EXHIBITION AT NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
CELEBRATES 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF RAPHAEL'S BIRTH


The exhibition and an accompanying film have been supported by a generous grant from the National Italian American Foundation.

The National Gallery's Small Cowper Madonna, Saint George and the Dragon, Niccolini-Cowper or Large Cowper Madonna, Alba Madonna, and Portrait of Bindo Altoviti, the finest and most comprehensive collection of Raphael's paintings in America, are combined with four paintings and twelve drawings by Raphael from American and foreign lenders. Through a series of case studies of these paintings, Dr. David A. Brown, curator of early Italian painting, who
conceived the exhibition and prepared the accompanying
catalogue, analyzes Raphael's creative processes and offers
new solutions to questions of authenticity and dating.

Raphael's Umbrian beginnings and relation to Perugino,
his teacher, are examined in a series of early works including
The Miracle of Saint Jerome, a small predella panel from the
North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh. The Portrait of
Emilia Pia from the Baltimore Museum of Art, heretofore a
controversial attribution to Raphael, is newly dated to the
period preceding his association with Perugino. The Agony
in the Garden panel from The Metropolitan Museum of Art is
reassessed with its preliminary study, or "cartoon," and an
x-radiograph of the painting.

Raphael's residence in Florence from 1504 to 1508,
where he came under the influence of Leonardo da Vinci and
other Florentine masters, is presented through comparative
study of several major works. Highlights of this section of
the exhibition are the Small Cowper Madonna, recently
cleaned to reveal Raphael's original spatial conception as
well as the subtlety and brilliance of his color, and a
preparatory drawing by Raphael, newly acquired by the
National Gallery, for Saint George and the Dragon. Further,
a new connection between Raphael's landscape in the painting
of Saint George and a work by Flemish artist Hans Memling,
also in the Gallery's collection, is proposed. Raphael's
mature Florentine style is represented by the Large Cowper
Madonna.

The major work in America from Raphael's Roman period
(more)
(1508-1520) is the **Alba Madonna** exhibited with one preparatory and one related drawing by Raphael. The portrait of **Bindo Altoviti**, considered by some scholars to be the work of Giulio Romano, is firmly attributed to Raphael and dated to around 1512.

The first part of the exhibition considers Raphael in the context of American taste and collecting from the eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century. Raphael's impact in America was felt by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artists who imitated the Italian master, seeking inspiration from his work. Examples include Benjamin West's drawing of **The Water Bearer**, after that figure in the **Fire in the Borgo fresco** in the Vatican; John Singleton Copley's **The Ascension**, composed in the manner of Raphael; and Washington Allston's **Beatrice**, in which the style of Raphael's religious paintings is adapted to portraiture.

Raphael's popularity in America led to an important production of copies of his paintings by professional artists. A version of the most famous of his works, **Madonna of the Chair**, is included in the exhibition together with other copies, one of which was purchased by Thomas Jefferson while Minister to France.

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, major originals by Raphael had yet to enter American collections. Collectors such as Andrew W. Mellon, Samuel H. Kress, Peter A. B. and Joseph Widener, Isabella Stewart Gardner, J. P. Morgan, and Henry Walters vied to acquire whatever works were still available by the "Prince of Painters."
in this portion of the exhibition is the *Madonna of the Candelabra* from the Walters Art Gallery, the first Madonna by Raphael to enter an American collection.

The exhibition chronicles the efforts of these collectors by means of photographs of the collectors themselves and their paintings *in situ*, news clippings, albums, and other visual evidence about their acquisitions. A short film about American collectors and their Raphael's complements the installation of objects.

An international symposium in conjunction with the exhibition will be sponsored by the National Gallery's Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts in January.

Editor's note: Three drawings by Raphael from the Uffizi will be on view for the opening week of the exhibition only.

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