

NORTON SIMON MUSEUM FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Norton Simon Museum presents Raphael's *The Small Cowper Madonna* On Loan from the National Gallery of Art

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Pasadena, CA—The Norton Simon Museum is pleased to announce the rare loan of Raphael's *The Small Cowper Madonna*, c. 1505, from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. One of about 12 works by Raphael in U.S. collections, this painting of the Madonna and Child was executed early in the artist's career, during the four years he spent in Florence (1504–08). This extraordinary loan is part of an exchange program between the National Gallery of Art and the Norton Simon foundations, which also brought Vermeer's *A Lady Writing* to the Simon in the fall of 2008. *The Small Cowper Madonna* is one of five works by Raphael in the collection of the National Gallery of Art, and its presentation at the Simon marks the first time it has been lent to another U.S. museum.

"The Norton Simon Museum has the distinction of being home to the only painting by Raphael in the western United States," noted Norton Simon Museum President Walter W. Timoshuk. "For our second loan from the National Gallery of Art, it seemed fitting to choose *The Small Cowper Madonna*, thus giving our visitors the rare chance to view two extraordinary paintings by the artist side by side."

"The National Gallery of Art is honored to lend its beloved Raphael painting *The Small Cowper Madonna* to the Norton Simon Museum," remarked Earl A. Powell III, Director, National Gallery of



Raphael (Italian, 1483 - 1520)
The Small Cowper Madonna, c. 1505
Oil on panel
Overall: 59.5 x 44 cm (23 7/16 x 17 5/16 in.);
framed: 86.2 x 71.4 x 8.3 cm (33 15/16 x 28 1/8 x
3 1/4 in.)
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Widener
Collection, 1942.9.57

Art. "It is our hope that art lovers on the west coast will enjoy the painting's masterful composition and serene beauty."

Raphael's *The Small Cowper Madonna* will be installed next to the Norton Simon Art Foundation's own Raphael painting, *Madonna and Child with Book*, c. 1502–03, in the Museum's Renaissance gallery. During the painting's three-month loan, the Museum will present a series of public programs, including tours, events for children, and a lecture by David Alan Brown, Curator of Italian Paintings at the National Gallery of Art, and the author of *Raphael and America*, an exhibition catalogue published in 1983 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Raphael's birth. Linda Wolk-Simon, curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and a Raphael scholar, will also lecture.

About Raphael and *The Small Cowper Madonna*

Raphael was born on Good Friday of 1483 in the hill town of Urbino in central Italy. He was the son of Giovanni Santi, a painter in the service of the Court of Urbino. Orphaned by age 11 and placed in the care of his uncle Bartolomeo, a priest, Raphael achieved fame and with it important religious commissions well before his 20th birthday. In the course of just two decades (tragically he died at the age of 37) he gained the respect and admiration of Urbino's Ducal Court and artistic circles in Florence and Rome, as well as the patronage of two powerful popes. Raphael received his earliest inspirations and influences in Urbino and in travels to Perugia, Città di Castello, Orvieto and Siena. The young painter was surely impressed by his father's work, as well as the graceful, classicizing postures and landscapes in paintings by Signorelli and Perugino. Later, stays in Florence and Rome exposed him to the work of Fra Bartolomeo, Leonardo, and Michelangelo, which astonished him and marked his mature style.

Thought to have been painted in Raphael's earliest days in Florence, *The Small Cowper Madonna* shows the first hints at his exposure to fluidity and an appreciation of nature that he had not seen in Umbrian paintings, marking his movement toward a freer and more emotive style. While we know from careful study and X-ray examination that Raphael used a cartoon or template to trace the overall layout of the figures of the Madonna and Child, his underdrawing takes on more freshness and vigor, and this is conveyed in more animated expressions and the position of the child. He balances confidently in his mother's lap, and we are more taken by their gazes than by those of figures in Raphael's earlier works. The landscape beyond suggests quotidian activity, and the elevated throne with celestial beings and saints of earlier, formal altarpieces are replaced by a stone wall and a humble wooden bench. Despite her demure halo, the Madonna is humanly reflective, sweet, and powerfully connected in a maternal sense to her active child and the landscape beyond.

About the Art Exchange Program

In 2007 the Norton Simon foundations entered a new phase in their history by forming an art exchange program with both the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and The Frick Collection in New York City. Works of art from the Norton Simon foundations are lent to both of these important institutions for special viewings, and in return, masterpieces from their collections make their way to the Norton Simon Museum. The exchange is an opportunity to share the Norton Simon collections with a much wider audience while simultaneously providing the Museum's Southern California visitors the chance to view some of the world's most significant and visually compelling paintings.

Loans to the National Gallery of Art have included Rembrandt's *Portrait of a Boy*, 1655–60, and Manet's *The Ragpicker*, c. 1865–70 (summer 2007 and 2009 respectively). Loans to The Frick Collection have included Jacopo Bassano's *Flight into Egypt*, c. 1544–45; Peter Paul Ruben's *Holy Women at the Sepulchre*, c. 1611–14; Guercino's *Aldrovandi Dog*, c. 1625; Francisco de Zurbarán's *Still Life with Lemons, Oranges and a Rose*, 1633; and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's *Birth of St. John the Baptist*, c. 1655, which were installed in a special presentation titled *Masterpieces of European Art from the Norton Simon Museum* (winter 2009).

Loans to the Norton Simon Museum have included Johannes Vermeer's *A Lady Writing* from the National Gallery of Art (fall 2008) and Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's *Comtesse d'Haussonville* from The Frick Collection (fall 2009).

About the Norton Simon Museum

The Norton Simon Museum is known around the world as one of the most remarkable private art collections ever assembled. Over a thirty-year period, industrialist Norton Simon (1907–93) amassed an astonishing collection of European art from the Renaissance to the 20th century, and a stellar collection of South and Southeast Asian art spanning 2,000 years. Among the most celebrated works he collected are *the Branchini Madonna*, 1427, by Giovanni di Paolo; *Madonna and Child with Book*, c. 1502–03, by Raphael; *Still Life with Lemons, Oranges and a Rose*, 1633, by Francisco de Zurbarán; and *Portrait of a Boy*, 1655–60, by Rembrandt van Rijn. The collection is particularly notable for its 19th-century works, including the *Mulberry Tree*, 1889, by Vincent van Gogh, and a stunning selection of over 100 works by Degas, including the *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, 1878–81. Masterpieces from the 20th century include works by Picasso, Modigliani, and Brancusi. Highlights from the Asian collection include the bronze sculptures *Buddha Shakyamuni*, c. 550, India: Bihar, Gupta period, and *Shiva as King of Dance*, c. 1000, India: Tamil Nadu; and the gilt-bronze *Indra*, 13th century, Nepal.

In 1974, Norton Simon and a reorganized Board of Trustees assumed responsibility for the Pasadena Art Museum, taking up management of its building and incorporating its important collection of 20th-century European and American art with the outstanding collections of the Norton Simon foundations. Highlights from the PAM collection include the Galka Scheyer Blue Four Collection, a body of works by artists Lyonel Feininger, Paul Klee, Alexei Jawlensky, Vasily Kandinsky, and others assembled by art dealer, scholar, and muse Galka Scheyer; postwar American art, particularly from Southern California-based artists, including John Altoon, Larry Bell, Wallace Berman, Bruce Conner, Richard Diebenkorn, Llyn Foulkes, Sam Francis, George Herms, Robert Irwin, and Ed Ruscha; and a photography collection comprised of works by Ansel Adams, Lewis Baltz, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Imogen Cunningham, Frederick Sommer, Edward Weston, and Minor White, among others.

Approximately 1,000 works from the permanent collection of 12,000 objects are on view in the Norton Simon Museum's galleries and sculpture garden throughout the year. There are two temporary exhibition spaces within the Museum; every year the curatorial department mounts three to five exhibitions centered on the collection. To extend the impact of these exhibitions and to explore genres and themes within the permanent collection, the Museum offers ten to twenty free public programs per month, including scholarly lectures, adult education courses, music and dance performances, and hands-on activities for children. Private tours are available by reservation.

In collaboration with Yale University Press, the Norton Simon Art Foundation actively produces scholarly publications focused on segments of the collections on view at the Museum. Recent editions include *The Blue Four Collection at the Norton Simon Museum* (2002), the three-volume *Asian Art at the Norton Simon Museum* (2003–2004), *The Collectible Moment: Photographs in the Norton Simon Museum* (2006), *Nineteenth-Century Art in the Norton Simon Museum*, volume I (2006) and *Degas in the Norton Simon Museum: Nineteenth-Century Art*, volume II (2009). In late 2010 the Foundation will publish *Collector Without Walls: Norton Simon and His Hunt for the Best*.

Location: The Norton Simon Museum is located at 411 West Colorado Blvd. at Orange Grove Blvd. in Pasadena, California, at the intersection of the Foothill (210) and Ventura (134) freeways. For general Museum information, please call (626) 449-6840 or visit www.nortonsimon.org. **Hours:** The Museum is open every day except Tuesday, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., and 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday. **Admission:** General admission is \$8.00 for adults and \$4.00 for seniors. Members, students with I.D., and patrons age 18 and under are admitted free of charge. Admission is free for everyone on the first Friday of every month from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. **Special Notice: Beginning January 1, 2011, adult admission will be \$10 and senior admission will be \$5.** All public programs, unless stated otherwise, are free. The Museum is wheelchair accessible. **Parking:** Parking is free and no reservations are necessary. **Public Transportation:** The City of Pasadena provides a shuttle bus to transport passengers through the Pasadena Playhouse district, Lake Street shopping district, and Old Pasadena. A shuttle stop is located in front of the Museum. Visit www.cityofpasadena.net/artsbus for schedules. The MTA Bus Line #180/181 stops in front of the Museum. The Memorial Park Station on the MTA Gold Line is the closest Metro Rail station to the Museum, located at 125 East Holly Street and Arroyo Parkway. Please visit www.metro.net for schedules.