 2026 (Section 7).

1.1 First impressions

The painting’s charm lies in the meeting of the two children. Christ throws his arms round his cousin, who leans his head against him and looks down, while Christ himself turns to look straight out at us. The Virgin, calm and inward, rests a long hand on her son; Joseph, old and bald, bends his profile over the group from the shadows. It is a quiet, intimate image of family affection, of the kind that Italian painters of the generation after Leonardo and Raphael made one of the most popular subjects of private devotion.

The picture has had a hard life. It reached the market dark, flaking and torn, and its recent conservation has made it legible again without disguising its losses. It should be judged as what it is: a 16th-century Italian devotional painting, worn but sound, whose composition and faces still speak clearly.

2 Description of the painting

2.1 The figures

The composition is vertical and the figures are shown at half length, close to the picture plane, against a dark, undefined background. There is no landscape, architecture or furniture.

The Virgin occupies the left half. Her body faces the viewer and her head is turned slightly to the right and inclined, in three-quarter view, with lowered eyelids; she looks down and out of the picture rather than at the children. Her hair is parted in the centre and drawn smoothly over the temples beneath a dark green veil, and a thin gold ring outlines her halo. She wears a rose-pink dress with a broad, rounded neckline gathered into small pleats and edged by the white border of her chemise, and a black band high under the bust. Her right arm, in a long, close-fitting sleeve of ivory or white



Figure 2: The painted surface after conservation (conservator's photograph, October 2026).[D1]

silk with fine folds, crosses the lower left of the picture; her long-fingered hand rests on the Christ Child's thigh. A deep green drapery covers her lap.

The Christ Child stands on his mother's lap at the centre. His body turns to the right and he throws both arms round his cousin, but his head turns back over his shoulder towards the viewer, so that his is the only gaze in the picture that meets ours. He has fair curls and three short gilt rays rising above his head, within a fine ring halo.

The infant Saint John the Baptist stands at the right, a little lower and slightly more in profile. He inclines his head against Christ's shoulder and looks down, with an expression of quiet seriousness, and passes his right arm round Christ's waist. A thin dark strap crosses his chest, and at his hip a brownish, shaggy garment, the camel skin of the Baptist, is just visible (Figure 3). A thin, straight dark line passing between the two faces may be the shaft of his reed cross; it could also be an old scratch, toned in.

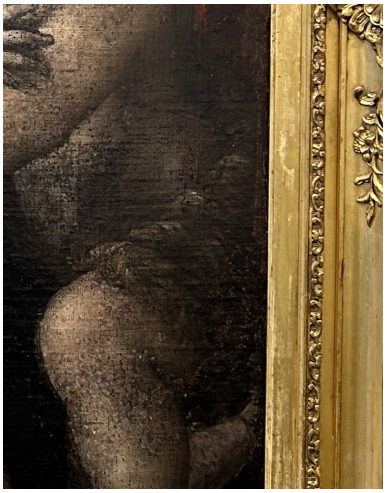
Saint Joseph appears behind them at upper right, in strict profile to the left, bald, with a long grey beard, looking down at the children. A red-orange mantle is gathered over his shoulder. Faint traces of a ring halo can be seen around his head.

2.2 Light and colour

Light falls from the upper left. It catches the Virgin's forehead and neck, the Christ Child's back and arm, and the faces of both children, and leaves Joseph half in shadow. The palette is restricted and warm: the rose of the Virgin's dress, the ivory sleeve, the green of her veil and lap, the flesh tones of the children and the red-orange accent of Joseph's mantle, all set against near-black. Gold is used



(a) The meeting of the faces, with the thin dark line between them.



(b) St John's hip, with the camel skin.

Figure 3: Details identifying the infant St John.

sparingly, in the fine halos and the rays above the Child's head.

2.3 Dimensions and inscriptions

The canvas measures 101.6 × 74.9 cm (40 × 29½ in); the frame 125.1 × 98.4 cm (49¼ × 38¾ in), as catalogued at the 2026 sale; the conservator gives 101.7 × 75 cm.[M1][D1] There is no signature, date or inscription on the front. The words "B. Luini" formerly written on the reverse of the old lining are discussed in Section 4.

3 Artistic analysis

3.1 Subject and iconography

The subject is the Holy Family with the infant Saint John the Baptist, one of the most popular themes of Italian devotional painting in the 16th century. The meeting of the two cousins as children is not told in the Gospels; it developed from late medieval devotional writing, in which the young John, already living in the wilderness, meets the Holy Family on its return from Egypt. From the late 15th century, in the circles of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael, the encounter became an image of tender affection between the two infants, and it carried a deeper meaning: John is the herald who will recognise Christ and baptise him, and their embrace foreshadows that recognition and the Passion that follows.[I1][I2]

Several details secure the identifications. John is shown with the camel skin of the Baptist at his hip and, probably, the thin shaft of his reed cross between the two faces (Figure 3). The Christ Child is distinguished by the gilt rays above his head, the Virgin and Joseph by fine ring halos. Joseph, old and bald, stands apart in the shadows as the protector of the family, a role that 16th-century painters often expressed by placing him behind the group and in profile.

3.2 Composition

The design is built on two diagonals and a vertical. The first diagonal runs from the Virgin's head down through her white sleeve to her hand on the Child's thigh: a long, pale band that leads the

eye into the centre from the upper left. The second runs from Joseph's head down through the two children's faces to the Child's legs, crossing the first at the embrace. The Virgin's upright figure, with the clear oval of her face and the vertical of her veil, holds the left half steady, while the right half is filled by the closely knit group of the children and Joseph.

The Virgin and the two children form a compact triangle in the foreground, in the shallow space of a devotional picture without setting; Joseph is added at the upper right as a profile "wing" that closes the group. At the base of the triangle the Virgin's large hand, with its long, splayed fingers under the Child's thigh, is the physical hinge of the design: it carries the diagonal of the sleeve, supports the Child and binds mother and son together.

The four heads form a descending arc, from the Virgin at upper left to Joseph at upper right and down to the children at the centre, and the Child's face, the only one turned to us, sits at the point where the arc and the two diagonals meet. That single outward glance is the emotional hinge of the picture, as the Virgin's hand is its physical one. Everybody else looks inwards or downwards; the Child alone acknowledges the viewer, inviting the viewer into the family circle.

The figures fill the canvas closely and are cut by its edges: the Virgin's left side, Joseph's mantle and St John's legs run out of the picture. The effect is of a group seen close to, as through a window, a device used by the followers of Leonardo and Raphael, in Milan and in Florence, to give a devotional image immediacy. Whether the canvas has also been slightly reduced cannot be established, because its original edges are no longer visible.

3.3 Drawing, modelling and the painter's hand

The best passages are the heads and the hands, and the Virgin's head is the finest of all: a regular oval, with firm drawing of the lids and mouth and soft half-tones. It is carefully constructed: the long, straight nose with its shaded side, the heavy, lowered upper lids, the small, closed mouth with a darker line at the corners and the soft transition of the cheek into shadow. The Christ Child's arm, foreshortened as it reaches round his cousin, and his small hand with spread fingers on St John's back are confidently drawn. The faces of the two children, one turned out, one turned in, are differentiated with real sensitivity: robust, round-cheeked infants with dark, lively irises and sidelong glances, closer to the vigorous children of Florentine painting than to the porcelain infants of Leonardo's Milanese followers.

Elsewhere the painter is more summary. The Virgin's dress and the green drapery on her lap are broadly blocked in; the transition from her shoulder to the sleeve is simplified; Joseph is treated as a profile silhouette rather than a modelled head; and the children's bodies, now abraded, are softer and less firmly structured than their heads. The dark background is uniform. This combination, careful heads and hands with simplified drapery and setting, is characteristic of a capable professional painter working from established models, rather than of the inventor of those models.

3.4 Light, colour and mood

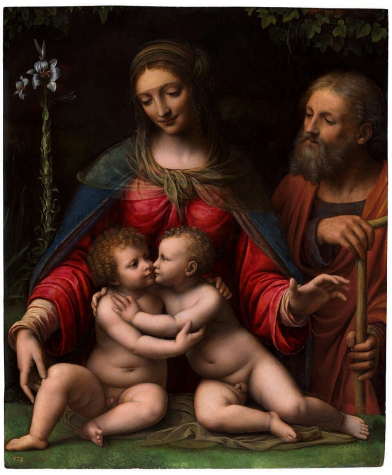
The light from the upper left is selective. It falls on the faces, the Virgin's neck and sleeve and the Child's back, and lets everything else sink into darkness. Compared with Luini's own Holy Families, where figures sit in a softly lit landscape or before a bower of leaves, here the setting has disappeared and the contrast between light and dark is stronger. The modelling is a soft, moderate chiaroscuro rather than the dense, smoky sfumato of Leonardo's Milanese followers. The colour, rose, ivory, green and a single red accent, is restrained and harmonious.

The mood is tender and grave rather than playful. The Virgin does not smile; St John's expression is serious; Joseph watches in silence. The theme of the children's embrace, which in 16th-century Italian painting often carried a foreshadowing of Christ's Passion and of John's role as his herald, is

treated here with a quiet solemnity suited to private prayer.

3.5 The old attribution to Bernardino Luini

Bernardino Luini (c. 1481–1532) was the most successful of the Milanese painters who adopted the manner of Leonardo. His Holy Families, with their sweet, smiling Virgins and smooth, enamel-like children, were among the most admired Italian pictures in 19th-century Britain and America, and many paintings of uncertain authorship were given his name at that time. The "B. Luini" on the old lining of the present painting and the Potomack catalogue, which compared it with Luini's *Holy Family* in the Prado, belong to that tradition.[M1]



(a) Bernardino Luini, *The Holy Family with the Infant St John*, panel, 100 × 84 cm. Museo del Prado, P000242. Public domain.[I3]



(b) Bernardino Luini, *The Holy Family with St Anne and St John*, panel. Pinacoteca Ambrosiana, Milan. Public domain.[I4]



(c) The present painting.

Figure 4: The present painting beside two Holy Families by Luini.

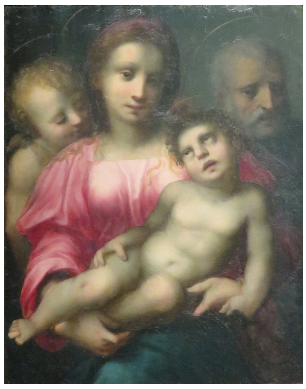
The comparison shows points of contact, but more differences:

- **Points of contact.** Both Luini pictures show the infants embracing, and in the Ambrosiana painting an old, bald, bearded Joseph appears at the right, turned in profile towards the group, as in the present painting.[I4]
- **The Virgin.** Luini's Virgins have the oval, smiling face, the long almond eyes and the softly waved hair of Leonardo's types, and they wear a red dress under a blue mantle. The present Virgin does not smile; her face is broader and more naturalistic, and she wears a rose-pink dress with a gathered neckline, a high black band and a long pale sleeve, with no blue mantle.
- **The children.** Luini's infants are smooth and porcelain-like, with tight curls; here they are solid and active, more strongly lit.
- **The setting.** Luini sets his figures in a landscape or before a bower of leaves, with a lily; here the ground is dark and empty.
- **The composition.** In the Prado painting the children sit on the ground and kiss; here the Christ Child stands on his mother's lap and turns to the viewer.

The present painting is therefore **not a copy of any known work by Luini**, and its figure types are not his. The old attribution is understandable, given the subject and the profile Joseph, but it should not be maintained.

3.6 The Florentine models: Andrea del Sarto and Domenico Puligo

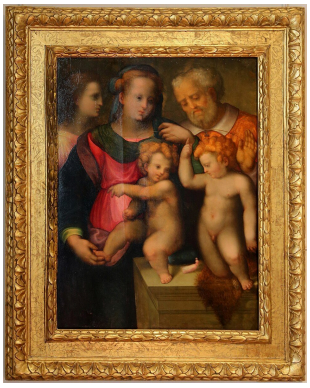
The closest parallels for the figure types, dress and handling are found not in Milan but in Florence, in the Holy Families painted in the 1520s by Andrea del Sarto and, above all, by his friend and follower Domenico Puligo (1492–1527).



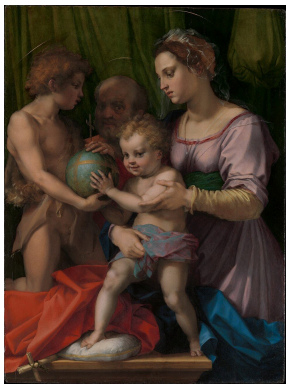
(a) Domenico Puligo, *Holy Family with St John*. Columbus Museum of Art. Public domain.[I5]



(b) Domenico Puligo, *Holy Family with St John*, c. 1525. Galleria Palatina, Florence. Photo F. Bini, CC BY-SA 4.0.[I6]



(c) Workshop of Domenico Puligo, *Holy Family*. Photo Sailko, CC BY 3.0.[I7]



(d) Andrea del Sarto, *The Holy Family with the Young St John* (Borgherini), c. 1528. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 22.75. Public domain.[I8]

Figure 5: Florentine Holy Families of the 1520s.

- **The Virgin's dress.** The rose-pink dress with a broad, gathered neckline, the high band under the bust and the long sleeve of a contrasting pale colour are characteristic Florentine dress of the 1520s, as worn by Sarto's and Puligo's Virgins.
- **The faces.** Puligo's Virgins have the same full oval, centrally parted hair under a dark veil, heavy lowered lids and small closed mouth. Their mood is grave and inward rather than smiling.
- **Light and ground.** Puligo was known for his soft, smoky modelling, with figures emerging from a dark ground. Vasari praised his colouring and noted his habit of blurring contours.[I9] The present painting shares this approach.
- **Halos.** Fine gold rings, as here, are usual in Puligo's Holy Families.
- **Joseph.** In the Puligo workshop picture an old, bearded Joseph bends over the group from the right, looking down at the children; the present painting places him in the same position, in stricter profile.

3.7 Raphael's grouping of mother and children



Figure 6: Raphael, *Madonna della Tenda*, c. 1513–14. Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Public domain.[I10]

The way the Christ Child is held upright against his mother, turning his head while the infant John presses close at the right, recalls Raphael's Roman Madonnas, such as the *Madonna della Tenda*. Raphael's compositions circulated widely in drawings and engravings and were absorbed by Sarto's and Puligo's workshops. The present painting combines this grouping with the motif of the embrace and with a Joseph in profile.

The result is a **composite invention**: a new arrangement assembled from figure types and motifs that were common property among Florentine painters of the generation after Raphael and Sarto. This was normal practice in 16th-century workshops producing Holy Families for private patrons.

3.8 Is the composition original?

No other version of this composition has been found. The searches made for this study covered reverse-image search engines (Bing, Yandex), the photographic archive of the Fondazione Federico Zeri in Bologna, whose holdings on Luini, Puligo, Bugiardini and Sogliani were reviewed image by image, Wikimedia Commons, the online collections of the principal museums concerned, and the auction archives of Invaluable and other houses from 1998 to 2026. Only the 2026 sale photographs of the present painting were found.

The gallery's own observation, that no reproductions of the same design can be found online, is therefore confirmed. It supports the view that the painting is not a copy of a famous picture, but an **independent composition by a follower**, assembled from established models. It is not proof that no other version exists: many paintings in private collections and many sale records are not illustrated online.

3.9 Quality compared

Set beside the Florentine models, the present painting is clearly the work of a lesser hand. Puligo's and Sarto's pictures are more fluent in their drawing of the body, richer in the modelling of drapery and more refined in their transitions of light. The present painter concentrates his care on the heads and the hands. He handles the drapery broadly and the anatomy of the children less firmly, and he simplifies the background to a uniform dark ground. The heads, especially the Virgin's and the Christ Child's, are the best of the painting, and they show a painter well trained in the Florentine tradition.

3.10 The schools considered

Two independent readings were made for this study, and every regional school with a claim to the painting was weighed:

School	For	Against	Assessment
Florentine / Tuscan (followers of Sarto and Puligo)	Virgin's type, dress and long pale sleeve; robust children; soft modelling on a dark ground; ring halos; Joseph bending over the group	Joseph in strict profile is less usual in Florence	**Preferred**
Lombard / North Italian (Milan, Cremona, Piedmont)	The embracing infants; Joseph in profile (Luini's Ambrosiana *Holy Family*); dark ground; the old attribution	No Leonardesque sfumato or smiling Virgin; different dress and children	Close alternative
Genoese (following of Luca Cambiaso)	Chubby infants; bald Joseph	Cambiaso's handling is much broader	Possible, less likely
Emilian	Rose and white palette	No Correggesque softness	Less likely
Roman	Raphaelesque grouping of mother and child	No Roman structure or monumentality	Unlikely
Iberian (Valencian or Castilian followers of Leonardo)	The embracing infants were popular in Spain	Spanish Leonardeschi worked on panel; no Spanish facial types	Unlikely

Both readings agree that the painting is not by Luini, that it is the work of an anonymous Italian painter of the 16th century working from High Renaissance models, and that the Florentine and North Italian traditions are the two serious candidates. The balance of the figure types favours Florence.

3.11 Conclusion on attribution

> **Italian School, 16th century, probably Florentine, in the manner of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto.** Formerly attributed to Bernardino Luini.

The painting is not by Luini or his workshop, and no named painter can be proposed. Its figure types and handling follow the Florentine Holy Families of Puligo and Sarto; the profile Joseph and the theme of the embrace are shared with Lombard painting and with Luini, but were widespread. A Lombard origin cannot be ruled out entirely. The painting is best described as the work of a follower of the Florentine masters of the 1520s, active later in the century.

4 Condition and the 2026 conservation

4.1 The painting as it was sold in June 2026

When it was sold the picture was barely legible. A thick, yellowed and partly blanched varnish lay over the whole surface, the dark background was crossed by flaking and losses, and Joseph's head could hardly be made out. The conservator's examination on arrival in Harrogate (27 July 2026) recorded:[D1]

- **Structure:** an old lining with an added canvas adhered with organic glue paste, now slack and distorted.



Figure 7: Left: the painting as photographed for the Potomack Company sale, June 2026, out of its frame. Right: after conservation, photographed by the conservator, October 2026. Different cameras and lighting; the comparison is of legibility, not of exact colour.[M1][D1]

- **Surface:** grime over heavy, discoloured, oxidised varnish layers, with evidence of earlier attempts at cleaning.
- **Earlier restoration:** considerable retouching and overpaint throughout.
- **Paint layer:** serious craquelure with raised, lifting paint in the upper centre, and numerous losses of paint and ground, especially along the top and upper sides.
- **Damage:** a large tear in the upper centre, through the original canvas and the old lining, affecting an area of about 29 × 18 cm.
- **Frame:** grime and numerous serious losses of the composition ornament.

4.2 The treatment, July–October 2026

Francis W. Downing Ltd, Fine Art Conservation, Harrogate (ICON-accredited), carried out the following work:[D1]

1. Emergency consolidation of the raised paint.
2. Removal of surface dirt, of the discoloured resin varnish and of the obtrusive later retouching. Older, unobtrusive retouching and basic overpaint were deliberately left in place.
3. Removal of the distortion of the structure under vacuum and gentle heat; the torn edges re-adhered.
4. Impregnation and **lining onto a new canvas** with a stable conservation adhesive under vacuum and heat.
5. Filling of the tear and other losses, and toning with ***tratteggio***, a technique of fine parallel hatching.
6. A non-yellowing, UV-protective synthetic varnish.
7. The frame cleaned and consolidated; the missing ornament re-cast, replaced, toned and gilded. The painting refitted with an acid-free protective backing.



Figure 8: Raking light before treatment (conservator's photograph). The light, falling from the side, shows the network of raised cracks and islands of lifting paint in the upper half, the vertical line of the tear above and to the right of the children, and the scattered losses along the upper edge.[D1]

The conservator recorded the condition after treatment as **stable**, with a recommended re-examination in five to ten years.[D1]

4.3 Why *tratteggio*, and how to read it

Tratteggio was developed in Rome at the Istituto Centrale del Restauro in the mid-20th century, within the theory of restoration associated with Cesare Brandi. Losses are filled and then toned with fine, parallel strokes of pure colour. At a normal viewing distance they merge with the surrounding paint and restore the continuity of the image; close to, the hatching can be distinguished from original paint.[T1][T2]

The conservator explains that the losses and new fills were so extensive that repainting them in imitation of the original would have been neither appropriate nor ethical, so the painting was toned "holistically" rather than reconstructed.[D1] For a collector this is a mark of probity: what is original and what is modern remain legible. It also means that the picture will always read, close to, as an old painting that has suffered, and should be presented that way.

4.4 What the cleaning recovered: Joseph's head

Before treatment, Joseph seemed almost absent. The enhanced sale photograph shows that his head was **there, but worn and veiled**: the profile of the forehead, the eye socket, the nose and the grey mass of the beard can all be traced. The cleaning made the figure legible again, and the toning



Figure 9: Upper right quarter. Left: sale photograph, June 2026, with brightness and contrast raised for study. Right: after treatment, October 2026.[M1][D1]

has reinforced its contours. The head as it reads today therefore combines original paint, worn thin, with modern toning within and around it. The vertical line of the tear runs to the right of the head, through the background and the upper part of the mantle (Figure 10).



Figure 10: The same area in raking light before treatment (left) and after treatment (right).[D1]

4.5 Condition today: an assessment for the collector

- **Best preserved:** the Virgin's face and neck, the faces of the two children, the Christ Child's arm and hand, the Virgin's long white sleeve and hand, and the red of Joseph's mantle. These passages carry the drawing and the expression of the picture.

- **Abrasion:** across the flesh the paint has been worn thin by past cleaning, so that the tops of the canvas weave show pale and the colour survives mainly in the interstices. This gives the flesh a granular, slightly "pixelated" look in close-up photographs. It is old damage, not caused by the 2026 treatment.
- **Weave emphasis:** the texture of the canvas is strongly visible across the whole surface. This is typical of paintings that have been lined with heat and pressure in the past, and is accentuated here by abrasion.
- **Retouching:** older retouching survives by deliberate choice, and new toning covers the tear and the losses in the background, along the top and around Joseph. Its full extent is not mapped in the conservation report; ultraviolet photography would show it. On the photographic evidence, original paint survives best in the Virgin's face and neck and in the children's heads and torsos, while the background, the upper edge and parts of Joseph's head owe more to toning. The old retouching left in place includes, probably, passages of the long sleeve at the left edge.
- **Craquelure:** a wide, irregular network of age cracks, now laid down, remains visible, especially in the dark background.
- **Structure:** new lining, stable.

In plain terms: the painting has been rescued from an unstable and almost illegible state and is now sound. It is, however, a **worn and restored** old painting, not a well-preserved one. Its appeal lies in the composition, the faces and the period character, and its condition is described here in full.

4.6 Close views after conservation



(a) The Virgin.



(b) The two children.

Figure 11: Gallery photographs, 13 November 2026. The pale speckling in the flesh is the canvas weave showing through abraded paint, together with fine toning.

5 Frame, support and reverse

5.1 The frame



Figure 12: Upper left corner of the frame after restoration.

The painting is presented in a broad gilt frame, 125.1 × 98.4 cm overall,[M1] of swept Louis XV revival design. Pierced corner cartouches of C-scrolls, shells and flowers, with matching cartouches at the centre of each side, sit on a hollow frieze with trailing flowers, a sanded flat and two running ornamental mouldings, the inner one leading to a plain gilded slip.

The ornament is cast composition on a softwood core, gilded over a red bole that shows where the gold is worn. This type of frame was made in large numbers in Europe and America in the mid-19th century, c. 1840–1880. It is therefore not original to the painting, but it is a period frame in its own right, and its presence suggests that the picture has been in this frame since at least the later 19th century. Its losses were re-cast and gilded in 2026.[D1]

5.2 Support and reverse

The original canvas is not visible: it has been lined twice, once in the past with glue paste and again in 2026. Its weave, seen through the paint on the front, is a fairly fine, regular plain weave. The old lining and the stretcher with expansion keys are of a type common in the 19th century.

5.3 The “B. Luini” inscription

Before treatment, the reverse of the old lining canvas bore the words “B. Luini” in black paint, in a confident cursive hand. Because they were written on the **lining** canvas, they cannot be older than that lining, which is probably of the 19th century. They record an attribution to Bernardino Luini made by an owner or dealer at that time, when Luini was among the most admired and collected painters of the Italian Renaissance, especially in Britain and America. They are an old attribution, not a signature, and they carry no weight as evidence of authorship.

The inscription is no longer visible, as the reverse is now covered by the 2026 lining canvas. It is recorded in the 2026 sale photographs reproduced here, which form part of the painting’s documentation.



(a) June 2026: the old glue-paste lining on its keyed stretcher.[M1]



(b) Detail of the old lining: "B. Luini", brushed in black.[M1]



(c) November 2026: the new lining, backing and mirror plates.

Figure 13: The reverse before and after the 2026 treatment. The consignment label "ASAV 18" remains on the frame at upper right.

6 Origin and estimation of age

6.1 The evidence

No document dates the painting and no technical analysis has been made. Its date must therefore be estimated from independent kinds of evidence, none of them decisive on its own.

Evidence	Observation	What it indicates
Style and models	Figure types, dress, halos and soft modelling of the Florentine Holy Families of Sarto and Puligo, c. 1515–1530, combined with Raphaelesque and Leonardesque motifs (Section 3). Drapery and background simplified; contrasts of light somewhat stronger.	A follower working from these models: after c. 1530, probably by one or two generations.
Dress	The Virgin's dress, square gathered neckline, high band and detached long sleeve, is fashion of c. 1515–1540, treated here as a formula.	The design goes back to models of c. 1520–1540; the execution is somewhat later.
Support	Canvas, not panel. In Florence, as in Milan, the painters of the 1520s used wooden panel for pictures of this kind. Canvas became common for easel paintings in central Italy from the middle of the century.	Favours a date after c. 1540; not conclusive alone.
Ground	Where paint has flaked along the lower edge, the losses expose a warm, reddish-brown layer over the canvas, apparently an earth-coloured ground; no bright white gesso ground is visible. Coloured grounds spread in Italian painting on canvas from the middle of the 16th century.[T4]	Consistent with a date after c. 1550; it also speaks against Luini's generation. Needs confirmation by sampling.
Ageing of the paint	A wide, irregular network of cracks with cupping and lifting; extensive losses of paint and ground; abrasion from repeated cleaning; several campaigns of retouching and multiple varnish layers before 2026.[D1]	A long history: several centuries rather than decades.

Evidence	Observation	What it indicates
Lining	An old glue-paste lining on a keyed stretcher, of a type usual in the 19th century, bearing the inscription “B. Luini”.	The painting was already old, damaged and attributed to Luini when it was lined.
Frame	Louis XV revival gilt composition frame, c. 1840–1880.	Framed as a gallery picture by the later 19th century.

6.2 The Florentine context

Andrea del Sarto’s workshop was the most productive in Florence in the 1520s, and his Holy Families were copied, varied and recombined for decades after his death in 1530 by his pupils and by later painters. Puligo, who died in 1527, ran a workshop that produced many Madonnas and Holy Families for private devotion, often in several versions. In the following generations, painters such as Michele Tosini and the large workshops that supplied the Florentine market with devotional pictures continued to use these models, increasingly on canvas.[I9][I11] The present painting belongs naturally to this production: a picture for a private house, combining familiar models in a new arrangement.

6.3 Could it be a later imitation?

A **19th-century copy or pastiche** is unlikely. The painting had already suffered heavy losses, abrasion and several restorations before it received its old lining and its 19th-century frame and inscription, and such a history takes far longer than a few decades. A date in the **17th century** cannot be excluded on the photographic evidence: the darkened ground and stronger lighting would fit a conservative painter of the early 1600s. But the figure types, the dress and the gold halos remain those of the 16th century, and nothing in the handling is specifically Baroque.

6.4 Conclusion on date and origin

> **Origin:** Italy, probably Florence or Tuscany; North Italy is the main alternative.
> **Date:** most probably the **second half of the 16th century, c. 1550–1600**. The two independent readings made for this study proposed c. 1540–1600 and c. 1560–1640 respectively, both favouring the later 16th century; an early 17th-century date cannot be excluded without technical analysis.
> **Description:** Italian School, 16th century, probably Florentine, in the manner of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto.

A Spanish origin, among the Iberian followers of Leonardo and Raphael, was also considered. Spanish Leonardesque painting of the early 16th century (Fernando Yáñez de la Almedina, Fernando Llanos) was on panel and of a different figure type, and nothing specifically Iberian has been observed. A **Lombard or North Italian** origin, the main alternative, would not change the date range.

6.5 How the date and origin could be refined

- **Paint cross-sections** from existing losses at the edges: the structure of the ground is the most informative single indicator of date and region.
- **Pigment analysis** (for example X-ray fluorescence): lead-tin yellow and smalt would support a 16th-century date; Prussian blue (after c. 1710) or other later pigments would exclude one.[T5]
- **Thread count and weave** of the original canvas, visible in X-radiographs.

- **Infrared reflectography**: underdrawing, transfer marks from a cartoon or changes in the composition would show how the painter worked from his models.
- **Specialist opinion**: images of the cleaned painting could be submitted to a specialist in Florentine painting of the 16th century, and compared with the photographs of the Fondazione Zeri.

7 Market study and valuation

7.1 Basis of the valuation

This valuation is a **gallery retail valuation**: the price at which the painting can reasonably be offered to a private collector by a London gallery, in its present state, with its conservation documentation and this study. It is based on the prices at which comparable paintings are currently offered by specialist dealers in Italy, the United Kingdom and on the principal international platforms for old master paintings (1stDibs and Proantic), consulted on 17–20 November 2026.

The comparables were selected for their **subject** (the Holy Family, or the Virgin and Child with the infant St John), **school and period** (Italian, 16th and 17th centuries, particularly Florentine, Tuscan and North Italian painting after the High Renaissance masters), **support and size**, **number of figures**, **attribution level** and **state of preservation**. Each was checked against its image and description. Prices are the dealers' advertised prices; sterling equivalents use €1 = £0.87.[F1]

7.2 Anonymous Italian devotional paintings of the 16th and 17th centuries

Work and dealer	Support, size	Price	Comparison with the present painting
Tuscan School, late 16th c., *Holy Family with St Anne and the young St John*. Antichità Ischia Romano, Riva del Garda[R1]	Canvas, 54 × 73 cm	€2,500 (≈£2,200)	Same school and period; much smaller and more provincial.
Painter from Northern Italy, *Holy Family with the young St John*. Ghidotti, Chiari[R9]	Canvas, 67 × 53 cm	€3,900 (≈£3,400)	Smaller, weaker drawing.
Central Italy, mid-16th c., *Holy Family with child saints*, "Tuscan periphery, after Sarto, Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio or Tosini". Galleria Bompadre, Foligno[R2]	Poplar panel, 90 × 63 cm	€4,300 (≈£3,700)	Same Florentine orbit; naive execution, well preserved.
Follower of Garofalo, *Madonna and Child*, 16th c. Youngs Antiques, Lincolnshire[R10]	Canvas, 64 × 53.5 cm, relined	£5,000	UK dealer; two figures, much smaller.
Copy after Andrea del Sarto, late 16th c., *Madonna and Child with the infant St John*. Bisi Antichità, Lonato[R11]	Canvas, 77 × 59 cm	€6,000 (≈£5,200)	Same Sartesque lineage; smaller; a copy of a known model.
Bolognese School, 17th c., *Holy Family with the young St John*. Ravelli, Villa Verucchio[R12]	Canvas, 116 × 101 cm framed	€6,000 (≈£5,200)	Later in date; similar size.
Lombard School, 17th c., *Madonna and Child with St John*. Antiquità Ghilli, Milan[D2]	Canvas, 102 × 114 cm	€6,000 (≈£5,200)	Later; three figures.

Work and dealer	Support, size	Price	Comparison with the present painting
Northern Italy, 16th c., *Madonna and Child with the young St John and St Joseph*. Coradi Rare Finds, Brescia[R13]	Canvas, c. 95 × 124 cm	€7,000 (≈£6,100)	The same four figures and period; the closest match in subject and size.
Circle of Bernardino Luini, *The Virgin and Child*, 16th c. Period Portraits, York[D3]	Canvas, 64 × 76 cm	£8,000	UK dealer; two figures; smaller.
Italian School, 2nd half 17th c., *Holy Family with the infant St John*. 1stDibs (dealer in Vicoforte)[R14]	Canvas, framed 132 × 107 cm	€9,000 (≈£7,800)	Later; relined; in a 19th-century frame.



(a) Northern Italy, 16th c.: €7,000.[R13]



(b) After Sarto, late 16th c.: €6,000.[R11]



(c) Central Italy, mid-16th c.: €4,300.[R2]



(d) The present painting.

Figure 14: Anonymous Italian Holy Families offered by dealers, November 2026. Images: the dealers; research comparison only.

7.3 Paintings with a named circle, workshop or attribution

Work and dealer	Support, size	Price	Comparison with the present painting
Circle of Battista Ramenghi, *Holy Family with the infant St John*. Antichità Castelbarco, Riva del Garda[R15]	Canvas, 86 × 72 cm	€6,600 (≈£5,700)	Named Bolognese circle; smaller.
Workshop or follower of Domenico Beccafumi, *Madonna and Child with the young St John*. Antichità Castelbarco[R16]	Canvas, 70 × 53 cm	€8,800 (≈£7,700)	Tuscan; three figures; much smaller.
Attributed to Scipione Pulzone, *Madonna and Child with St John and St Elizabeth*. Antichità Castelbarco[R17]	Canvas, 119 × 102 cm	€9,500 (≈£8,300)	Larger; four figures; a specific attribution.
School of Titian, *Holy Family with the infant St John*. 1stDibs[R6]	Canvas, 84 × 98 cm	€9,984 (≈£8,700), discounted from €12,480	Similar size; prestigious name.

Work and dealer	Support, size	Price	Comparison with the present painting
Workshop of Cristoforo Roncalli, *Holy Family*. 1stDibs[R5]	Canvas, 161 × 121 cm	€14,352 (≈£12,500), discounted from €17,940	Much larger; named Roman workshop.
Workshop of Andrea del Sarto, *Holy Family with St Elizabeth and the infant St John*. Antichità Ischia Romano[R3]	Canvas, framed 80 × 96 cm	€14,500 (≈£12,600)	The same Florentine lineage; a version of a famous Sarto composition.
Venetian School, 16th c., *Holy Family*. 1stDibs[R4]	Canvas, 66 × 94 cm	€17,395 (≈£15,100)	Period canvas with carved frame.
Workshop of Andrea del Sarto (attributable to Jacone), *Virgin and Child*. 1stDibs[R8]	Panel, 72 × 56 cm	€20,280 (≈£17,600), discounted from €25,350	Period panel with a named Florentine attribution.



(a) Workshop of Sarto: €14,500.[R3] **(b)** Attributed to Pulzone: €9,500.[R17] **(c)** Beccafumi workshop or follower: €8,800.[R16] **(d)** Circle of Ramenghi: €6,600.[R15]

Figure 15: Italian devotional paintings with a named circle, workshop or attribution offered by dealers, November 2026. Images: the dealers; research comparison only.

7.4 Where the present painting stands

The two groups define the market for this kind of painting. Anonymous Italian Holy Families and Madonnas of the 16th and 17th centuries are offered at about £2,200–7,800; the larger, four-figure works of the 16th century at the top of that range. Paintings with a named circle, workshop or attribution are offered at about £5,700–17,600, most often between £8,000 and £15,000.

Several qualities set the present painting at the upper end of the first group and within the second:

- **Size and ambition.** At 101.6 × 74.9 cm, with four figures at half length, it is larger and more complex than most of the anonymous comparables. Among them, only the Northern Italian Holy Family offered at about £6,100 matches it in size, number of figures and date; the other large ones are of the 17th century.
- **An original composition.** No other version is known (Section 3). Most comparables at this level are copies or versions of famous models; the present painting is an independent invention in the Florentine manner, with a memorable motif, the Child's outward glance from the embrace.
- **Lineage.** Its figure types and handling derive from the Florentine Holy Families of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto, the same lineage as the Sarto workshop picture offered at £12,600, and its history includes an old attribution to Bernardino Luini.

- **Age.** A genuinely old painting of the 16th century, with a physical history consistent with that date (Section 6).
- **Documented conservation.** Rescued from an unstable state and fully treated in 2026 by an accredited conservator, with a written report and before-and-after photographs. None of the dealer descriptions consulted mentions a comparable conservation report.
- **Presentation.** A handsome 19th-century gilt frame, restored at the same time; a London gallery setting; and this illustrated study.

The painting's **condition** weighs in the other direction: the flesh is worn, and old losses and a repaired tear have been toned with visible *tratteggio* (Section 4). The valuation takes this fully into account. A collector acquires an authentic, legible and stable 16th-century composition whose restoration is transparent, rather than a pristine surface.

7.5 Valuation

> **Gallery valuation: £12,500**
> *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John*, Italian School, 16th century, probably Florentine, in the manner of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto; oil on canvas, 101.6 × 74.9 cm; in its restored 19th-century gilt frame; with the 2026 conservation report and this study.
> Approximately €14,400 at the reference rate. Retail replacement value for insurance: £12,500.

The valuation places the painting between the largest anonymous 16th-century Holy Families offered by dealers (about £6,000–7,800) and the Florentine workshop pictures of the same lineage (about £12,600), alongside the attributed and "school of" paintings of comparable size. It reflects the painting's size, its four-figure composition, its originality, its Florentine Renaissance lineage, its age and its exceptionally complete documentation, balanced against its condition. For reference, UK dealers offer much smaller two-figure Italian canvases of the 16th century at £5,000–8,000.

7.6 What could add to the painting's value

- An opinion from a specialist in Florentine painting of the 16th century, which could connect the painting to a named circle or workshop (for example those of Domenico Puligo or Michele Tosini). Paintings with such attributions are offered at £12,000–17,600.
- A limited technical study (paint cross-sections and pigment analysis), confirming the 16th-century date.
- The discovery of a related version, drawing or document.

8 Provenance and documentary history

- **Before the 19th century:** unknown.
- **Probably 19th century:** lined with glue paste; inscribed "B. Luini" on the reverse of the lining; placed in the present Louis XV revival frame (c. 1840–1880).
- **Until 2026:** Arthur Savarin Cohen, Maryland, USA; his estate.[M1]
- **25 June 2026:** Potomack Company, Alexandria, Virginia, *English and European Fine Art, Antiques, Modern & Rugs*, lot 2015, as "Northern Italian School after Bernardino Luini, 16th century, The Holy Family".[M1]

- **2026:** Atlantiques, London.
- **July–October 2026:** conservation by Francis W. Downing Ltd, Harrogate (report DI 2306, 27 October 2026).[D1]

No earlier sale or exhibition of the painting has been traced. The consignment label “ASAV 18” of the 2026 sale remains attached to the frame.

9 Opportunities for further research

1. **Specialist opinion.** Photographs of the cleaned painting could be submitted to a specialist in Florentine painting of the 16th century and compared with the holdings of the Fondazione Federico Zeri, Bologna, the principal photographic archive of Italian paintings of this period.
2. **Technical study.** Two or three paint cross-sections from existing losses at the edges and X-ray fluorescence analysis of the pigments would confirm the date and could help to settle the region.
3. **Ultraviolet photography**, which would map the old and the new retouching precisely.

10 Catalogue entry



Figure 16: *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John.*

Italian School, 16th century, probably Florentine, in the manner of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto
The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist
Oil on canvas, lined
101.6 × 74.9 cm (40 × 29½ in); 125.1 × 98.4 cm framed
In a 19th-century Louis XV revival gilt frame.
Provenance: Estate of Arthur Savarin Cohen, Maryland; his sale, Potomack Company, Alexandria, Virginia, 25 June 2026, lot 2015 (as Northern Italian School after Bernardino Luini).
Conservation: Francis W. Downing Ltd, ACR FRSA, Harrogate, 2026.

The Christ Child throws his arms round the infant Saint John and turns to look out at the viewer, while the Virgin rests her long hand on him and Saint Joseph bends his profile over the group from the shadows. The rose and ivory of the Virgin's dress, the soft modelling and the dark ground follow the Holy Families painted in Florence in the 1520s by Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto, which were much imitated by the painters of the following generations. Formerly attributed to Bernardino Luini. Conserved in 2026: the painting has been relined, and old losses, including a repaired tear in the upper centre, have been toned with visible *tratteggio*.

11 Care and display

- **Environment:** hang away from direct sunlight, radiators and fireplaces; avoid damp walls and marked seasonal changes of temperature and humidity.[D1][C1]
- **Light:** moderate, UV-free lighting; low-intensity LED is suitable.[C1]
- **Handling:** carry by the frame, with two people for a frame of this size. Do not press on the canvas from either side.
- **Cleaning:** dust the frame gently with a soft brush. The painted surface should be treated only by a conservator.
- **Re-examination:** every five to ten years, as recommended by the conservator.[D1]
- **Documentation:** keep the conservation report, the sale photographs and this study with the painting.

12 Conclusions

1. **Subject.** The Holy Family with the infant Saint John: the Virgin, the Christ Child embracing John, who is identified by his camel skin and probably his reed cross, and Joseph in profile.
2. **Attribution.** Not by Bernardino Luini. The "B. Luini" on the old lining is a 19th-century attribution. The figure types, dress and handling are closest to the Florentine Holy Families of Domenico Puligo and Andrea del Sarto; the painting is the work of an anonymous follower.
3. **Originality.** No other version of the composition has been found. It is best understood as an independent composition assembled from Florentine, Raphaelesque and Leonardesque models, not as a copy of a known painting.
4. **Date and origin.** Italy, probably Florence or Tuscany, second half of the 16th century (c. 1550–1600); an early 17th-century date cannot be excluded without technical analysis.

5. **Condition.** Stable after the 2026 treatment, but worn: abraded flesh, extensive old losses and a large repaired tear, toned with visible *tratteggio*. The heads and hands, which carry the expression of the picture, are the best-preserved parts.
6. **Valuation.** £12,500 (gallery valuation, November 2026), based on the prices of comparable Italian devotional paintings offered by specialist dealers, and reflecting the paintingś size, four-figure composition, originality, Florentine lineage, age and documented conservation.

About this study

Prepared for Atlantiques from photographs of the painting before and after conservation, the conservator's report, the 2026 sale record and the sources listed below. Two independent art-historical readings were made and are combined here. The painting has not been examined in person by the authors of this study, and no technical analysis has been carried out. Artistic readings are interpretations of the visible work; school, date and attribution are proposed on stylistic and material grounds and are not documented. Dealer prices were consulted between 17 and 20 November 2026 as advertised; sterling equivalents are approximate.

13 Sources and selected bibliography

Object documentation

[D1] Francis W. Downing Ltd, Fine Art Conservation, Harrogate
Conservation Report – After care advice, no. DI 2306, 27 October 2026, signed Francis W. Downing ACR FRSA (ICON accredited), with photographs before treatment, in raking light and after treatment. Documentation held by the gallery.

[M1] Potomack Company, Alexandria, Virginia, 25 June 2026, lot 2015
English and European Fine Art, Antiques, Modern & Rugs. Northern Italian School after Bernardino Luini, 16th century, *The Holy Family*, oil on canvas, 101.6 × 74.9 cm, frame 125.1 × 98.4 cm; "Verso inscribed on canvas: B. Luini"; provenance Estate of Arthur Savarin Cohen, Maryland. Eight photographs. https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/northern-italian-school-after-bernardino-luini-16-2015-c-1fde2080e8

[P1] Photographs of the artwork
Nine photographs taken at the gallery on 13 November 2026 (front, details, frame and reverse); eight Potomack sale photographs (June 2026); four photographs in the conservation report.

Iconography and artistic context

[I1] "The Holy Infants Embracing"
Overview of the Leonardesque motif of the embracing infants and its derivations. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Holy_Infants_Embracing

[I2] Sotheby's, New York, 2015, lot 139: Giampietrino
Catalogue note on the Milanese theme of the "kiss of the Holy Children". https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/so-moretti-n09306/lot.139.html

[I3] Bernardino Luini, *The Holy Family with the Infant St John*
Museo del Prado, Madrid, P000242, oil on panel, 100 × 84 cm. Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bernardino_Luini_-_The_Holy_Family,_XVI_century_-Museo_Nacional_del_Prado_P000242.jpg

[I4] Bernardino Luini, *The Holy Family with Saints Anne and John*
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[I5] Domenico Puligo, *Holy Family with St John*
Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio. Image: Wikimedia Commons, public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Holy_Family_with_John_the_Baptist_by_Domenico_Puligo,_Columbus_Museum_of_Art.JPG

[I6] Domenico Puligo, *Sacra Famiglia con san Giovannino*
c. 1525, Galleria Palatina, Florence. Photo: Francesco Bini, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domenico_puligo,_sacra_famiglia_con_s._giovannino,_1525_ca.jpg

[I7] Workshop of Domenico Puligo, *Sacra Famiglia*
Photo: Sailko, CC BY 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Domenico_puligo_(bottega),_sacra_famiglia,_01.jpg

[I8] Andrea del Sarto, *The Holy Family with the Young Saint John the Baptist*
c. 1528, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 22.75. Image: public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Holy_Family_with_the_Young_Saint_John_the_Baptist_MET_DP295025.jpg

[I9] G. Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori*
Florence, 1568: life of Domenico Puligo. See also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domenico_Puligo

[I10] Raphael, *Madonna della Tenda*
c. 1513–14, Alte Pinakothek, Munich. Image: public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Raffael_-_Madonna_della_Tenda_(Alte_Pinakothek).jpg

[I11] Fondazione Federico Zeri, Bologna, photographic archive
Records for Luini, Puligo, Bugiardini and Sogliani consulted November 2026. https://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it. On later Florentine workshop production see also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michele_Tosini

Dealer offers consulted

[D2] Antiquità Ghilli, Milan, via Proantic
Asking price €6,000, consulted November 2026. https://www.proantic.com/en/1663713-madonna-with-child-and-saint-john-17th-century-lombard-italian-school.html

[D3] Period Portraits (Nick Cox), York
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[R1] Antichità Ischia Romano, Riva del Garda, via Proantic
Tuscan School, late 16th century, *The Holy Family with St Anne and the Young John*; asking price €2,500, consulted 20 November 2026. https://www.proantic.com/en/1855836-the-holy-family-with-st-anne-and-the-young-john-16th-century-tuscan-school.html

[R2] Galleria Bompadre, Foligno, via Proantic
Central Italy, mid-16th century, *Holy Family*, panel; asking price €4,300. https://www.proantic.com/en/1852411-oil-on-panel-depicting-the-holy-family-mid-16th-century-central-italy.html

[R3] Antichità Ischia Romano, via Proantic
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https://www.proantic.com/en/1858014-the-holy-family-workshop-of-andrea-del-sarto-florence-1486-1530.html

[R4] 1stDibs: Venetian School, 16th century, *The Holy Family*
Asking price €17,395. https://www.1stdibs.com/es/arte/pinturas/pinturas-figurativas/16th-century-venetian-school-la-sagrada-familia-siglo-xvi-venetian-school-%C3%B3leo-sobre-lienzo-marco-tallado-a-mano/id-a_13450752/

[R5] 1stDibs: Workshop of Cristoforo Roncalli, *The Holy Family*
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[R6] 1stDibs: School of Titian, *The Holy Family with the Infant St John*
Asking price €9,984 after discount. https://www.1stdibs.com/es/arte/pinturas/pinturas-figurativas/tiziano-vecellio-pieve-di-cadore-1490-venice-1576-la-sagrada-familia-de-tiziano-pintura-de-los-siglos-xvi-xvii-%C3%B3leo-sobre-lienzo-obra-de-un-maestro-cl%C3%A1sico-italiano/id-a_18484462/

[R7] 1stDibs: attributed to Scipione Pulzone, *Virgin and Child with St John and St Elizabeth*
Asking price €9,880 after discount. https://www.1stdibs.com/es/arte/pinturas/pinturas-de-retratos/scipione-pulzone-gaeta-c-1540-rome-1598-madonna-pulzone-%C3%B3leo-sobre-lienzo-del-siglo-xvi-obra-de-un-maestro-antiguo-tema-religioso-italia-arte/id-a_18671412/

[R8] 1stDibs: Workshop of Andrea del Sarto (Jacone), *Virgin and Child*
Asking price €20,280 after discount. https://www.1stdibs.com/es/arte/pinturas/ndrea-del-sarto-pseudonym-of-andrea-dagnolo-di-francesco-florence-1486-1530-madonna-ni%C3%B1o-del-sarto-pintura-%C3%B3leo-sobre-tabla-siglo-xvi-viejo-maestro/id-a_16126542/

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[R10] Youngs Antiques, Lincolnshire, via Antiques Atlas
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[R14] 1stDibs, dealer in Vicoforte
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[R15] Antichità Castelbarco, Riva del Garda, via Proantic
Circle of Battista Ramenghi, *Holy Family with the Infant St John*; €6,600. https://www.proantic.com/en/1711579-holy-family-with-the-infant-saint-john-the-baptist-battista-ramenghi-1521-1601-circle.h.html

[R16] Antichità Castelbarco, via Proantic
Workshop or follower of Domenico Beccafumi, *Madonna and Child with the Young St John*; €8,800. https://www.proantic.com/en/1826260-madonna-and-child-with-the-young-saint-john-domenico-beccafumi-monte aperti-1486-siena-1.html

[R17] Antichità Castelbarco, via Proantic
Attributed to Scipione Pulzone, *Madonna and Child with St John and St Elizabeth*; €9,500. https://www.proantic.com/en/1831682-madonna-and-child-saint-john-the-infant-and-saint-elizabeth-scipione-pulzone-1540-1598..html

[F1] Exchange rate
Approximate rate used: €1 = £0.87 (November 2026).

Technique, conservation and care

[T1] AIC Conservation Wiki, "Inpainting"
On the methods and principles of inpainting, including *tratteggio*. https://www.conservation-wiki.com/wiki/Inpainting

[T2] C. Brandi, *Teoria del restauro*
Rome, 1963; and P. Mora, L. Mora, P. Philippot, *Conservation of Wall Paintings*, London, 1984, on *tratteggio*.

[T4] J. Dunkerton and M. Spring, "The development of painting on coloured surfaces in sixteenth-century Italy"
In *Painting Techniques: History, Materials and Studio Practice*, IIC Dublin Congress, London, 1998, pp. 120–130.

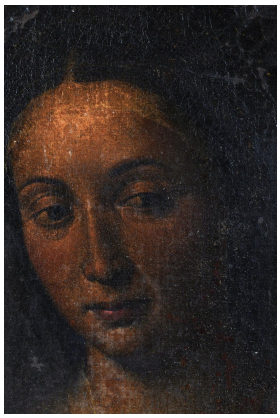
[T5] J. Kirby, "Fading and Colour Change of Prussian Blue"
National Gallery Technical Bulletin 14 (1993), pp. 62–71. https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/technical-bulletin/kirby1993

[C1] Canadian Conservation Institute, Caring for paintings
https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute/services/preventive-conservation/guidelines-collections/paintings.html

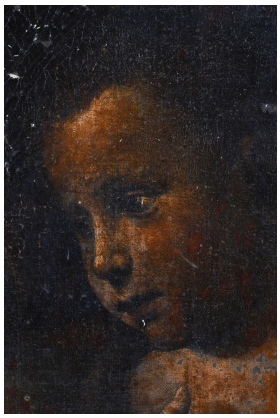
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A Photographic details



(a) The Virgin's head before treatment.[M1]

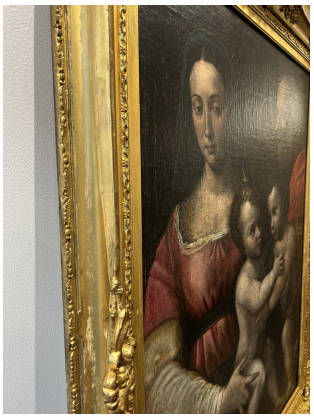


(b) St John's head before treatment.[M1]

Figure 17: Potomack sale photographs, June 2026.



(a) Joseph and St John after treatment.

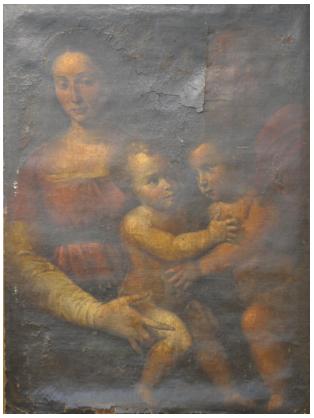


(b) Oblique view.

Figure 18: Gallery photographs, 13 November 2026.



(a) Flaking and losses at the lower edge before treatment, exposing the reddish-brown ground and the canvas.[M1]



(b) Before treatment, conservator's photograph.[D1]

Figure 19: Condition before treatment.