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Abstract

The Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden, created approximately between the 1440s and 1460s, is a perfect representation of the highly iconographical images produced during the Renaissance. Although it continues to remain unknown as to who the specific artist responsible for this painting is, it has been attributed to either Robert Campin or one of his many followers. Nevertheless, the depiction of the Virgin Mary holding baby Christ on her lap is heightened as the scene takes place within an enclosed garden, otherwise known as hortus conclusus. Throughout the image itself, one is able to understand how the Madonna and the enclosed garden promote one another in the artist's goal of creating a holy and otherworldly space.

Keywords

iconography, saints, flowers, enclosed garden, Madonna and Child

Disciplines

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Comments

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An Iconographical Analysis of the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden*

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Northern Renaissance

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The *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden*, created approximately between the 1440s and 1460s, is a perfect representation of the highly iconographical images produced during the Renaissance (Figure 1). Although it continues to remain unknown as to who the specific artist responsible for this painting is, it has been attributed to either Robert Campin or one of his many followers. Nevertheless, the depiction of the Virgin Mary holding baby Christ on her lap is heightened as the scene takes place within an enclosed garden, otherwise known as hortus conclusus. Throughout the image itself, one is able to understand how the Madonna and the enclosed garden promote one another in the artist's goal of creating a holy and otherworldly space.

It is, to this day, impossible to attribute Campin to any work with certainty, since he never included his signature or date on any of his works.¹ As a result, there is a limited amount of his personal records, making it increasingly difficult to study his possible influences, as scholars remain unsure where he was born.² Due to this major setback, historians are forced to make educated guesses as to which pieces were created by Campin based on stylistic similarities.³ Of course, every scholar will have different opinions, making it even more difficult to appreciate the talent of the artist.⁴

What makes this situation even more complicated is that Campin led a workshop, beginning in 1406, in Tournai, Belgium where he hired multiple assistants and apprentices to help with his work.⁵ Additionally, he taught many young painters - one of his most famous

¹ Frinta Mojmir, *The Genius of Robert Campin* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), 6.

² Charles Sterling, "Observations on Petrus Christus," *The Art Bulletin* 53, no. 1 (1971): 5.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3048794>

³ Mojmir, *The Genius of Robert Campin*, 6.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Dirk de Vos, *The Flemish Primitives: The Masterpieces*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 21.

students being Rogier van der Weyden.⁶ Since multiple hands were involved in helping Campin with a portion of his paintings or even forced to tackle the entirety of a painting, in Campin's name, creates greater conflict when attempting to correctly attribute a painting to a specific person.⁷ Hoping to clarify which paintings Campin did himself, there is an intuitive concept of scholars being able to identify the artist because the painting shows the "spirit" of that particular hand.⁸ For instance, this painting looks to be very cohesive throughout the composition making scholars believe it was completed by one artist alone – this means it was either Campin himself or one of his followers, not a combination.⁹

These walls containing the garden, while also acting as compositional frame that push the figures into the foreground, hold religious significance. This idea of an enclosed garden originally became important due to its mention in one of the passages in the Song of Solomon: "A garden enclosed is my sister, a spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed".¹⁰ Ever since then, Mary sitting in an enclosed garden has been thought to be a holy environment. In the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden*, the Virgin Mary is seen wearing a light blue dress, which is overpowered by her overlaying dark blue cloak; both provide ample space for the artist to exercise a large amount of freedom when it comes to illustrating the folds in the fabric. Blue is an incredibly significant color as it resembles the sky on a clear day; the dispelling of clouds can be understood as the "unveiling of truth".¹¹ This further emphasizes the fact that

⁶ Martha Wolff, "Robert Campin," in *Early Netherlandish Painting: The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue*, by John Oliver Hand and Martha Wolff, (Washington: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 34.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origins and Character 1*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 175.

⁹ Martha Wolff, "Follower of Robert Campin," in *Early Netherlandish Painting: The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue*, by John Oliver Hand and Martha Wolff, (Washington: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 39.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 35.

¹¹ George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), 272.

Mary is seen as the personification of grace and purity, as she is the queen of heaven and the all merciful mother.¹²

There is a duality of the garden enhancing Mary's purity and virginity, as it surrounds her with saints and sacred vegetation, as well as Mary making the garden otherworldly. By putting the Virgin Mary in an enclosed garden, the overall setting is understood to take place in a mystical landscape, perhaps in paradise or heaven; this allows the viewer to better understand the miracle of her Immaculate Conception of Christ.¹³ It is also incredibly common for the Virgin to be sitting on some sort of throne or highlighted area surrounded by saints or angels.¹⁴ For example, there is a great similarity between the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden* to the *Madonna and Child in the Rose Garden* by Stefan Lochner, completed in 1440 (Figure 2). There are so many luxurious details in Lochner's painting that reveal themselves when spending time on the meticulous patterns on the fabric held behind Mary, the rich vegetation, and large amounts of angels surrounding both her and Christ. Most importantly, however, the viewer sees Mary being framed by angels as well as the archway of the roses behind her. In this case, Lochner neglected the idea of a decorative throne and, instead, highlighted her presence in other ways that are just as influential.

In the case of the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden*, the Virgin Mary and Christ sit on a humble throne with two golden arm rests beside her. Instead of having an immaculately jeweled and lavish seat, the artist utilizes other techniques to help emphasize their bodies as the central figure. First, Mary is located in the middle of the composition so one's eyes fall directly on her when encountering the piece; another helpful detail are the subtle golden

¹² Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 161.

¹³ Wolff, "Follower of Robert Campin," 35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

lines protruding from both the heads of Mary and Christ emphasizing their holiness as their bodies radiate heavenly light. Third, Mary is sitting in front of a hanging cloth that is only as wide as her body with a majority decorated in pinks and oranges. These are contrasting colors to her blue garments, which make her stick out. It is unclear as to whether the shapes on this hanging cloth should be taken literally or are solely there for design. Based on the detail in yellow there appear to be pineapples, and the small vegetation depicted in purple could possibly be thistle; there has been no research that addresses this cloth and its possible meaning specifically in regards to the pineapple. However, if it were in fact thistle being portrayed, its spike infested and thorny plant provides a reference to the Passions of Christ, and more specifically the crown of thorns.¹⁵ As a result, this minute detail could be a foreshadow of what is to come in Christ's future. This same pattern continues as there is a pillow on the ground, protruding out of the Virgin Mary's drapery. This small detail is a wonderful representation of the homogeneity and consistency throughout the piece in regards to color and pattern.

Robert Campin's *Virgin and child*, completed in 1425, is similar in the sense that the Virgin Mary is depicted in an even subtler manner as she rests on the floor of the garden; her back is seen resting on the brick wall for support. This illustration allows for the viewer to understand that her body does not need to be highlighted by extravagant detail in order to enhance her importance (Figure 3). One is able to tell that she is located in an otherworldly landscape solely due to the holy light pouring onto her from both left and right, as well as the gilded landscape behind the hanging cloth. Another aspect that is typically portrayed in reference to Mary, within an enclosed garden, is a fountain which was neglected in both paintings; the Virgin Mary was thought to be the "fountain of living waters" as so described in the Book of

¹⁵ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 49.

Solomon and considered a pure and holy mother.¹⁶ This idea is proven in Jan Van Eyck's *Madonna by the Fountain* from 1439, as it takes up a great portion of the panel and is in a very close proximity to the Madonna and Child (Figure 4).

Returning to the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden*, there is an even larger cloth, behind Mary's individual one, that fills the entirety of the back wall and provides a backdrop for all four saints. Here there is a use of a more simplistic and schematized flower pattern using green as the background color and gold to depict the design; this pattern and choice of green fabric further emphasizes that this scene takes place within a garden rich with vegetation.¹⁷ One detail about this back wall that is really profound is that it does not reach the total height of the panel; instead, it stops short and, as a result offers a sliver of the landscape beyond this garden to the viewer. As the audience then takes advantage of the opportunity to better understand where this enclosed garden is located, there is nothing for the eyes to rest on, as a majority of the space is painted blue with a few bushes growing over select portions of the wall.

Following the horizontal line of the back wall, one stumbles across a small portion of a building that the garden extends from on the left hand side. In delicate details there are design elements that elevate it from being a naked façade but, then again, it remains subtle and not too over the top; the artist strategically incorporates small architectural structures above the doorway that provide more decoration without distracting the audience from the overall importance of the Madonna and Child. The vertical lines portrayed in the doorway guide the viewer down to the delicate black and white tilework that becomes darker as it recedes, diagonally, into the interior. In the *Salting Madonna*, created by Robert Campin in 1430, one is able to see a very similar

¹⁶ Wolff, "Follower of Robert Campin," 35.

¹⁷ Ibid.

perspective used on the ground (Figure 5). At its beginning, the lines of the tile seem to make sense; however, the further back they go the more skewed they become. As a result of understanding this stylistic choice, the viewer should automatically reference one of Campin's paintings that was considered to be a masterful example of the tilted perspective: his *Mérode Altarpiece* of 1427 (Figure 6). This painting references the famous portrayal of the annunciation within a domestic Flemish interior where the viewpoint is unique to every piece of furniture in the room. Campin takes advantage of this play on perspective in order to allow for the audience to view details they would not normally be able to see from one perspective.

Since the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden* is supposed to take place within a garden, it would make sense for there to be vegetation throughout the space. At this time, it was believed that all flowers, despite their form or color, should be celebrated as manifestations of God; it is necessary to delve into all identified vegetation in this piece as it will help enhance one's understanding of what message the artist is attempting to portray.¹⁸ One of the first interesting compositional features that strikes the viewer is the fact that all the flowers begin growing directly at the bottom perimeter. Spatially, this implies that the plants are growing in "our space" almost inviting the viewer to walk into the scene.¹⁹

Starting on the left hand side of the painting is a depiction of a blue Iris which was popularly used to represent the presence of the Holy Mary.²⁰ Additionally, the term Iris literally translates to mean Sword Lily and therefore references the sorrow of the Virgin Mary during the Passions of Christ.²¹ The depiction of this single Iris can be compared to the Irises painted in the *Medici Madonna* of the 1460's, by Rogier Van der Weyden (Figure 7). In both paintings, the

¹⁸ Koch, "Flowers Symbolism," 71.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 70.

²⁰ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 39

²¹ Ibid.

Irises are portrayed growing lean and tall until the bud erupts into a beautiful blue flower; the only difference being that in the *Medici Madonna* the Iris is portrayed in a vase which was typical in scenes of the Annunciation.²²

As the viewer moves their eyes to the right, beyond Saint Catherine, there are numerous flowers presented at the very center of the composition. There are blue Columbines, six-petalled yellow flowers, and strawberries; each of these flowers hold their own significance and relevance to the overall meaning of the piece. First, the term Columbine derives from the Latin word for dove (Columba). As a result, the Columbine has been referenced to a white dove indicating the Holy Ghost in multiple occasions.²³ Also, there is significance in that there are always seven blooms per stock. One explanation for this is that they reference the Seven Gifts of the Spirit. According to the prophecy of Isaiah 11:2, these gifts include “Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Might, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord”.²⁴ Scholars have also argued, however, that these seven blossoms refer to the Sorrows of the Virgin. More specifically, they symbolize the psychological state of melancholy, felt by the Virgin Mary, during the Passions of Christ, as the flower is depicted in a dark blue.²⁵

Adjacent to the Columbine is the yellow six-petalled flower. Although this specific flower has not been identified, it can be found in the depiction of the Frankfurt Madonna and Child within the *Flémalle Altarpiece*, created in the 1430’s by Robert Campin, in a more subtle manner (Figure 8). In the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden* they jump out at the viewer due to their size and enhancement of the already vibrant color.²⁶ Through the stems

²² Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 325.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Koch, “Flowers Symbolism,” 74.

²⁶ Wolff, “Follower of Robert Campin,” 38.

of the various blossoms of the six-petalled flower rests some very miniature strawberries, which has been referred to as “the symbol of perfect righteousness, or the emblem of the righteous man whose fruits are good works”.²⁷ When a cluster of strawberries are depicted alongside other fruits and or flowers its iconographic meaning alters; they then represent the good works of the righteous or the fruits of the spirit.²⁸ After understanding the iconography behind these flowers, one is able to appreciate how the artist was able to take advantage of their individual iconography to implement more beauty and detail within the painting.

Compositionally speaking, there are four saints surrounding the Madonna and Child, with two on each side. These figures include (from left to right) Saint Catherine, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Barbara, and Saint Anthony Abbot.²⁹ Despite the small size of the enclosed garden, the artist refrained from having the figures overlap, as this action would consequently hide some of the detail portrayed on their bodies. Each saint fits one piece of the puzzle as they perfectly interlock.³⁰ Whatever space was leftover between their bodies was filled by rich vegetation, decorative design, and objects that represent and act as attributes to each Saint; this includes the sword, wheel, and book for Saint Catherine, the lamb for Saint John, the tower for Saint Barbara, and the hog for Saint Anthony.³¹

Beginning on the left side of the painting, Saint Catherine appears to be sitting on the step directly in front of the doorway. She is seen holding and carefully analyzing a book which indicates her to be a well-educated individual; the book she holds, however, has yet to be identified. Also, she wears a crown signifying her royalty and to remind the viewer of her

²⁷ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 48.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Wolff, “Follower of Robert Campin,” 35.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

importance and sacrifice to Christ.³² It was very usual to have Saint Catherine depicted in paintings portraying the Madonna and Child as she is known for having a miraculous dream about Christ. In this dream she sees the Virgin Mary holding Christ prior to his birth, and Mary asks him to take Catherine on as one of his servants; Christ denies for the reason being that she was not beautiful enough. Once Catherine woke the next morning she wondered what she would have to do in order to gain Christ's approval, as she was already known for her beauty and intelligence. For this reason, she was baptized; afterwards, she had another dream where Christ appeared to her and finally deemed her worthy and, as a result, named her his celestial spouse as he gave her a ring which she miraculously woke up wearing.³³

At this time, Maxentius, who shared the imperial crown with Constantine the Great and Licinius, selected Alexandria as the capital of his part of the Empire. He decided to massacre all Christians, and any of those that did not agree with him and his rule. Catherine was determined to change his mind and, as a well-educated individual, presented Maxentius with the beauties of Christianity. In response to her speech, Maxentius redirected her to a crowd of philosophers that were meant to fight for him – instead, she converted all of them to Christianity.³⁴ As a result, the emperor had the philosophers beheaded and placed Catherine in prison. He attempted to starve her into submission, but the holy angels brought her food every day. After this failure, Maxentius realized that he should not waste her beauty and offered to make Catherine his wife, but she refused him as she was already married to Christ. In response, he sentenced Catherine to death by being “bound between four wheels, rimmed with spikes, and torn to death”.³⁵ However, as soon as the ceremony was about to begin, the wheels were destroyed as a result of a spontaneous

³² Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 193.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

fire; as a result, she was then beheaded by a sword. As a result, she is portrayed in the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden* with a spiked wheel at her feet, as well as the sword that ended her life. As discussed previously, the Iris, translating to Sword Lily, could also be utilized in reference to Saint Barbara as she was martyred by the sword.³⁶

Adjacent to Saint Catherine stands John the Baptist. He is arguably the most recognizable saint in Madonna and Child paintings as he is constantly portrayed in similar works by artists all around the world. He is well known due to his role in predicting the coming of Christ as well as baptizing him.³⁷ Saint John is depicted in luscious green apparel, as it was typical for him to dress richly when represented in settings referring to paradise. The color green represents the “color of vegetation and of spring, and therefore symbolizes the triumph of spring over winter, or of life over death”.³⁸ As green is only created due to its combination and mixture of yellow and blue, it references the act of regenerating one’s soul, amidst tough and troubling times, through good work.³⁹ Physically, and compositionally speaking, it is common for him to be close in proximity to Christ referencing the hierarchy of importance amongst the saints. Interestingly enough, Saint John the Baptist is the only saint within this scene to show off any anatomical limbs other than their head and hands. Saint John is special in that a great portion of both of his legs are showing as he stands barefoot in the garden, illustrating his humility and lifelong servitude to Christ; Robert Campin has depicted Saint John in this way numerous times in some of his other works.⁴⁰ For instance, in the single panel depicting patron Heinrich von Werl and Saint John the Baptist in the *Werl Altarpiece*, from 1438, Saint John is shown with one leg

³⁶ Koch, “Flowers Symbolism,” 75.

³⁷ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 223.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 64.

somewhat covered, while his knee-cap is exposed in the other signifying his movement (Figure 9). While being in the presence of both the Virgin Mary and Christ, it was very unusual to see a saint exposing his body; typically, they cover up to show their respect to the almighty. The only other figure the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden* showing his legs is baby Christ. Due to the opening of his garment, his whole lower body is exposed. Another aspect that intertwines Saint John the Baptist and Christ is that Saint John holds a lamb in his left hand, as he points to it with his right, while looking directly at Christ. This illustrates that Christ is the *Ecce Agnus Dei* (the Lamb of God).⁴¹

Directly to the right of the Madonna and Child is Saint Barbara. When she was growing up, her father built a tower to stow her away in and as a result shield her from the world. Since she barely had access to the outside world, she had to arrange for a Christian disciple to disguise himself as a physician in order to enter the highly guarded facility; he then went on to baptize her before her father had noticed. Afterwards, she commanded for there to be a third window built in the tower in order to represent the Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; this tower can be seen directly to the right of Saint Barbara, where three windows are also depicted. When she told her father that she converted to Christianity, he was furious. He turned her into the authorities and commanded that she be tortured and beheaded by none other than himself. After the execution took place, her father was walking home, but was suddenly killed by a strike of lightning created by the almighty. As a result of her brutal death, Saint Barbara is now the “patron saint of artillery, soldiers, gunsmiths, and firefighters”.⁴²

Compositionally speaking, it is unclear as to whether she is positioned next to the Madonna or behind her; this acts as a reminder that at this point in time, perspective was not a

⁴¹ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 224.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 186.

huge concern of the artist.⁴³ When analyzing the contorted nature of her body it seems that she is sitting on a portion of her miniature tower, and leaning in to get closer to the Madonna and Child. Saint Barbara is depicted wearing white fabric on her head, and as a result covering the sides of her face and hair, and in an orangey-red dress which symbolizes martyred saints.⁴⁴ As she extends her right arm out, with a fruit in hand, there is a fluid movement as the color of her dress overlaps with the pink cloth behind Mary. One then sees her offering a fruit to Christ, while her left hand guides and mimics the gesture as if promoting Christ to reach out and take it from her. It is unclear and unknown whether Saint Barbara is handing Christ a pear or a poorly shaped apple. A pear would indicate the Incarnate Christ as he stands for a symbol of love and forgiveness for human kind.⁴⁵ If it was an apple, however, it would be the “Symbol of Christ, the new Adam, who took upon himself the burden of man’s sin”; one important distinction to make between Adam and Christ, however, is that when Christ is holding an apple is symbolizes the fruit of salvation, while Adam references sin.⁴⁶

After taking the time to understand both Saint Catherine and Saint Barbara’s stories, it is odd that the artist chose to depict Saint Barbara as the one offering fruit to Christ. In Hans Memling’s *Virgin and Child with Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Barbara*, completed in the early 1480’s, he chose to illustrate the opposite (Figure 10). In this case, Saint Catherine sits on the left hand of Christ with a wheel and sword laid beside her in the grass. She stares at baby Christ in an enchanted manner, and extends her arm towards him as he places a ring on her finger, referring to their marriage. On the opposing side, however, one sees Saint Barbara; scholars were able to quickly identify her by the miniature tower behind her with three windows.

⁴³ Wolff, “Follower of Robert Campin,” 38.

⁴⁴ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 273.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Unlike the Saint Barbara in the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden*, she is completely disengaged from both the Virgin Mary and Christ as she focuses on the book in her lap. When comparing both Memling's and Campin's work, the onlooker is able to understand that artists have a certain amount of freedom when it comes to depicting religious scenes. That being said, Memling's rendering of Saint Catherine and Saint Barbara makes more sense since he considers the hierarchy of relationships with Christ.

The very last saint illustrated on this painting is Saint Anthony Abbot, otherwise known as Anthony the Great, as he became a hermit when he was eighteen in reaction to both of his parents dying; he then went on to sell all of his expensive and worldly items to dedicate the rest of his life to becoming a hermit in the desert. His relevance mainly revolves around the fact that he had to learn not to become tempted by the materials of the world, and rather dedicate his time and thought on God alone.⁴⁷ After spending many decades working on his temptations, what he called his demons, he reappeared from the desert feeling as though he had conquered his desire for the material world. However, once he reappeared from solitude all of his urges and impulses flooded back; luckily he was able to overcome them by using God as his guide, and, as a result has been thought of as the father of monasticism. This depiction of Saint Anthony is typical, in that he is dressed in the hood and robe of a monk while leaning on a Tau-shaped staff; one aspect that is unusual about this portrayal, however, is that he is not carrying a bell that was used by hermits to ward off demons from attacking as well as exorcising demons and evil spirits.⁴⁸ Similarly, a hog is portrayed as it is representative of the demon of sensuality and gluttony, indicating his triumph over sin.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 181.

⁴⁸ Rosa Giorgi, *Saints and Their Symbols* (New York: Abrams, 2012), 14.

⁴⁹ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 181.

Saint Anthony wears a green garment similar to that of Saint John the Baptist, but in a much darker color. Again, green symbolizes the triumph of life over death, but perhaps he wears a darker shade because he is much older giving the color time to collect dirt and dust. Hidden within his cloak is a rosary which represents his devotion to the Virgin Mary. This allegiance consists of a series of meditations and prayers centered around events in the life of Christ and of the Virgin; these prayers are directed towards the rosary as one is able to count their meditations on the string of beads.⁵⁰ Lastly, his left hand grips his long wooden cane while his right holds a scroll, which references either two things: one, it suggests the individual to be well educated and a good writer or two, the person holding it can be an Old Testament Author known and celebrated for their writings.⁵¹

Overall, the *Madonna and Child with Saints in the Enclosed Garden* begs the onlooker to delve deeper and to not be satisfied with the visual appearance of an object; only after every object, individual, and pattern has been deciphered can the viewer be satisfied. For this reason, it is almost unnecessary to burden scholars and historians with correctly identifying the artist responsible for the painting as the work is already able to hold a substantial amount of significance on its own. The enclosed garden depicted here is incredibly influential as it enhances the perception of Mary's purity, virginity, and holiness; similarly, the vegetation proves to hold specific reference to the lives of the Madonna and Child as well as every saint depicted. As a result, there is not one ounce of this painting dedicated solely to beauty, as everything has a deeper meaning just waiting to be discovered!

⁵⁰ Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian art*, 301.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

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Figure 1



Madonna and Child with Saints in Enclosed Garden by Follower of Robert Campin, oil on panel, c. 1440-60's

Figure 2



Madonna in the Rose Garden by Stefan Lochner, medium unknown, 1440

Figure 3



Virgin and Child by Robert Campin, oil on panel, 1425

Figure 4



Madonna by the Fountain by Jan van Eyck, oil on panel, 1439

Figure 5



Salting Madonna by Robert Campin, oil on panel, c. 1430

Figure 6



The Mérode Altarpiece by Robert Campin, oil on oak, c. 1425

Figure 7



Medici Madonna by Rogier Van der Weyden, oil on panel, c. 1460s

Figure 8



Frankfurt Madonna and Child in the *Flémalle Altarpiece* by Robert Campin, medium unknown, c. 1430s

Figure 9



Depiction of Saint John the Baptist and Patron Heinrich von Werl in the *Werl Altarpiece* by Robert Campin, oil on panel, 1438

Figure 10



Virgin and Child with Saints Catherine of Alexandria and Saint Barbara by Hans Memling, oil on wood, early 1480s