



## NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Greg Langel  
Media and Marketing Manager  
412-371-0600 ext. 524  
GLangel@TheFrickPittsburgh.org

For Immediate Release

### **THE FRICK ART & HISTORICAL CENTER PRESENTS**

#### ***FROM MICHELANGELO TO ANNIBALE CARRACCI: A CENTURY OF ITALIAN DRAWINGS FROM THE PRADO***

*Exhibition of seventy superb sixteenth-century Italian drawings makes  
international debut at the Frick*

PITTSBURGH, PA, October 17, 2008—The Frick Art & Historical Center is the premier venue for the North American tour of *From Michelangelo to Annibale Carracci: A Century of Italian Drawings from the Prado*, an exhibition of seventy sixteenth-century Italian drawings from the Prado Museum in Madrid—one of the world’s foremost art institutions. Marking the first time that most of these extraordinary works have appeared beyond the walls of the Prado Museum, this exhibition—focusing on examples from Mannerism to the early Baroque period (1520–1620)—explores the working methods of the most important artists active in Italy during a time of unprecedented artistic patronage. *From Michelangelo to Annibale Carracci: A Century of Italian Drawings from the Prado* opens at the Frick on October 25, 2008, and will remain on view through January 4, 2009.

The drawings included in this exhibition were selected by guest curator Nicholas Turner, formerly of the J. Paul Getty Museum and the British Museum, and a specialist in Renaissance and Baroque drawings. In addition to Michelangelo, Giulio Romano (1499–1546), Paolo Veronese (1528–1588), Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), and Andrea del Sarto (1468–1530) are

– more –

FRICK ART & HISTORICAL CENTER

7227 REYNOLDS STREET • PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA • 15208-2923 • 412-371-0600 • FAX 412-241-5393

THEFRICKPITTSBURGH.ORG

among the artists represented by detailed studies for commissioned works, as well as intimate *primi pensieri*, or first thoughts—the quick sketches that captured the “heat” of a creative moment. The exhibition contains a range of works in a variety of drawing media, from highly refined pen and ink drawings used in preparation for paintings to rapid compositional sketches and figure studies in chalk. Research in preparation for the exhibition revealed that the two drawings by Michelangelo (1475–1564) are figure studies for his *Last Judgement* in the Sistine Chapel.

The exhibition reflects the variety and types of drawings produced during the sixteenth century and investigates the artistic characteristics of various geographical regions. Sometimes the compositional study is no more than a tangle of rapidly drawn lines as the artist puts down his thoughts at the beginning of his creative process. Such works are extraordinarily communicative, with the artist’s energy transmitted to the viewer across the centuries with remarkable freshness. And in works such as Michelangelo’s *Study of a Man’s Right Shoulder, Breast and Upper Arm*, Turner observes that, “The energy of these marks, variably accented, is Michelangelo’s unique graphic handwriting, as powerful as one would expect from an artist of his stature.” A preparatory study for a demon in the Sistine Chapel’s *Last Judgement*, the drawing, made on an irregularly shaped piece of paper also points to Michelangelo’s working methods—he made many such studies on large sheets of paper, which have since been cut up and dispersed among museums and collectors.

Another factor influencing the development of drawing in the sixteenth century was the unprecedented cultural and economic advances that occurred in Italy during the Renaissance and continued into the Baroque era. An expanding class of the rich and the powerful—both secular and ecclesiastical—created a climate in which artistic patronage flourished. Artists had to plan carefully the decorations that were commissioned to highlight a patron’s wealth and intellectual aspirations. To help them in their planning they made drawings. The Renaissance artist Andrea del Sarto was renowned for his process of making preparatory drawings before painting. This patient pursuit of perfection became a pattern for later artists, and his *Study for a Draped Female Figure with Studies of Figures and a Head* on the reverse is a highlight of this exhibition.

Of the drawings containing religious subject matter, some are for altarpieces in churches and family chapels, such as Giorgio Vasari's *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin*; some are for smaller pictures, with a private devotional purpose, like *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist and Saint Catherine* by Denys Calvaert (1540–1619); while others are designs for scenes in fresco cycles or murals decorating churches, chapels and cloisters, such as Carlo Urbino's (active from 1553–1585) *Design for the Decoration of the Front Wall of a Chapel*. Among drawings of secular subjects are designs for fresco decorations, such as the *Battle between Hercules and the Amazons* by Luca Cambioso (1527–1585), commissioned for newly constructed family palaces. Two Giulio Romano drawings of warriors are another example of a secular subject.

Romano was born in Rome around 1499 and working for Raphael in the Vatican by 1515, eventually becoming Raphael's most trusted assistant. At Raphael's death in 1520, Romano inherited direction of the master's shop and completed many of his projects. The two warriors included in the Prado collection are squared for transfer and are likely designs for trompe l'oeil figures that would have been rendered in an architectural setting.

The Prado's sixteenth-century Italian drawing collection is rich in figure studies, which fall into three main categories. First are the finished compositional studies, which were usually made as *modelli* for paintings, such as Paolo Veronese's *The Evangelist Saint Luke Seated in a Landscape* or *A Dignitary Kneeling before a Pope* by Federico Zuccaro (1540–1609). At this stage in the creative process—prior to his work with brushes and color on the painting itself—the artist was at the end of the planning of his design. The next stage was very often the making of the full-sized cartoon, which was enlarged by “squaring the drawing.” This was done by ruling a grid over the smaller drawing (as seen in the two examples by Giulio Romano) to transfer the drawing, square by square, in proportion, to a larger piece of paper or to the wall or canvas.

The third category of figure drawing is made up of separate figure studies, such as the two drawings by Michelangelo that have just recently been identified in the Prado's collection as studies for the *Last Judgement* in the Sistine Chapel. Other notable instances of such separate studies include two splendid drawings by Polidoro da Caravaggio (1499–1543), a student of Raphael's, and, later in the century, Lazzaro Tavarone's (1556–1641) *Female Saint Seated on a Cloud*.

Sometimes drawings were undertaken as exercises, to allow the artist to practice his skills or to use such works as examples for his pupils to copy. Drawings in the exhibition that might have had an instructional purpose include a drawing from Michelangelo's studio, *Sheet of Studies of Faces in Profile to the Left*, which seems to record the efforts of one or perhaps more competent followers to learn from examples provided by the astonishingly talented master. Bartolomeo Passerotti (1529–1592), who was known to have been a drawing teacher, might have made his beautifully finished *Male Head Turned to the Left* as a model for pupils to copy.

## **THE COLLECTION**

The Prado houses one of the oldest and greatest collections of art in the world, and at its core are the finest works collected by Spanish royalty. Included in the Prado's collection are nearly four thousand drawings. Those in this exhibition came to the museum in 1931 through the bequest of the nobleman Pedro Fernández Durán. He acquired much of his collection, including these Italian drawings, from an engraver and art restorer, Isidoro Brun, who painstakingly built the collection (which also included Dutch, French and Spanish drawings) on a shoestring budget. Fernández Durán acquired the drawings close to the time of Brun's death, and he, in turn, willed his entire collection of paintings, decorative arts and drawings to the Prado.

Prior to their exhibition in 2005 at the Prado, these sixteenth-century Italian works were mostly unknown, as they had never previously been studied as a group. Only a dozen had been published, and Nicholas Turner's research for the exhibition resulted in the re-attribution of a number of the works. This tour provides a rare opportunity for American audiences to view these important drawings for the first time.

This exhibition is organized and circulated by Art Services International, Alexandria, Virginia, in association with The Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid. Support for the exhibition has been provided by The Samuel H. Kress Foundation, The Chisholm Foundation, and an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. The Pittsburgh presentation of the exhibition is supported, in part, through a generous grant from Drue Heinz Trust.

## **CATALOGUE**

Nicholas Turner has written the fully illustrated, all-color catalogue that accompanies the exhibition. An additional essay is provided by Dr. José Manuel Matilla, Head of the Department of Drawings and Prints at the Prado and Curator of the Exhibition. Of particular significance, the

catalogue also includes color images and documentation of the remaining 517 sixteenth-century Italian drawings in the Prado's rich collection—an invaluable resource tool for scholars and students. The English language catalogue is published by Art Services International. The catalogue is available for purchase in the Frick's Museum Shop for \$54.95. The discounted price for Frick members is \$49.46.

## **EXHIBITION TOUR**

*From Michelangelo to Annibale Carracci: A Century of Italian Drawings from the Prado* premieres at the Frick Art & Historical Center, (October 25, 2008–January 4, 2009); and then travels to the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois (January 24–April 5, 2009); and to the Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma (April 25–July 5, 2009).

## **FRICK ART & HISTORICAL CENTER**

The Frick has a history of presenting exhibitions of works on paper. *From Michelangelo to Annibale Carracci: A Century of Italian Drawings from the Prado* is part of this tradition begun in 1985, when the temporary exhibition galleries at the Frick were first opened. Over the years, more than thirty exhibitions have enlightened visitors about the pleasures of drawing, presenting works that range from Old Master drawings to contemporary works, such as the recent show of new work by Craig McPherson. The temporary exhibition galleries were initially conceived as a “drawing cabinet” type of venue especially appropriate for appreciating small works on paper.

The Frick Art Museum at the Frick Art & Historical Center contains collections of fine and decorative arts assembled by Helen Clay Frick, daughter of Henry Clay Frick. In addition to exhibiting its permanent collection, which has strengths in Italian Renaissance and French eighteenth-century painting, the Museum has an active program of temporary exhibitions.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Frick Art & Historical Center is located at 7227 Reynolds Street in Pittsburgh's Point Breeze neighborhood. Free parking is available in the Frick's off-street lot or along adjacent streets. The Frick is open 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Tuesday–Sunday and closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission to The Frick Art Museum, Car and Carriage Museum, Greenhouse, and Playhouse is free. Docent-led tours of *A Panorama of Pittsburgh: Nineteenth-Century Printed Views* are available free of charge on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2:00 p.m.

Groups of five or more and those interested in scheduling a tour of the permanent collection are requested to schedule a private tour at an alternate time. The cost for group tours of the exhibition and permanent collection is \$7 per person, and reservations must be made one to two weeks in advance. Call 412-371-0600, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00p.m., Monday—Sunday.

**For additional information or images, please contact Greg Langel, Media and Marketing Manager, at 412-371-0600 ext. 524 or [GLangel@TheFrickPittsburgh.org](mailto:GLangel@TheFrickPittsburgh.org).**

# # #

*The Frick Art & Historical Center, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, is an historic site and cultural center with a mission to serve the public through preservation, presentation, and interpretation of the fine and decorative arts and historically significant artifacts for all residents of and visitors to Western Pennsylvania.*