



2020.348

Greek Triptych of the Mother and Child with Saints

The central panel shows the Theotokos as the “Unfading Rose,” issuing from a large rose and holding the Child in her left hand and a rose in her right. She wears a patterned orange mophorion and a crown. The Child is clad in kingly dress of patterned silver; he wears a crown and holds a terrestrial sphere in his right hand and a sort of scepter in his left. The background behind the two figures is silver; on either side of the Mother is a celestial body and a sort of urn, the one on the left filled with roses; in the lower corners of the scene are small flowering plants. A ribbon around the head of the Theotokos bears the words ΡΟΔΟΝ ΤΟ ΑΜΑΡΑΝΤΟΝ ΧΑΙΡΕ Η ΜΟΝΗ ΒΛΑ[ΣΤΗΣΑΣΑ ΤΟ ΜΗΛΟΝ ΤΟ ΕΥΓΙΟΣΜΟΝ...] The scene is elaborately framed with orange “pillars and arch” and, at the top and bottom of the panel, floral decorations against a white background.

The left wing of the triptych shows Saints Charalambos and Athanasios above Saint George, on a white horse, slaying the dragon. The right wing shows Saints Nicholas and Spiridon above Saint Demetrios, on a brown horse, slaying the heathen warrior. The backgrounds are silver except for light tan areas decorated with flowering plants behind and under the two horses.

A vertical crack extends through most of the central panel, and gesso and paint have been lost on the bottom right edge of the panel. Most of the paint has been lost from the figure of Demetrios. However, the icon remains a very attractive example of the Greek Italianate folk style of the period. The triptych was cleaned in 1958 by the prominent iconographer Fotis Kontoglous.

Central panel: 7 1/2" x 10 1/2"

Prob. 1780-1800

Purchased in Athens in 1957 for \$50.