

TITLE WALL

Botticelli, Titian, and Beyond: Masterpieces of Italian Painting from Glasgow Museums

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[AFA and Glasgow Museums logos]

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Botticelli, Titian, and Beyond: Masterpieces of Italian Painting from Glasgow Museums

The Glasgow Museums, primarily comprised of the holdings of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and the Burrell Collection, own what is probably the finest and most comprehensive collection of Italian paintings of any municipal museum in Britain. Numbering about one hundred fifty paintings, the holdings are remarkable both for the high quality of individual paintings and for their wide chronological range. The forty works of art from Glasgow shown here do justice to both these aspects of the collection. Included are a number of unquestionable masterpieces, among them Luca Signorelli's *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, Giovanni Bellini's *Virgin and Child*, Domenichino's *Landscape with St. Jerome*, a pair of monumental landscapes by Salvator Rosa, Francesco Guardi's *View of San Giorgio Maggiore*, and perhaps most celebrated of all, Titian's radiant *Christ and the Adulteress*. Chronologically, the exhibition extends from Niccolò di Buonaccorso's *St. Lawrence* of about 1370–75 to Luigi da Rios's *Overlooking a Canal, Venice*, painted five hundred years later. All five centuries are represented by superior paintings that reflect the inventiveness of Italian art in the creative centers of Bologna, Florence, Milan, Naples, Rome, Siena, and, especially, Venice. A majority of the artworks are religious in theme, but there is also a representative range of secular subjects—from ancient history, mythology, and allegory to genre scenes of everyday life, landscape, and townscape.

About one half of the paintings shown here—and about the same proportion of those in the collection as a whole—belonged to the successful Glasgow coachbuilder Archibald

McLellan (1797–1854). McLellan formed his collection in the 1830s and 1840s with the specific purpose of creating a civic museum worthy of the booming mercantile city. He wanted his paintings to be “illustrative of the characteristics and progress of the various schools of painting in Italy . . . since the revival of art in the fifteenth century” and his collection to “form the foundation for a more extensive and complete collection.”

McLellan also wished the works to represent strong moral values which, he hoped, would be instilled in the community. Hence, the majority of works depict religious subjects, noble stories from antiquity, or high-minded allegory. Subsequent bequests to the Glasgow Museums, especially during the later nineteenth century, have further enriched and extended the chronological scope of the nucleus provided by McLellan.

I. The Italian Renaissance: Tradition and Discovery (nos. 1–8)

Sharing the tastes of his time, Archibald McLellan had little interest in Italian painting produced before 1400, and so the fourteenth century is not broadly represented in the Glasgow Museums. Fortunately, however, the late medieval *St. Lawrence*, by the Sienese painter Niccolò di Buonaccorso, was given to the collection in 1980. With its gold background and richly wrought surface, it serves as a worthy representative of Italian painting immediately before the dawn of the Renaissance. Two other important paintings of this period – works by Agnolo Gaddi and Lorenzo Monaco in the Santa Barbara Museum of Art collection – have been added to the exhibition.

Dating from the late fifteenth century are three masterpieces by a trio of leading and influential painters: Luca Signorelli, Sandro Botticelli, and Giovanni Bellini of the Umbrian, Florentine, and Venetian schools, respectively. In differing degrees, these

reflect the pioneering advances of the early Renaissance: a renewed interest in the sculpture and architecture of classical antiquity; creation of a compelling illusion of three-dimensional form and three-dimensional space by means of modeling in light and shade, geometric perspective systems, and through credible background landscapes; and a new desire to convey a sense of movement and of inner human thoughts and feelings in grand narrative scenes. As in classical antiquity, the activities of the individual were seen and portrayed in heroic terms, as a new attitude regarding the importance and immense potential of the common man emerged in the Renaissance.

II. The Sixteenth Century: Towards a New Beauty (nos. 9–15)

The works of the most venerated central Italian masters of the beginning of the sixteenth century—Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael—had already become rare in their own day and were far beyond the reach of most nineteenth-century collectors. However, McLellan succeeded in acquiring outstanding paintings by their Venetian contemporaries Titian and Paris Bordone (see works in adjoining Von Romberg Gallery). Characteristic of their generation are the new grandeur, beauty, and fluency of movement given to the human figure, while the sensuous warmth and richness of their color and textures and their poetically evocative landscape backgrounds are typically Venetian. In large part, these effects were achieved as a result of the Venetians' adoption of the novel and more flexible technique of oil on canvas, which replaced the traditional one of egg-based tempera on panel, used in the 15th-century paintings nearby. Also well represented in the Glasgow Museums' collections is the elaborate style called "Mannerism" – the prevailing Italian mode of the mid- to late sixteenth

century, which emphasized self-conscious artifice over realistic depiction. Artists such as Girolamo da Carpi of Ferrara, Orazio Sammacchini of Bologna, an anonymous Florentine painter, and the Roman Cavaliere d'Arpino all owed a profound debt to great masters of the beginning of the century, notably Raphael and Michelangelo. But in their different ways, they sought to achieve new effects of beauty by introducing a greater refinement, virtuosity, and, often, an unnatural complexity of anatomy, movement, and space.

III. The Seventeenth Century: Rhetoric and Realism (nos. 16–24)

By the end of the sixteenth century, Mannerism was in decline, and a new generation led by the Bolognese painter Annibale Carracci and the towering Roman master Caravaggio had begun to forge their own artistic traditions in vigorous reaction against the old one. Very different from each other, these two new directions are well represented in this exhibition in the areas of religious painting and landscape. Similar in subject and composition, but contrasting in style, are the Holy Family groups by Antiveduto Gramatica, a follower of Caravaggio, and by Sassoferrato, whose painting is based on a print by Carracci. While the first aims at a vivid realism and dramatizes the domestic scene by theatrically spotlighting the forms against a shadowy background, Sassoferrato adopts light, clear colors and a tightly organized figure design that engenders an attitude of classical calm. A similar contrast can be drawn between the treatment of landscape by Domenichino, a close follower of Carracci, and Salvator Rosa, the former being ideally serene and luminous and the latter pair being dark, storm-tossed and wildly romantic. At the same time, these three paintings share the

novelty that although they ostensibly depict a scene in the life of a saint, the view of nature has now become dominant, thereby preparing the way for autonomous, secular landscape painting in the future. Subjects from classical mythology also became highly popular with seventeenth-century patrons, but there are no important examples in Glasgow's collections. There is, however, the Milanese Francesco del Cairo's highly voluptuous *Death of Cleopatra*, which in its disturbing drama and the sensuousness of its pictorial handling, may be regarded as the most completely "Baroque" work in the exhibition. The word "Baroque" comes from the Italian term meaning "irregular," in this context referring to the unflattering momentary expression and extremely intense emotions captured in this picture as the artist depicts the instant in which Cleopatra is bitten by the asp.

IV. The Eighteenth Century: Age of Elegance (nos. 25–34)

The overall stylistic label usually applied to Italian painting of the eighteenth century is that of "late Baroque," which carries the implication (not altogether unjustified) that the principal stylistic trends of the eighteenth century largely represent continuations of those of the seventeenth. Colors tend to become lighter, however, a tendency often complemented by a lightening of the mood – even to a whimsical degree. The pastel colors and erotic nature of some of these compositions are reflective of contemporary Rococo painting in France.

Although arbiters of taste in mid- to late nineteenth-century Great Britain somewhat frowned on the period, McLellan bought quite extensively in this area, acquiring the Roman as well as the more generally admired Venetian school. As a consequence,

Glasgow possesses an impressive number of eighteenth-century Italian pictures, among them an attractive variety of subjects and genres, including religious, historical, mythological, and allegorical works. Traditional religious subjects include Francesco Solimena's solemn *Virgin and Child* and Francesco Trevisani's uncharacteristically intimate and moving *Agony in the Garden*. Refreshingly unusual among Glasgow's Italian pictures, by contrast, are two sparkling and witty scenes from classical mythology: Pier Leone Ghezzi's *The Purification of Aeneas in the River Numicius* and Andrea Casali's *Triumph of Galatea*, as well as a more severely moralizing subject from Roman history, Luigi Garzi's *Sacrifice of Marcus Curtius*, and a secular, probably political allegory by Antonio Balestra of Verona. Venetian townscape is represented impressively by Francesco Guardi's luminous masterpiece *View of San Giorgio Maggiore*, one of the most popular souvenir scenes commissioned by British aristocrats when they made their "Grand Tour" of Europe. A topographical, if delicately idealizing, landscape is represented by Paolo Anesi's *View of Ariccia*, a town outside of Rome that was a favorite haunt of British Grand Tourists. Finally, there are some purely imaginary, bucolic landscapes by the Roman Andrea Locatelli and the Venice-based Francesco Zuccarelli.

V. The Nineteenth Century: Patriotism and Genre (nos. 35–40)

By the close of the eighteenth century, Italy had dominated European painting for half a millennium. It now gave way to France, and most nineteenth-century Italian painting is undeniably provincial. In some ways, this development is surprising and paradoxical, especially since the patriotic fervor aroused by the *Risorgimento*—the movement toward

the political unification of the peninsula—had an energizing effect on the sister arts of literature and music. Nevertheless, the local art academies maintained an inherited tradition of expertise, and at least on a technical level the quality of Italian painting in the nineteenth century remained high. Thanks to a bequest in 1862 by Cecilia Douglas, who lived for many years in Rome, the Glasgow Museums possess probably the only two works in any British collection by Vincenzo Camuccini, the leading painter in early nineteenth-century Rome. Inspired by a moral seriousness and executed in a severely Neoclassical style to match, this pair of pictures can probably be interpreted as an early reflection of Italy's stirrings for political freedom. Half a century later, most Italian painters were obliged to sell their work on the open market, through exhibitions or dealers, and consequently had to pay more attention to popular taste. Indicative of this situation is the fact that Glasgow's group of nine late nineteenth-century Italian paintings are all relatively small in scale and in subject consisting of contemporary, historical, and genre scenes of daily life, and local landscape. In style, they continue to adhere to a pre-Impressionist realism, although in handling they vary considerably—from the linear precision of Pietro Aldi's *A Painter and His Model* of 1879 to Antonio Mancini's lushly pictorial *The Sulky Boy* of 1875, reminiscent of the French master Edouard Manet.

Labels:**Niccolò di Buonaccorso**

Sieneese, c. 1348-1388

St. Lawrence, c. 1370-75

Tempera and gold on panel

Glasgow Museums, Donated by Julius Lewis Lyons, 1980 (3359)

St. Lawrence, martyred for his faith in Rome in 258 A.D., was one of the more popular saints in the late Middle Ages. He would have been immediately recognized by his attributes, the martyr's palm and a gridiron, the grill on which he was roasted alive. This painting would originally have been part of a multi-panel altarpiece, with many saints surrounding a central image of the Virgin and Child. It is in somewhat damaged condition, but we can still get an inkling of the effect it would have made during the celebration of the mass in a dark church, its gold background shimmering in candlelight, a poignant object of meditation and devotion.

Agnolo Gaddi

Florentine, 1350-1396

St. Ursula, c. 1388-1393

Tempera and gold on panel

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. Arthur Sachs (1946.6.2)

Ursula was an English Christian princess who was promised in marriage to a pagan prince as a reward for his conversion to Christianity. According to the 4th-century legend, Ursula and her 11,000 virgin companions traveled with the prince to Rome to meet the pope. On the return journey, Ursula and her retinue of virgins were massacred by Huns after she refused to marry their leader.

This painting was probably once part of a multi-panel altarpiece of many saints flanking a central image of the Virgin and Child. St. Ursula holds an arrow, the instrument of her martyrdom, and a book of the Gospels, signifying her faith.

Agnolo Gaddi was a follower of the great early Renaissance master Giotto, who transformed religious painting by moving away from the flat and static icon tradition. Gaddi uses Giotto's technique of modelling with light and shade to make St. Ursula look solidly three-dimensional and lifelike.

Lorenzo Monaco (Piero di Giovanni)

Florentine, c. 1370-75-c. 1425-30

The Martyrdom of Pope Caius, c. 1394-95

Tempera and gold on panel

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Purchase (1967.15)

Lorenzo Monaco was the most important and innovative painter in Florence during the decades following the Black Death, the pandemic of bubonic plague that killed up to two-thirds of the population of Europe.

Pope Caius was bishop of Rome in the 3rd century. He was executed for performing baptisms by the Roman Emperor Diocletian, shown here alongside his wife and assistant. The executioner sheathes his sword as Caius's head rolls towards the viewer and his spirit ascends to heaven.

Paintings like this one have been referred to as Bibles of the Illiterate, as they were intended to make the sacred stories come to life even – or especially – for those who could not read. In Lorenzo Monaco's time everyone knew the stories of the Bible, but only 1% of the population was literate. The church fathers encouraged artists to tell the stories in ways that would engage the hearts, minds, and emotions of the faithful.

This tiny panel was originally part of the *predella* (base) of a much larger altarpiece in the Church of San Gaggio, Florence.

Luca Signorelli

Tuscan (born in Cortona), c. 1450-1523

Lamentation over the Dead Christ, c. 1488-90

Oil (?) on panel

Glasgow Museums, Bequest of Dame Maxwell Macdonald, 1967 (PC.25)

Signorelli's most famous work, the monumental *Last Judgment* in the cathedral of Orvieto, features an array of heroic Roman-style male nudes that inspired Michelangelo. Here, Signorelli has adapted the forms and composition of an ancient Roman sarcophagus relief of a fallen hero to depict the tragedy of Christ's sacrifice. The dead Christ, looking very much like a youthful Roman athlete, is supported by his grieving mother, the Virgin Mary. She in turn is supported by other mourning saints, as Mary Magdalene rushes in to join them. At either side, like bookends or parentheses, other saints discuss the meaning of Christ's sacrifice.

The painting was originally a *predella* (base) for a multi-paneled altarpiece. Its long horizontal format seems to have inspired Signorelli to new heights of dynamic storytelling. Many 15th-century artists strove to adapt ancient Roman forms to Christian purposes, but Signorelli was one of the most skillful and original.

Sandro Botticelli (and possibly Assistant)

Florentine, 1444/45-1510

The Annunciation, c. 1490-95

Oil, tempera, and gold leaf on walnut panel

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (174)

Botticelli is best known for his beautiful painting of the *Birth of Venus*, the first depiction of a female nude in Italian Renaissance art. But he was a deeply pious man, and this painting is a fine example of his religious art.

The angel Gabriel rushes in from the left to announce to Mary that she will bear the Son of God. Mary accepts her destiny with a gesture of humble submission, as the golden rays above indicate the miraculous passage of the Holy Spirit.

The exquisite linear delicacy of the figures and their ballet-like poses are very distinctive of Botticelli. Less typical is the imposing architecture, which looks suspiciously like a contemporary Florentine palace. With its Doric columns receding sharply into the background, Botticelli shows his skill at one-point perspective, a mathematical system invented in Florence in the 1420s that enables artists to create the convincingly believable spaces in which the sacred stories come to life.

Giovanni Bellini

Venetian, c. 1438-1516

Virgin and Child, c. 1480-85

Tempera and oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Bequest of Mrs. John Graham Gilbert, 1877 (575)

Bellini was the greatest artist in late 15th-century Venice. He was famous for his large church altarpieces, but many of his most beautiful, and memorable, works are small paintings like this one of the *Virgin and Child* made for private devotion. This painting was probably displayed in a bedroom.

Bellini's originality is in large measure due to his mastery of the medium of oil paint. Painting with oil rather than tempera enabled him to model his figures with greater subtlety and softness than ever before. He took the idea of the Madonna and Child as both believably human and simultaneously divine to new heights. This Madonna is a beautiful young mother who tenderly balances her pudgy toddler. But this is no ordinary baby. He looks down at an unseen viewer with an expression of great solemnity and raises his hand in benediction.

The faux-marble ledge establishes a solid base for convincing us of the reality of the holy figures, but it also acts as a barrier, setting them apart from us.

Vincenzo Catena

Venetian, c. 1470/80-1531

Virgin and Child with St. Mary Magdalene and Another Female Saint, c. 1500-05

Oil on panel

Inscribed with a now fragmentary signature on the ledge: VINZENZIVS-CA[T]ENA

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (199)

This type of private devotional panel, with the Virgin, Christ Child and saints seen in half-length behind a parapet and set against a dark background was invented by Giovanni Bellini. Catena was a young Venetian follower of Bellini and this painting follows the Bellini format. But it is very different from Bellini in the crisp sculptural clarity of the figures and in the way the figures do not relate to each other, but rather each is lost in her own melancholy thoughts, perhaps contemplating the eventual sacrifice of the young Christ Child, who raises his arm to bless the viewer.

The saint on the right can be identified as Mary Magdalene, through her symbol of the jar of ointment with which she anointed Christ's feet. Her fancy hairstyle may be meant to represent the vanity of her early life. The saint on the left may be St. Agatha who was martyred by having her breasts cut off. But her crown of leaves could mean she is St. Olive, an obscure saint whose relics are preserved in the city of Brescia, part of the Venetian Republic.

Bartolomeo Veneto

Venetian, c. 1480–1531

St. Catherine Crowned, c. 1520

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (210)

St. Catherine of Alexandria was an Egyptian princess who lived in the 4th century. When she converted to Christianity and tried to convert others, she was tortured and killed by order of the Emperor Maxentius. She can always be identified by the spiked wheel which was the instrument of her torture. The crown of white jasmine flowers may refer to her purity and status as a princess and virgin martyr.

But her come-hither gaze is slightly disconcerting for a virgin martyr saint. This type of subject originated with artists in the circle of Leonardo da Vinci who used courtesans as models for St. Mary Magdalene. It became popular with a certain kind of male customer in early 16th-century Venice: images of beautiful young woman decked out as saints but inspiring distinctly un-saintly thoughts!

Although he is known as Bartolommeo Veneto, he was probably born in Cremona, and the metallic precision of the details is more typical of Northern Italy than Venice.

Titian (Tiziano Vecellio)

Venetian (born in Pieve di Cadore), c. 1488/90-1576

Christ and the Adulteress, c. 1508-10

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (181)

According to the story recounted in John 8:2-11, the Pharisees, seeking to trap Jesus into contradicting the law of Moses, brought before him a woman caught in the act of

adultery, demanding that she be stoned to death. Jesus disarmed her accusers by saying “*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*”

This is the most famous painting in the Glasgow collections. It was once attributed to Giorgione, a towering figure in Venetian painting who died young; the current attribution to Titian, Giorgione’s most gifted student, is based on the richness of the colors, the exquisite rendering of textures and play of light on surfaces, and the complex psychological interplay among the figures. The figures wear contemporary clothing, a brilliant touch that makes the story come to life more vividly than ever before, and also suggests that its moral has contemporary relevance. Which it still has.

Titian (Tiziano Vecellio)

Venetian (born in Pieve di Cadore), c. 1488/90-1576

Head of a Man, c. 1508-10

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, purchased 1971 (3283)

This painting is a surviving fragment of Titian’s *Christ and the Adulteress* (on view nearby) before the canvas was cut down.

Titian would have been only 20 years old when he made these paintings. The influence of his master Giorgione can still be seen in the soft blurred edges, the dramatic three-quarter view over his shoulder, and the romantic moodiness of his expression. Typical of Titian, even at this early age, are his trademark sketchy brushwork in the white lacy edge peeking out from under the jacket, and the way he paints light reflecting off the pink satin cap.

Paris Bordon

Venetian (born in Treviso), 1500-1571

Virgin and Child with Saints Jerome and Anthony Abbot and a Donor, c. 1522

Oil on poplar panel

Inscribed on the scroll: Pariss. Bordonus. Taruisi/nus. f

Glasgow Museums, Bequest of Mrs. John Graham Gilbert, 1877 (570)

The Venetians took the subject of the Virgin, Christ Child, and saints in a pastoral landscape to new heights of sophistication. In this, as well as in the feathery, soft-focus brushwork, Bordon follows in the footsteps of his teachers Giorgione and Titian.

At left is the kneeling donor, the real-life person who would have commissioned and paid for the painting. His protector (and probable namesake) St. Anthony Abbot turns to introduce him to St. Jerome, who gestures to the crucifix on the ground. Presumably the two saints will then introduce him to the Virgin Mary who, unaware of the introduction that is about to take place, looks down at her baby with maternal affection.

The natural way the figures relate to each other puts a new, and particularly Venetian, spin on the traditional theme called a *sacra conversazione* (holy conversation), merging the earthly and heavenly realms.

Paris Bordon

Venetian (born in Treviso), 1500-1571

Virgin and Child with Saints John the Baptist, Mary Magdalene, and possibly George, c. 1524

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (191)

The Virgin, Christ Child, and saints in a serene landscape setting was one of Bordon's favorite and most characteristic subjects. Here, a kneeling St. John the Baptist looks out at the viewer as he gestures to his symbols, the lamb and reed cross. The lamb is also the symbol of Christ's future sacrifice—as is the goldfinch the Christ Child clutches in his little hand. Mary Magdalene holds the jar of ointment with which she will anoint Christ's feet. The armored figure at right is either St. George, the warrior saint, or possibly St. Liberale, patron saint of Bordon's native city, Treviso.

This was an ambitious painting for a twenty-four year old artist and owes much to Bordon's mentor—namely Titian—the rather grand figures and their complex arrangement, the warm color range and glowing intensity of the reds and blues, and the poetically atmospheric landscape.

Tintoretto (Jacopo Comin/Jacopo Robusti)

Venetian, 1518-1594

Portrait of a Venetian General, c. 1570s

Oil on canvas

Collection of Michael Armand Hammer

Based on its resemblance to a 1571-72 portrait of Sebastiano Venier by Tintoretto in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, it is very possible that this is also a portrait of Venier. The sliver of blue sky and white clouds on the left suggests the painting was likely cut from a larger composition.

Sebastiano Venier (1496-1578) was one of the most revered figures in Venetian history. He came from a distinguished Venetian family but earned his place in history first as the Captain-General (i.e. Admiral) of the Venetian fleet that vanquished the Turks in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, then as Doge of the Venetian Republic. He was elected Doge, i.e. leader, of the Venetian Republic in 1577 but served as Doge for only nine months, as he died in 1578.

Tintoretto is famous primarily for his religious paintings, but he was also an accomplished portraitist. Venier wears the armor of a Captain-General, but we do not

need his costume to tell us that this is a man to be reckoned with. The feathery brushwork that describes every whisker and every wrinkle convinces us that this is a faithful likeness. But it is the way he looks directly at us with an expression that exudes intelligence, canniness and the hint of a smile that makes him enduringly alive.

Master of the Glasgow Adoration

Active c. 1490–1520

Adoration of the Magi, c. 1503–10

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Bequest of Mrs. John Graham Gilbert, 1877 (586)

The identity of the artist who made this painting is unknown, but this is his most important work, so he is referred to as the “Master of the Glasgow Adoration”. He may have been Spanish, or working in Spanish-controlled Naples.

Whoever he was, this very popular subject gave him a fine opportunity to show his skill at a multiple figure composition and rich decorative details. The exotically-attired kings (*magi*) pay homage to the Christ Child. They are often shown as representing the three ages of man. Here the kneeling king with the long white beard, representing old age, has set his crown on the floor and given his gift of gold. The second king, representing middle age, is in the process of respectfully removing his crown. The third, representing youth, gazes up at the star that guided them to Bethlehem. Behind them, the stable where Christ was born, is constructed on the ruins of a Roman temple, signifying that Christianity has supplanted pagan antiquity.

The rich decorative details of brocade, crowns, gifts, necklaces are done in a technique called *pastiglia*, stucco that has been molded and gilded.

Francesco Francia

Bolognese, c. 1450-1517

The Nativity of Christ, c. 1490

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (146)

By the 1490s artists had become increasingly skillful at making the sacred stories come to life by placing the holy figures in landscapes or architectural settings.

Francia has placed his sacred figures in a lovely little landscape—that is perhaps more reminiscent of Central Italy than the Holy Land. The Virgin Mary and two angels kneel in adoration of the newborn Christ Child; behind them stand Joseph and a praying shepherd. In the sky, two angels sing in jubilation.

The gentle, contemplative mood is typical of Francia, who was the premier painter in late 15th-century Bologna. This little painting was originally the central panel of the base

(*predella*) of an altarpiece made for the church of Santa Maria della Misericordia in Bologna.

Girolamo da Carpi

Ferrarese, c. 1501–1556

Virgin and Child in a Landscape with the Child Baptist and St. Catherine of Alexandria, c. 1545

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Bequeathed by Sir Claude Phillips, 1924 (1587)

By the mid-16th century, many artists were employed by the various ducal courts in Italy. Girolamo da Carpi came from Ferrara and worked for the Dukes of Ferrara.

In paintings made for these aristocratic patrons, the emphasis was on originality and virtuoso displays of skills rather than piety. Here Girolamo da Carpi has cleverly conflated two separate stories, the Mystic Marriage of St. Catherine to the Christ Child, and the meeting of the Holy Family with the young St. John the Baptist. In the clouds at upper right, musician angels celebrate the meeting by performing a concert.

The elegantly elongated figures, showy color effects (the shot-silk of St. Catherine's draperies, the dramatic stormy sunset sky) and especially the disconcerting embrace of the large and athletic holy children all suggest that this painting was intended as much as a courtly conversation piece as a devotional image.

Orazio Sammacchini

Bolognese, c. 1532-1577

St. James Major and St. Catherine of Alexandria, c. 1565

Oil on white metal

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (164)

A flying angel bestows martyr's crowns on the two saints who are identifiable by their attributes: St. Catherine by the broken wheel and a sword, the instruments of her martyrdom; St. James by his pilgrim's staff and hat, a reference to his pilgrimage site at Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain.

The figures seem to be striking poses. The poses, as well as their rather stolid grandeur, would have been recognized by contemporaries as referring to the heroic styles of Michelangelo and Raphael. This reference back to High Renaissance classicism, as well as the artificially pretty colors, were characteristic of the mid-16th-century Mannerist style in Bologna.

Florentine, late 16th century

St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness, c. 1570-75

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Bequeathed by Sir Claude Phillips, 1924 (1588)

St. John the Baptist lived as a hermit in the wilderness and he is often shown wearing only a fur loincloth. He fills his drinking cup with water from a stream. His reed cross, entwined with ivy and a ribbon inscribed with his motto, *Ecce Agnus Dei* (*Behold the Lamb of God*)—his reference to Christ—rests against his leg.

The identity of the painter is unknown, but the way in which the young saint is depicted as an athletic young man with roundly sculptured limbs suggests it was done by an artist working in Florence in the 1570s.

Cavaliere d'Arpino (Giuseppe Cesari)

Roman, 1568-1640

Archangel Michael and the Rebel Angels, c. 1592-93

Oil on tin leaf (?) -coated copper

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (153)

Giuseppe Cesari was the most famous, most popular artist in late 16th-century Rome. He was knighted by the pope who gave him the honorific title “Cavaliere d'Arpino.”

This little painting demonstrates why he was so popular. The swashbuckling Archangel Michael swoops in to vanquish the devil (the little dragon at lower right) and his rebel angels with the energy and brio of a ballet dancer. The cascade of falling bodies of the rebel angels shows Arpino's skill at depicting the human body in a variety of difficult poses (many derived from Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel). The colors are pretty and decorative, the details are exquisite. This dazzling display of virtuosity was meant to show off the Cavaliere's skill rather than his piety. By this time, religious paintings were being made as collectibles and this painting was most likely made for a private art collector.

Antiveduto Gramatica

Roman, c. 1570/71–1626

Virgin and Child with St. Anne, c. 1614–17

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (141)

The Madonna gazes affectionately at her Child as he reaches for a pair of cherries offered by his grandmother, St. Anne. The cherries allude to the Garden of Eden and Original Sin, the white cloth to Christ's burial shroud.

This painting reflects many of the trends of early 17th-century religious painting in Rome. Several were inspired by the great artistic revolutionary, Caravaggio: placing the figures very close to us in space, spotlighting them against a dark background, using strong

contrasts of light and shadow for dramatic effect and to make the figures look sculpturally believable; depicting the elderly St. Anne as an unidealized older woman.

The mood of sweetly sentimental piety is very unlike Caravaggio, but typical of the spirit of Counter-Reformation Rome.

Giovanni Baglione

Roman, 1566-1643

St. Catherine of Alexandria Carried to Her Tomb by Angels (early 17th century)

Oil on canvas

Santa Barbara Museum of Art,

The Suzette and Eugene Davidson Fund, 1985.40

Beginning in the late 16th century, the fathers of the Catholic Church made an official appeal to artists to use their skills to produce art that would stir the emotions of the faithful. Religious images were understood to be powerful weapons in the campaign to counteract the success of the Protestant Reformation.

This painting is a beautiful example of a Counter-Reformation image. Earlier images of St. Catherine always showed her as a lovely, vital young princess, often standing beside the spiked wheel on which she would be tortured. Here she is instead presented as lifeless, in the arms of a mournful, loving angel who is about to transport her to heaven. Two other angels descend with her martyr's palm and crown.

The appeal to our emotions is heightened by the dramatic use of light and shadow, and the way Baglione places the figures so intimately close to our space. She is literally being held up for us, too, to gaze upon with sorrow, to ponder the tragedy of her sacrifice for her faith.

Sassoferrato (Giovanni Battista Salvi)

Roman (born in Sassoferrato), 1609–1685

Virgin and Child with St. Elizabeth and the Child Baptist, c. 1640s

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Mrs. John Graham Gilbert Bequest, 1877 (584)

In 17th-century Counter-Reformation Rome, there was renewed interest in making the sacred stories come to life by representing the holy figures as real people. Sassoferrato accomplishes this goal in this charmingly intimate and informal scene in which the Christ Child, sitting on his Mother's lap, offers a drink to the young St. John the Baptist. Behind them, St. Elizabeth registers a mother's surprise or dismay at her toddler being so grabby.

The broad, simple, sculptural forms evoke the great Renaissance artist Raphael. An interesting touch is the blue and white porcelain bowl. Its design looks Persian. It

would have been one of the gifts given to the Christ Child by one of the three Kings (the Magi) who came from exotic locales. Real Persian, Turkish, and Chinese porcelains were being imported into Europe at this time and they were very rare and precious.

Francesco del Cairo

Milanese, 1607–1665

Death of Cleopatra, c. 1645–50

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (134)

Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, chose suicide rather than permitting herself to be taken prisoner by the conquering Roman army under Octavian. As recorded by the historian Plutarch (46-120 A.D.), the method of death she chose was to be bitten by an asp, a poisonous snake.

By the mid-17th century, paintings were no longer being made exclusively as objects for religious devotion. They were increasingly being made as collectibles, art objects whose purpose was to entertain or to decorate the homes of the wealthy.

Del Cairo had a successful career as a specialist in paintings of tragic heroines. The swooning figure of Cleopatra, writhing in her death throes, would have appealed to the Baroque love of melodrama. It is also an early example of the subject of the damsel in distress, whose enduring appeal to certain segments of the art-buying public is even more appealing if the damsel is also losing her clothing.

Carlo Dolci

Florentine, 1616-1686

Adoration of the Magi, c. 1633-34

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (154)

Dolci painted four versions of this subject. The first, or prime, version was made for Prince Leopoldo de' Medici, younger brother of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. This painting was probably made for another member of the Medici family or a Florentine aristocrat.

It is easy to see why the subject would have been popular with royalty: three sumptuously dressed kings offer their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the newborn Christ Child.

Dolci was a favorite of the Medici court. He specialized in small-scale devotional works of this type. His skill at rendering rich details with exquisite precision and polished, enamel-like surfaces would have appealed to his aristocratic patrons. It is tempting to

ascribe his distinctive brand of sweet, borderline sentimental, piety to his name: in Italian, *dolci* (plural of *dolce*) means sweet.

Carlo Dolci

Florentine, 1616-1686

Salome, c. 1681-85

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Purchased by Glasgow Museums through JC Robinson, 1883 (656)

Dolci's *Adoration of the Magi* (also in the exhibition) was painted at the very beginning of his career. *Salome* was painted almost fifty years later.

According to the gospels of Matthew and Mark, Salome, the beautiful daughter of Herodias and step-daughter of King Herod, on instruction from her mother, demanded that the king give her the head of St. John the Baptist.

Dolci shows Salome holding the severed head on a platter as she turns to look back, presumably at her parents or her mother, whose bidding she has done. The head of the Baptist appears to be a self-portrait of the artist.

Showing the figures spotlit against a black background ratchets up the dramatic effect of the gruesome scene. But Dolci's technical brilliance at the rendering of textures suggests that his real interest is Salome's gorgeous (contemporary) gown.

Domenichino (Domenico Zampieri)

Bolognese, 1581–1641

Landscape with St. Jerome, c. 1610

Oil on panel

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (139)

Domenichino came from Bologna, and following his fellow Bolognese Annibale Carracci, was part of the legacy of a new kind of landscape painting, the so-called classical landscape.

Nominally the subject is St. Jerome who, according to the *Golden Legend*, a medieval biography of the saints, spent four years as a penitent in the “*vast solitude of the desert, burnt with the heat of the sun.*” Domenichino has taken liberties with the location but otherwise hews to tradition, showing Jerome at work translating the Bible into Latin on the rock he used as a writing desk, along with his attributes, a skull, cardinal's hat, a cross made of sticks—and the tame lioness who was his companion.

But Domenichino's real subject is the landscape, not the desert but probably an idealized version of the countryside around Rome, verdant, serene, and luminous. It is

an ideal vision of man and nature in harmony that was enormously influential on later landscape painters.

Salvator Rosa

Neapolitan, 1615-1673

St. John the Baptist Revealing Christ to the Disciples, 1656-7

Oil on canvas

Signed: SR

Glasgow Museums, Presented to Glasgow Museums in memory of John Young by his family, 1952 (2969)

This painting is based on the passage in John 1:35 in which St. John the Baptist points out Jesus to his future disciples with the words, "*Behold the Lamb of God.*" The theatricality of St. John's gesture and the reactions of the disciples emphasize the drama of the revelation. But the real drama here is in the landscape.

Placing religious figures in a landscape setting was by now a longstanding tradition. But the landscape was always secondary to the religious event. Perhaps the light over the horizon is meant to suggest a new dawn breaking with the advent of Christ, but one has the sense that for Rosa the religious event is mostly an excuse to paint a spectacularly dramatic landscape.

Salvator Rosa

Neapolitan, 1615-1673

St. John the Baptist Baptizing Christ in the Jordan, 1656–57

Oil on canvas

Signed: SR

Glasgow Museums, Gifted to Glasgow Museums by Mrs. Alice Thom, 1953 (2987)

As Christ is being baptized by St. John, others wait to be baptized or bear witness to the event. This event is described in all four gospels. St. John the Baptist was the patron saint of Florence. This painting and the adjacent *St. John the Baptist Revealing Christ to the Disciples* were commissioned as a pair by a Florentine noblewoman, the Marchesa Maria Acciaiuoli Guadagni.

Both paintings are spectacular examples of Rosa's theatricality and originality. He was a playwright, poet and actor as well as a painter. His rebellious personality and the wild, tempestuous landscapes for which he became famous, made him an inspiring figure to the artists of the Romantic period in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

Salvator Rosa

Neapolitan, 1615-1673

Hagar and Ishmael Visited by an Angel in the Wilderness, c. 1639-40

Oil on canvas,
Signed: SR on rock
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Purchase, 1969.8

According to the Book of Genesis (21:9-21), Hagar and the illegitimate son she bore to Abraham were cast out from the house of Abraham and left to wander aimlessly in the desert. When their water was entirely consumed, Hagar abandoned her child because she could not bear to watch him die. Hearing the child's cries, God sent an angel to inform Hagar that He would protect them, and that her son would be the founder of a new nation.

In Islamic tradition, Ishmael is regarded as the patriarch of several Arab tribes and the forefather of the prophet Mohammed.

Rosa was a playwright as well as an artist. By setting the story in a forest rather than the desert he ratchets up the drama – contrasting the dark, foreboding forest with the heavenly light that spotlights the main figures and signifies God's presence.

Roman School

Mid-17th century

Vanitas, c. 1650/60

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Bequest of Dame Anne Maxwell Macdonald, 1967 (PC.26)

The “*vanitas*” theme was a popular allegory about the brevity of life (symbolized by the beautiful flowers) and the “vanity,” or vain hope, that material possessions will make us happy. The young woman probably represents Mary Magdalene, who after meeting Christ renounced her former life of attachment to jewels and earthly pleasures.

The *vanitas* theme gave artists an opportunity to show their skill in depicting luxurious objects – here the velvet and gold brocade table cover, the silver incense burner in the foreground, and the gilded sculpture of Apollo and Cupid.

This latter depicts a real bronze sculpture made by a contemporary French artist working in Rome, which is a clue that the artist who made it was probably Roman. But it is possible that it was made by two different artists, one specializing in figures and architecture, the other in still life, as the flowers and luxury objects are painted in a different, more detailed style than the figure.

Francesco Solimena

Neapolitan (born in Canale di Serino), 1657–1747

Virgin and Child, c. 1720–30

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (143)

Solimena was the leading painter in early 18th -century Naples. His specialty was large mural paintings for churches and palaces. But here we see him at his most original and personal.

He uses the typically Baroque pictorial strategies of placing the figures against a monochromatic background and very close to us in space for maximum emotional impact. But the emotion here is as quiet and subtle as the color palette.

The Christ Child, looking simultaneously like a baby and an old man, looks directly at us. In one hand he clutches a goldfinch (symbol of his future sacrifice, as according to legend, the little bird was present on the way to Calvary) and with the other makes a gesture of benediction.

His elegant mother envelopes him in her embrace, cradling him with one hand and gesturing to us with the other, as two little angels look on.

It is an updated icon, a perfect balance of the human and the divine, for our contemplation and meditation.

Attributed to **Francesco Trevisani**

Roman (born in Capodistria), 1656–1746

Agony in the Garden, 1740

Oil on copper

Inscribed on the reverse: Cve Trevis. Ro/ 1740 (Cavaliere Trevisani in Roma, 1740)
Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (145)

The title refers to the passage in the gospel of Luke (22:42-4), describing Christ's agony in the garden of Gethsemane during the night before the Crucifixion:

“And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly. . . and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

The figure style and color palette hark back to the simple, sculptural classicism of Roman Renaissance painting. The soft brushwork, however, is reminiscent of Trevisani's Venetian training. He utilizes the Baroque strategy of placing the figures very close to the front of the picture plane, that is, very close to us, for maximum emotional impact.

But the emotion doesn't feel like a strategy, it feels very authentic and very personal. Trevisani would have been 80 years old when he made this tiny painting. It was almost certainly made for intimate private devotion.

Andrea Locatelli

Roman, 1695–1741

Landscape with Fishermen by a Stream, c. 1730

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (160)

Locatelli specialized in small-scale landscapes of idyllic pastoral beauty. Although inspired by the Roman *campagna*, the countryside around Rome, his landscapes are idealized and imaginary, rather than representing actual topography.

Locatelli is following the tradition of ideal landscape invented by 17th-century painters like Domenichino, but his are lighter, prettier and more decorative. The fishermen too are essentially decorative embellishments. They have no narrative function, although the central fisherman's reclining pose cleverly refers to ancient sculptures of river gods.

Francesco Zuccarelli

Umbrian, 1702–1788

St. John the Baptist Preaching, c. 1740–45

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (166)

Zuccarelli was Tuscan by birth, but spent most of his career in Venice and lived in London for nearly twenty years. He was a founding member of the Royal Academy in the 1760s.

His specialty was picturesque Arcadian landscapes bathed in soft pink and golden light. These were enormously popular with his patrons in both Venice and Britain. Usually these landscapes were pastoral, showing happy peasants with their flocks and herds. But occasionally, as here, he modified his usual formula to introduce figures from a biblical or historical narrative.

Zuccarelli has faithfully followed one aspect of the gospel account. According to Luke (3:4-18), three types of people attended the Baptist's sermon: ordinary folk, soldiers, and Roman tax collectors – all wanting to know how they could reform their lives. But the biblical event took place near the River Jordan; Zuccarelli has opted instead for a more pleasing idyllic woodland glade.

Pier Leone Ghezzi

Roman, 1674–1755

The Purification of Aeneas in the River Numicius, c. 1725

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (3233)

This mythological subject comes from the Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1st century A.D.). The goddess Venus, having gained approval from Jupiter to make her son Aeneas immortal, swoops down in her golden chariot to announce the good news. Aeneas, having washed away the mortal parts of his body in the sacred waters of the Numicius river (represented here in the form of the river god on the left) and, having tasted a drink of nectar and ambrosia, becomes a god.

Aeneas strikes a god-like pose as one of Venus's cupids holds the bowl of ambrosia and two more frolic with his discarded armor. Ghezzi's wit and sense of humor are also evident in the antics of the other cherubs.

Andrea Casali

Roman, 1705–1784

Triumph of Galatea, c. 1740–65

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (195)

The story of the sea-nymph Galatea, of her love for Acis and of the giant Polyphemus's jealous anger, is recounted in the Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1st century A.D.). According to the myth, when Polyphemus killed Acis with a boulder, Galatea made Acis immortal by transforming his blood into the river in Sicily that bears his name. Here Galatea is borne over the waves in her shell-chariot, surrounded by frolicking mermaids, tritons, nereids, and cupids, as she casts a loving glance at her beloved who has been transformed into a water god.

Casali has transformed the rather violent tale into a luscious Rococo patisserie, an erotic fantasy of creamy flesh and swirling curvilinear forms.

Casali was trained in Rome, but worked in England for twenty-five years, making voluptuous, light-hearted entertainments like this one for aristocratic British clients.

Paolo Anesi

Roman, 1697–1773

View of Ariccia, c. 1760–65

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (213)

Although this is a view of an actual hilltop town near Rome, it is in the tradition of the ideal landscape as it evolved in the 18th century, a picturesque idyll with strolling figures leading us on the winding path toward town.

The town itself is dominated by the domed church of Santa Maria dell'Assunzione, built by Pope Alexander VII (Fabio Chigi), whose family palace appears at left. This painting may have been intended to promote the idea that life during the reign of the Alexander VII was happy and peaceful.

But Ariccia and its surrounding countryside were popular destinations for British Grand Tourists during the 18th century. This painting, with its soft colors, gentle curves and pale golden light would have been a lovely souvenir to take back to England.

Antonio Balestra

Veronese/Venetian, 1666–1740

Justice and Peace Embracing, c. 1700

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (266)

Female personifications of abstract ideas became popular in the 17th and 18th centuries. Here the little matchmaker Cupid looks up at the personifications of Peace and Justice, whom he has presumably brought together in love. Peace holds her traditional attribute of an olive branch. Justice wears a crown and holds a bundle of lictors' rods with an axe. The rods are symbols of a judge's power to punish; the crown indicates that Justice reigns supreme. The subject of Justice and Peace embracing in loving harmony suggests that the painting may have been commissioned for a government building – or perhaps for the reception room of a grand aristocratic palace.

Balestra worked mainly in Venice, where his slyly humorous suggestion that these two women have a little something going on would have been appreciated.

Luigi Garzi

1638–1721

Sacrifice of Marcus Curtius, c. 1715–20

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, William Kennedy Bequest, 1899 (900)

The Roman historian Livy (1st century B.C.) in his *History of Rome* recounts that in 362 B.C. a chasm suddenly opened in the Roman Forum. Soothsayers prophesied that it would be closed only when Rome's greatest treasure was sacrificed to it. A young nobleman, Marcus Curtius, recognizing that Rome had no greater treasure than the valor of her soldiers, rode fully armed into the chasm, causing it to close over him. In the painting, this heroic act of self-sacrifice is witnessed by groups of citizens and is set against a background of classicizing buildings meant to evoke the Roman Forum in the fourth century B.C.

The event is presented almost as if it were a play, with the hero in the center and the actors on either side gesturing theatrically. The Roman subject, and its moral message of the necessity of personal sacrifice for the greater good, is matched by its severely classicizing figure style and symmetrical composition.

Francesco Guardi

Venetian, 1712–1793

View of San Giorgio Maggiore, c. 1760

Oil on canvas

Signed: F. G. Fec

Glasgow Museums, Archibald McLellan Collection, purchased 1856 (184)

This painting of the church of San Giorgio Maggiore (designed in the 16th century by the great architect Andrea Palladio), as seen across the water from St. Mark's Square is a beautiful example of a Venetian "view" painting.

These "*vedute*," picturesque views of Venice, were the specialty of Venice's two greatest 18th-century painters, Canaletto and Guardi. Their paintings were avidly collected by the aristocratic British travelers who fell in love with Venice while on the cultural pilgrimage known as the Grand Tour.

Canaletto's paintings were more popular with the Grand Tourists because they were crisp, clear and precise. Guardi's are less literal and more atmospheric.

His interest in the effects of light refracting off water and his distinctively loose and sketchy brushstrokes – the paint often laid on in thick rich impasto – make his paintings look remarkably lively, fresh, and modern.

Vincenzo Camuccini

Roman, 1771–1844

Roman Women Offering Their Jewelry in Defense of the State, c. 1825–29

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Bequeathed by Mrs. Cecilia Douglas of Orbiston, 1862 (319)

As recounted by Plutarch (1st century A.D.), in the early days of the Roman Republic a Roman general vowed to send a portion of the spoils from the Etruscan city of Veii to the shrine of Apollo at Delphi. When the Romans failed to take Veii and make good on their promise, the patrician women of Rome nobly and patriotically donated their gold jewelry to the state to be melted down and offered in homage to the god. This story of self-sacrifice for the greater good became popular in pre-Revolutionary France where it was painted by numerous artists.

The moralizing message is matched by Camuccini's correspondingly severe classicizing style. The frieze-like arrangement of figures and attention to correct archeological detail are typical of the artist's work. He was the leading painter in Rome in the early 19th century, and this picture was commissioned directly from him by Mrs. Cecilia Douglas, a wealthy Scotswoman who lived there.

Vincenzo Camuccini

Roman, 1771–1844

Death of Julius Caesar, c. 1825–29

Oil on canvas

Glasgow Museums, Bequeathed by Mrs. Cecilia Douglas of Orbiston, 1862 (318)

Camuccini was the leading Roman exponent of early 19th-century Neoclassicism. The style is characterized by hard, clear draftsmanship, bold colors, sculptural figures and archaeologically correct details.

This painting is based on the account of the assassination of the Emperor Caesar (44 B.C.) in Plutarch's *Life of Brutus* (1st century A.D.) The event took place in the Theater of Pompey, recreated here and overseen by an ancient Roman sculpture thought to represent Pompey, the great Roman leader and general. As he is attacked by knife-wielding assailants, Caesar falls to one knee and gestures toward his comrade Brutus, who looks away. The painting is probably also based on a popular play of 1786. The overthrow of a dictator is a subject that would have had strong political overtones in Europe in the 1790s. This painting is a smaller version of a monumentally-scaled original, begun in 1793 and now in Naples. This reduced version was commissioned by Mrs. Cecilia Douglas, a wealthy Scottish woman living in Rome.

Antonio Mancini

Roman, 1852–1930

The Sulky Boy, 1875

Oil on canvas

Signed and dated upper right: Mancini, '75

Glasgow Museums, David Perry Bequest, 1940 (2191)

We do not know when or why the painting was given this title. It is possible that the “sulky boy” is a portrait of a real person, but that too is unclear. What is clear is that Mancini, who was only twenty-three when he made this painting, was aware of the most current trends in painting. He was born in Rome and trained in Naples but he visited Paris twice in the mid-1870s. In Paris he met Edouard Manet and Manet's influence can be seen here in the sketchy, rich impasto of the brushwork.

But the big expanse of dark background, with the child's head emerging from the shadows and peeping out from behind a colorful pile-up of objects is a very original amalgam of French, Spanish, Italian, even Neapolitan, influences.

Mancini had an international career, which included an exhibition of his work at the Paris Salon of 1872. He became a well-known society portraitist and was championed in Britain by his friend the American painter John Singer Sargent.

Federico Andreotti

Florentine, 1847–1930

The Violin Teacher, ca. 1875–90

Oil on canvas

Signed upper right, in red: F. Andreotti

Glasgow Museums, Margaret H. Garroway Bequest, 1947 (2598)

In this early part of his career, Andreotti specialized in scenes from contemporary life. The violin teacher – possibly a portrait of a real person – holds his bow aloft as he looks out at us and appears to be speaking. The musical score on the stand reads “Lezione V” (Lesson 5). Is he speaking to us? Are we his pupil? It would seem so.

The old man’s tired eyes, dirty fingernails and dignified but threadbare clothes tell us that he is barely scraping by. The patchy, suggestive brushwork helps to create the impression that the artist has captured a fleeting moment in time. This combination of sympathetic, earthy humanity, and painterly skill earned Andreotti considerable success, especially with British and American collectors. Between 1879 and 1991 his paintings were exhibited at the Royal Academy in London and the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts.

Pietro Aldi

Tuscan (born Manciano), 1852–1888

A Painter and His Model, 1879

Oil on mahogany panel

Signed and dated lower right: Aldi-Roma/1879

Glasgow Museums, Bequeathed by John C. McIntyre, 1939 (2146)

During his short career (he died at 36), Aldi specialized in romantic and sentimental subjects from his own day and from medieval and Renaissance history. It is not clear how the painting got this generic title, because it is almost certainly meant to represent the 15th-century painter Fra Filippo Lippi declaring his love for Lucrezia Buti, the novice nun who was his model for a painting of the Madonna. Their notorious love affair, recounted in Giorgio Vasari’s *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, etc.* (16th century), inspired many writers and artists in the late 19th century.

Aldi depicts the artist as an ardent young gallant dressed in the height of fashion and Lucrezia as a bashful nun torn between love and duty. The setting is an actual room in the Palazzo Pubblico (Town Hall) in Siena. The fresco paintings on its upper walls, Gothic woodwork, and richly inlaid marble floor are all rendered with the painter’s customary meticulous attention to detail and high finish.

Luigi da Rios

Venetian, 1844–1892

Overlooking a Canal, Venice, 1886

Oil on canvas

Signed lower right: L. Da Rios/Venezia, 1886

Glasgow Museums, Bequeathed by Adam Teacher, 1898 (787)

In this particularly engaging scene of contemporary life, the artist presents a pair of pretty young women in colorful costumes who are looking at something interesting that is taking place “off-stage” to the right. A young child struggles to climb up the wall so he too can see what is happening.

The medieval bell tower in the left distance indicates that this is the Dorsoduro section of Venice, which in the 19th century was a poor neighborhood. The women may be the wives of boatmen or fishermen.

Da Rios came from the Venetian mainland, studied at the Academy in Venice in the 1860s, and exhibited regularly in Britain, at the Royal Academy in London and the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts. This is typical of his many appealingly picturesque scenes of everyday life in the city which were especially popular with foreign visitors.

Caravaggio and the Caravaggisti

Although Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (c. 1572-1610) seems never to have concerned himself with taking on a large number of apprentices and establishing a “school,” he was one of the most influential artists who ever lived. His daringly original style, with its unidealized naturalism, remained controversial: he employed street urchins and prostitutes as models for gods, goddesses, and the Virgin Mary, and painted the reality of their flaws and defects. Also notorious for his violent behavior, he was exiled from Rome for manslaughter and met his untimely death at age 38.

The painters who emulated aspects of Caravaggio’s style, technique, and subject matter are called Caravaggisti. Giovanni Baglione and Antiveduto Gramatica were among the few who knew the master personally. While their paintings exhibit elements of his style, they also indicate an effort to retain a distinctive look of their own. Gramatica’s *Virgin and Child with St. Anne* employs the stark, dramatic contrast between light and dark – *chiaroscuro* – typical of Caravaggio’s mature style, suffusing what is otherwise an intimate family scene with gravity and foreboding. Baglione combines *chiaroscuro* with a startlingly persuasive rendering of the angel’s wings that has the effect of making the heavenly presence entirely believable.

In a similar vein, Francesco del Cairo employs a Caravaggesque theatrical spotlighting in his split-second, “snapshot”-like portrayal of Cleopatra’s death, this momentary quality also inspired by the master. Sassoferrato’s painting of the *Virgin and Child with St. Elizabeth and the Child Baptist* combines a less extreme form of *chiaroscuro* with an interest in capturing the effect of ancient Graeco-Roman reliefs, a “classical” look that had become popular among certain painters in the decades after Caravaggio’s death.

Caravaggio’s powerful work eventually had an impact on painters throughout Europe, including many of the greatest artists of the 17th century such as Rubens, Rembrandt, Velázquez, and Zurbarán.

Glasgow Show Timeline

Dante Alighieri publishes his epic poem the *Inferno* in 1317

The Black Plague ravishes Italy and Europe in 1348-50, killing up to two-thirds of the population

Lorenzo Monaco, *The Martyrdom of Pope Caius*, c. 1394-95, SBMA

Lorenzo Ghiberti finishes Gates of Paradise for Florentine Baptistry in 1424

Giovanni Bellini, *Virgin and Child*, c. 1480-85, Glasgow Museums

Botticelli paints his *Birth of Venus*, c. 1482-85

Christopher Columbus embarks on first voyage to the Americas in 1492

Leonardo paints the *Last Supper* in the refectory of the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan in 1495-98

Controversial Dominican friar and preacher Girolamo Savonarola is burned at the stake for heresy in Florence in 1498

Titian, *Christ and the Adulteress*, c. 1508-10, Glasgow Museums

Michelangelo paints his monumental frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome in 1508-12

Protestant reformation leader Martin Luther posts his *95 Theses* on the doors of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, in 1517

Niccolo Machiavelli publishes the *Art of War* in 1521

Paris Bordon, *Madonna and Child with Saints John the Baptist, Mary Magdalene and St. George*, c. 1524, Glasgow Museums

Troops of Emperor Charles V sack Rome in 1527

Council of Trent convenes and after a series of meetings, launches the Catholic Reformation, or Counter-Reformation, in 1545-63

Michelangelo serves as chief architect of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome from 1546-64

Cosimo I de' Medici, ruler of Florence, inaugurates the first Academy of Art, *Accademia delle Arti del Disegno*, in 1563

Founding of the Academy of Art in Rome, *Accademia di San Luca*, with support by Pope Gregory XIII, in 1577

Cavaliere d'Arpino, *St. Michael and the Rebel Angels*, c. 1592-93, Glasgow Museums

Caravaggio paints *The Martyrdom of St. Matthew* for San Luigi dei Francesi in Rome, embarking on his controversial and influential style of *chiaroscuro* and naturalism, 1599-1600

Shakespeare writes *Henry V*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth* in a span of seven years, from 1599-1606

Cervantes publishes the first volume of *Don Quixote*, the most influential work of literature from Spain's Golden Age, in 1605

Debut of Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, the first masterpiece of opera, in Milan in 1607

Galileo defends his scientific views of heliocentrism against the Inquisition, which forces him to sign a recantation, condemns him to house arrest, and bans his book *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* in 1633

Bernini sculpts the *Ecstasy of St. Teresa* for the Cornaro Chapel in the Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome in 1647-52

Founding of the Royal Academy of Art in France in 1648

Nicolas Poussin arrives in Rome and paints the surrounding countryside of the *campagna*, idealizing it and bringing a cerebral, classical quality to landscape painting, in the 1630s

Salvator Rosa, *St. John the Baptist Revealing Christ to the Disciples*, 1656-57, Glasgow Museums

Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, Voltaire, and others publish enlightenment and reform texts, initiating the Age of Enlightenment, in the 1650s

Carlo Dolci, *Salome*, c. 1681-85, Glasgow Museums

Sir Isaac Newton publishes his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* (the *Principia*) in 1687

Excavation begins on the ancient Roman towns of Herculaneum and Pompeii, destroyed and buried from the 79 A.D. explosion of Mt. Vesuvius, causing a renewed interest in Classicism, in 1738

Andrea Casali, *Triumph of Galatea*, c. 1740-65, Glasgow Museums

Continental Congress signs the Declaration of Independence and forms the United States of America in 1776

French Revolution marks the decline of monarchies and absolutism, and the rise of democracy and nationalism, from 1789-1799

Napoleon is crowned King of Italy after being elected Emperor of France in 1804, 1805

Niccolò Paganini publishes his *24 Caprices for Solo Violin, Op. 1* in 1819

Giuseppe Verdi's opera *La traviata* premieres in Venice in 1853

Edouard Manet exhibits *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* at the Salon des Refusés, the first Impressionist exhibition, sparking controversy due to its subject matter and innovative color and brushwork, in 1863

Italian Unification (*Risorgimento*), which began with Napoleon's defeat in 1815, is complete when Italian troops seize Rome under the leadership of King Victor Emmanuel II in 1870

La bohème by Giacomo Puccini premieres in Turin in 1896