

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. December 8, 1965. Two important Renaissance Italian paintings, which have hung for the past six months at the National Gallery in London, have been lent by their private owner for a public showing in America.

The Madonna di Loreto by Raphael and a full length Self-Portrait by Paolo Veronese have been placed on view at the National Gallery of Art in Washington for a period of six months, it was announced today by Director John Walker.

The Madonna is one of the first two works by Raphael to be commissioned by Pope Julius II. It was painted in 1508-09 for the church of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome. Part of its history is obscure, but it was recorded at the Casa Santa in Loreto in 1717, and in the residence of the Court in Exile of the Bourbons during the nineteenth century.

There are more than 30 known versions of the Madonna. The original was thought to have perished until Alfred Sharf, an art historian working in England, tentatively identified the painting now on exhibition as the original. Aided by X-rays and infrared photographs, Sharf concluded in an article published in 1964 that "Raphael's Madonna di Loreto is better embodied in (this) picture than in any other version."

(more)

Sharf's conclusion was subsequently supported by art specialists who saw the Madonna at the National Gallery in London this year.

The painting by Veronese is one of the few full-length self-portraits of the 16th century in Italy. It was formerly in the collection of Conte Salvi Pindemonte Moscardo in Verona.

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