LOT 3
PROPERTY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART SOLD FOR THE ACQUISITIONS FUND
MATTEO DI GIOVANNI AND STUDIO
ACTIVE IN SIENA 1430-1497
THE MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS BERNARDINO OF SIENA AND JEROME, BEHIND THEM TWO ANGELS
tempera on panel, gold ground
22 by 19 1/2 in.; 55.9 by 49.5 cm.

ESTIMATE 60,000-80,000 USD
Lot Sold: 80,500 USD

PROVENANCE
Sir Thomas Andros de la Rue, 1st Baronet, London, until 1911;
By whose Estate sold, London, Christie's, 16 June 1911, lot 52, for £304.10, to Simpson;
With Simpson, London;
From whom acquired by George Blumenthal (1856-1941), New York, 1926-1941;
By whom bequeathed to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1941, inv. no. 41.100.17 (all the above as Matteo di Giovanni).

EXHIBITED

LITERATURE
F. Mason Perkins, in Allgemeines Lexikon der bildenden Künstler, 24, Leipzig 1930, p. 256 (as Matteo di Giovanni);
B. Berenson, Italian Pictures of the Renaissance, Oxford 1932, p. 351 (as Matteo di Giovanni);
M. Gengaro, "Matteo di Giovanni," in La Diana, 9, nos. 3–4, 1934, p. 182 (listed among paintings variously attributed to Matteo di Giovanni);
B. Berenson, Pitture italiane del Rinascimento, Milan 1936, p. 302 (as Matteo di Giovanni);
B. Berenson, Italian Pictures of the Renaissance: Central Italian and North Italian Schools, London 1968, vol. I, p. 259 (as Matteo di Giovanni but damaged);
B.B. Fredericksen and F. Zeri. Census of Pre-Nineteenth-Century Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1972, pp. 139, 320, 379, 407, 608 (as by Matteo di Giovanni);
F. Zeri and E.E. Gardner, Italian Paintings: A Catalogue of the Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Sienese and Central Italian Schools. New York 1980, p. 49, reproduced plate 59 (as Workshop of Matteo di Giovanni, and probably datable to the 1480s);
K. Baetjer, European Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art by Artists Born Before 1865, A Summary Catalogue, New York 1995, p. 61, reproduced (as Workshop of Matteo di Giovanni);

CATALOGUE NOTE
The portrayal of the Madonna and Child at the center of a tight space surrounded by smaller saints or angels was made popular in Siena by Sano di Pietro in the mid-15th century.¹ The compositional type remained popular for the rest of the century, and after Sano's death in 1481 it was Matteo di Giovanni and his large workshop who took over as the dominant players in the output of these small devotional images. Though he is documented in Siena from 1452, Matteo's first extant dated work is not until 1460, a large altarpiece in the Museo dell'Opera, Siena.² Shortly after, Matteo was called to Pienza by Pope Pius II to work on two altarpieces for the cathedral. His reputation must already have been considerable since the other artists summoned - Giovanni di Paolo, Vecchietta and Sano di Pietro - belonged to an older generation and were the leading artistic personalities in Siena at the time.

Probably executed around 1480, the design of the work is characteristic of Matteo's oeuvre at this stage. The two saints depicted were held with particular veneration in Siena and are often paired together in works of this type.
Bernardino was one of the most popular saints in Siena and was canonized in 1450, just six years after his death. His cult grew exponentially after Pope Pius II's gift of the relic of the saint's right arm to the Cathedral in 1464. Jerome is shown to the right and is depicted in his episcopal red robes rather than as a penitent in the wilderness.

Zeri (see Literature, 1980) suggested that the panel may originally have had an arched top. However, comparison with other works by Matteo with arched tops, such as two panels in the Pinacoteca in Siena, show him deliberately populating the design with figures which fill the bow of the arch, a feature which is clearly absent from the linear disposition of the background figures of the present work. 3

1. This model is best exemplified in works such as Sano's Madonna and Child with Saints Jerome, Bernardino and Four Angels from circa 1455-60 in the Chigi Saracini Collection, Siena; see Renaissance Siena, Art for a City, exhibition catalogue, London 2007, pp. 111-13, cat. no. 11, reproduced in color.