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MADONNA AND CHILD
BY GUIDO DA SIENA (XIII CENTURY)
Recent Purchase

SIENESE PAINTINGS OF THE XIV-XV CENTURIES

In so far as the early Italian school may be called the greatest creation of the art of European painting, the importance of museum collections will always be rightly judged by the wealth of Italian Renaissance paintings which they possess. To aim at the richness of the collections of the great old museums of Europe, some of which were started as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, would be absurd for a young Institute such as ours, but even so an attempt must be made to build up the collections in such a way that the most important schools of the Italian Renaissance are equally represented, and the wonderful and logical development of this art through the three centuries—the XIV, XV and XVI—clearly shown.

It has happened that so far only the Venetian School is represented, with a few characteristic examples (Cima, Previtali, Titian, Tintoretto, Canale and Guardi), while the other great schools of Italy—the Florentine, Sieneese, Umbrian and Lombard — are almost entirely left out. Through an important purchase of several paintings, to which have been added two more loaned from private collections, it is now possible for the Institute to represent in an appropriate manner the School of Siena.

Perhaps on account of the refined and delicate nature of most of its artists, and the lack of powerful personalities, the School of Siena did not last as long as the Florentine or Venetian schools (hardly more than two centuries), while it preserved longer than the other schools the mediaeval spirituality and the Gothic sense of rhythmical linear composition. Its expressions are especially appealing to our modern decorative sense and our growing interest in the pure and direct devotional feeling of the art of the early Middle Ages.

The earliest painting among those acquired by the Institute is a Madonna attributed to Guido da Siena, a work of great beauty in its hieratic sentiment and its exquisite color scheme of light blue

and lilac with white against a gold background. The painting, probably executed in the latter part of the XIII century, is certainly by one of the two artists who painted the famous large Madonna on one of the main walls in the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena, generally regarded as the earliest important work of the Sieneese School, signed Guido da Siena and dated 1221. The date has been questioned, as the painting seems too advanced in style to make such an early date possible. It is probable, however, that it is correct but that the original painting has been almost entirely repainted by an unknown artist of the time of Duccio (about 1300) who was undoubtedly an important personage as he would otherwise not have dared to almost entirely replace the famous Madonna of Guido by a work of his own hand. He is unquestionably the same artist as the one who painted our Madonna, as may be seen by a comparison of the pronounced type of the Virgin and Child and by the modeling of the figures (compare especially the calves of the legs of the Child in both paintings). Although the type of the painting is quite Byzantine, we feel a decided personality of typically Sieneese character behind the veil of hieratic tradition. Byzantine is the flat ornamental style of the painting, the types of the Madonna and Child with their curved noses and almond shaped eyes, and the linear treatment of the garments with their interwoven gold threads; but the curious longing expression of the Madonna, the naively playing Child with his legs crossed and with a bird in his hand, and the refinement of the color scheme, show the vivid temperament and lyrical sense of the Sieneese style.

Duccio, the great Sieneese artist of the period of Cimabue, and the creator of the wonderful *Majesta* in the Academy in Siena (1311) and of the *Rucellai Madonna* in Santa Maria Novella at Florence, was a follower of Guido da Siena. The pupil of Duccio, again, is Segna di Buonaventura (active 1305-1326), the next artist repre-



MADONNA AND CHILD
 SEGNA DI BUONAVENTURA (Active 1305-1326)
 Recent Purchase

sented in our series of Siense paintings. Although this Madonna was executed hardly more than a generation later, we feel a decided advance in the direction of a more pictorial and at the same time a more plastic treatment of the figure. The modeling of the face is softer and rounder, and the costume, less flat and with fewer linear ornaments, is much darker, thus giving greater relief from the background. While the technical execution could never be mistaken for a Byzantine painting, the composition, on the other hand, seems almost more conservative than the one attributed to Guido da Siena—the Ma-

donna with her expression of lofty dignity and the serious Child clasping the scriptural roll tightly in his hand being most characteristic of the Byzantine tradition.

Siense art reached its climax in the XIV century with the great artists Simone Martini and the Lorenzetti, who with their followers spread the influence of Siense style all over Italy. But one example, the only Siense painting which the Museum owned up to this time, gives an idea of this wonderful period—a Madonna by Andrea di Bartolo, the son of Bartolo di Fredi. The traits of the Siense character, veiled still in the early paintings, now



MADONNA AND CHILD
BY ANDREA DI BARTOLO (1380(?) - 1428),

come fully to light. Like a lyrical poem of highly emotional quality seems this composition of Mother and Child sitting in a lovely meadow filled with flowers, embracing each other with passionate feeling. The intense glow of the dark eyes takes us back to Ambrogio Lorenzetti's great compositions of the early part of the XIV century.

In the XV century Florence overpowered the city of Siena and her commerce and political power fell into decline. But her art, although lacking the progressiveness and dramatic force of the Florentine School, lived quietly in the seclusion of the cloisters and developed there an inward life full of devout and mystical sentiment

which expressed itself behind a brilliantly glowing decorative style, as if it were hiding in the shadows of a church choir through whose many colored windows the evening sun glows. The Sienese art of this period, formerly regarded as inferior to that of the other great schools of Italy, now seems to us one of the loveliest flowers of the Renaissance.

At the head of the poetic and imaginative artists of this time stands Stefano di Giovanni, called Sassetta (1392-1450), on whose enchanting and highly spiritual treatment of the Franciscan legend we have B. Berenson's excellent treatise. The recently acquired painting, *The Portation of the Cross*, formerly in the posses-



MADONNA AND CHILD
BY SANO DI PIETRO (1406-1481)
 Gift of Sir Joseph Duveen

sion of Carl Hamilton of New York, shows his fine feeling for line and his exquisite color sense. The simplification in his style, shown in the reducing of the composition to a small number of figures, as well as in the abbreviatory treatment of the body, indicates that we are in the period of Masaccio; but the flowing lines surrounding the silhouette of Christ, the suspended movement of the mourning women, the delicate shades of light blue and pink, show that we are far away from Florentine realism, in an atmosphere where the music of rhythm seems more important than a developed sense of plastic form.

With Sano di Pietro (1406-1481) who

was influenced by Vecchietta, the pupil of Sassetta, we advance to the middle of the XV century. The somewhat obvious longing and the melancholy features of his Madonnas with their large dark eyes made this prolific artist one of the most popular of the Sienese School. His unusually fine understanding of the naiveté of children, his extraordinary decorative sense, shown in the arrangement of the angel heads which usually surround his compositions and in the curious cutting of his frames, adds to the fascination of his work. Our painting, which belongs to his earlier and best period, shows all these delightful qualities combined with a most pleasing



THE PORTATION OF THE CROSS
STEFANO DI GIOVANNI, CALLED SASSETTA (1392-1450)

color scheme of pale blue in the Virgin's mantle and dull pink in the Child's dress, enhanced by gold ornaments and a rich golden background. This fine example of XV Century Sienese art is a recent gift to the Institute by Sir Joseph Duveen.

The culmination of Sienese art of the XV century was reached by Matteo di Giovanni, one of whose beautiful Madonnas is on view at the Institute as the loan of Mrs. James S. Holden (described in the last number of the Bulletin).

Like Matteo, Benvenuto di Giovanni was a pupil of the sculptor-painter Vecchietta. This may explain the almost sculptural character of his compositions with the hard contours of their outlines and the curiously broken folds of the garments. With him we are near the end of the development of Sienese art, whose last phase is characterized by the many different influences to which the artists were subjected. In Benvenuto's work, also, we find influences from many sides, not

only from Matteo and Vecchietta, but also from the Florentine and Umbrian schools. The beautiful Madonna which the Institute has purchased belongs to his best period, before 1500, when his colors were blond and bright. The execution of this picture, which is in an exceptional state of preservation, is sharp and clear in every detail, being especially fine in the design of the Virgin and the angels and in the drawing of the flowers held by the Child and the wreaths worn by the angels. The blond type of the Virgin, the almost Botticellesque features of the angels, and the deep red in the costumes, are of exceptional beauty. In comparison to Matteo's lofty Madonnas, Benvenuto's have become more earthly and more consciously pretty, while in the gestures we find the beginning of the affectation that is typical of most of the painters of the end of the XV century.

If we consider that during the lifetime of Benvenuto (who died in 1517), Sodoma, the follower of Leonardo, already worked



MADONNA AND CHILD
BY BENVENUTO DI GIOVANNI (1436-1518)
 Recent Purchase

in Siena, we are impressed by the curious tenacity with which the Sienese painters of the XV century clung to their mediaeval tradition. But while in former days this conservatism was only regarded as a sign of weakness, and Sodoma alone, whose conscious and almost hysterical expression of sensuality is not now to our taste, held favor with those interested in Sienese art, we now think it an advantage that they tried to hold to the last the dignity and devout feeling, expressed in the midst of a glow of color and gold, which had made their early art so great. The importance of the Sienese School has been recognized only in our own generation, especially through the writings of scholars like B. Berenson and Mason Perkins, and we could not better characterize its value than

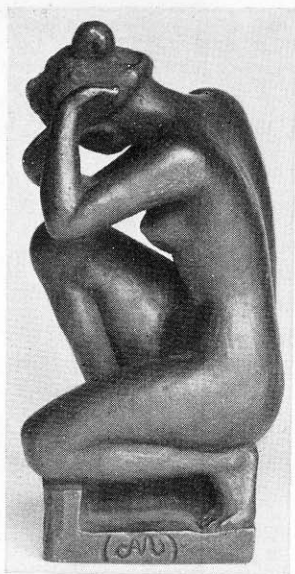
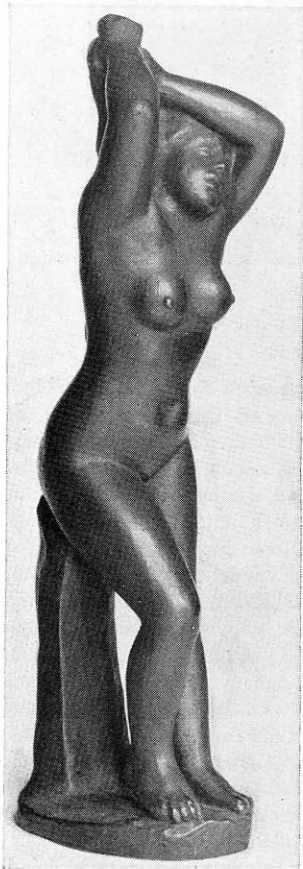
in the words with which G. H. Edgell closes his essay on this school in the catalogue of the Fogg Art Museum: "Poets, biographers, critics, have united to praise and expound the art of Florence; Siena has had no Dante, no Vasari, no Ruskin. The Florentine was the naturalistic, the progressive school, and deserves its reputation. It sounded a note that appealed to all, that all could understand. Its motto would have been the Greek one: 'Man is the measure of all things.' Its light should not dazzle us, however, and blind us to the beauty and inner significance of the reactionary sister school, whose creed may better be found in the words of the Psalmist: 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?'"

W. R. V.

SCULPTURES BY MAILLOL

An artist often beats upon the consciousness of his public for many years before he makes an impression, and after an interest in his work is aroused, it still takes a considerable time to measure his art with that of his predecessors and his contemporaries of similar pursuit.

Aristide Maillol, the French sculptor, is receiving a belated public recognition only in recent years, although he was born in 1861 and has been publicly engaged in the plastic arts since 1896. He has, however, had the warm support and interest of a discerning few among critics and connoisseurs. Rodin so constantly and persistently held the limelight during the past twenty years of his life that his compatriots



in the field of sculpture had to put up with scant recognition, and this accounts partly for Maillol's belated acclaim.

The Detroit Institute of Arts has just acquired two small bronzes, a standing figure of a woman and a squatting figure of a woman by Maillol, and they are now on exhibition in the gallery of European art. The strong sculptural feeling of the man is at once apparent in these two works. The strength of contour, the massiveness of form and the simple planes upon which his sculpture depends for its effectiveness is a reaction both against the baroque with its over embellishment, and the impressionism of Rodin, with the delicacies of light and shade breaking over its surfaces. Maillol perpetuates the human form, usually in repose and sparing of detail. Anatomical facts give way to the achievement of a simplified whole which discards the verities of naturalism for a reality of plastic truths, unadorned by literary or pictorial significance. His works stand forth in solid plastic isolation—a sufficient excuse in themselves for being.

Aristide Maillol began his artistic career as a painter of rather conservative persuasion, later coming under the influence of Gauguin. He was nearly thirty-five years of age before he seriously

took up sculpture, which has turned out to be his true medium of expression, and when an unbiased estimate of this period is obtained, he is likely to take rank with his much heralded contemporary, Rodin.

C. H. B.

TOMB RELIEF FROM TEL EL AMARNA

With the purchase of a bas relief from Tel el Amarna, the Institute has acquired an example of the art of the period in Egyptian history which perhaps more than any other fascinates the modern mind.

Although having a shorter life than any other city in Egypt—being occupied for only a single generation—Tel el Amarna is of the keenest interest to us as the capital of one of the most sincere, fearless and progressive of the long line of Egyptian pharaohs—Amenophis IV, or as he rechristened himself from the new religion which he introduced, Akhenaten (the splendor of the sun's disk).

The worship of the sun as the creator and source of all life, with its emphasis upon the radiant energy of the sun's rays, was now to supersede the older Amon worship of the sun as a personal diety, and a new name, the Aten, was adopted to express the realization of the power of the rays giving life to all things on earth, so beautifully expressed in Akhenaten's *Hymn to the Sun*.

The revolution brought about by Akhenaten, which caused the removal of his capital from Thebes where the Amon priesthood was so powerful, and the building of the new city of Tel el Amarna where he could carry out his ideals unmolested, also affected a great change in art. The motto which he chose, "Ankh em Maat" (living in truth), is reflected not alone in

the truth and beauty of his own personal and family relations, which the many representations found in his city make known to us, but also in the art of his reign which is perhaps the most naturalistic and true



to life of any period in the history of Egypt—breaking away to a great extent from the rigid laws and formulae that had held Egyptian art in such close bonds, and introducing a grace and delicacy of expression and a spirit and vigor of execution that cannot fail to charm even the casual observer. The tomb relief which the Institute has acquired, representing a group of mourners and funerary offerings of fish, bread, wine, meats, etc., shows many of these characteristics. There is a naturalness and grace of posture and an expressiveness of gesture in the

mourning women with their long streaming hair and slender figures that is most appealing, combining convention and naturalism to the best effect. In all the sculptures that have been unearthed from this ephemeral city, among them the fine statues of Amenophis and his wife, we find the same grasping after truth which opened the new field of ideas in religion and expressed itself in an art that combined an inner spiritual quality with the utmost grace and naturalism. It is only another instance of the truism that art is ever the handmaid of religion.

J. W.

MUSEUM NOTES

THE PRINT CLUB will hold its monthly meeting Monday evening, January 12th, at the Society of Arts and Crafts, where as guests of the Society the members will view an exhibition by the Chicago Society of Etchers.

A SPECIAL EXHIBITION of great Dutch masterpieces of the XVII century will be held for two weeks beginning January 9th. The exhibition includes some of the most important examples of Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Vermeer, Cuyt, Hobbema, Jan Steen and others, borrowed from famous collections in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago and Detroit.

"QUEEN ELIZABETH AT THE TOMB OF TUTANKHAMEN" will be the subject of the fourth lecture to be held on Tuesday evening, January 6th. It will be illustrated by stereoptican views. The speaker, Professor Jean Capart, is Secretary of the Royal Cinquenaire Museum at Brussels, and Director of the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for Egyptology at the University of Liege, Belgium. The lecturer is brought through the co-operation of the Archaeological Society of Detroit.

MR. I. B. STOUGHTON HOLBORN will give the fifth lecture on Tuesday evening, January 20th, on the subject "The Perfect City." The return engagement of Mr. Holborn is always looked forward to with keen anticipation.

"THE HOW AND WHY OF AN ARTISTIC HOME," by Frank Alvah Parsons, is the sixth lecture, to be given Tuesday evening, February 3rd. As president and director of the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts, Mr. Parsons has trained many hundreds of students in the household arts and his lectures are always stimulating and entertaining.

Keep these dates in mind and invite your friends. The lectures are free.

THE NEW BUILDING of the Detroit Institute of Arts is again under way after

some delay in the shipment of marble and by this time next year the shell of the building will be completed. We hope to be in it in the fall of 1926.

THE ANNUAL EXHIBITION FOR MICHIGAN ARTISTS under the auspices of the Scarab Club will open Monday evening, February 2nd, with an artists' reception. Any resident of Michigan is eligible to exhibit. Prizes similar to those given in other years will be awarded.

THE ANNA SCRIPPS WHITCOMB SCHOLARSHIP of one thousand dollars will be awarded in June, 1925, by competition to a native born resident artist, art student, designer or craftsman between the ages of eighteen and thirty years. Information about the scholarship can be secured from the Secretary. Mr. Robert H. McCallum, who won the scholarship this year, is at Cornwall, England, at present, studying with the English painter Stanhope Forbes.

MEMBERS' LECTURES on the History of Art will be given by Mr. R. Poland, Educational Secretary, on seven successive Friday evenings beginning February 6th. These lectures, illustrated with stereoptican views, will trace the progress of art from early Renaissance times to the present day and are designed especially for the members of the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society and their friends. The topics are as follows:

1. Italian Art I—Siena, Florence and Umbria.
2. Italian Art II—Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Correggio, Titian.
3. Early Flemish Art.
4. The Flower of Flemish and Dutch Art, the XVII Century.
5. A Survey of French Art.
6. American Art I—The Early Development.
7. American Art II—Contemporary.

NEW ACCESSIONS. OCTOBER—DECEMBER

Mediaeval Art:

Carved ivory diptych. French, XIV Century.....	Gift of Mr. A. S. Drey, Munich.
Three leaves from a Romanesque Evangeliarium. Salzburg, XII Century.....	Gift of Mr. Julius Böhler, Munich.
Stone lion. Bretagne, XII Century.....	Purchased
Two bronze candelabra. Flemish, XV-XVI Century.....	Purchased

Greek and Roman Art:

Collection of Greek vases. VII century B. C. to I century A. D.....	Purchased
Portrait bust of the Emperor Augustus. Roman I century A. D.....	Purchased
Female Marble Torso Attic, IV Century B. C.....	Purchased
Limestone head of a bearded man. Cyprus, VI Century B. C.....	Purchased
Marble head of a bearded man. Attic, first half V century B. C.....	Purchased

Egyptian Art:

Limestone tomb relief from Tel-el-Amarna. Period of Amenophis IV.....	Purchased
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Far Eastern Art:

Bronze head of Buddha. Siam, XII-XIV Century.....	Purchased
Glazed pottery figure of a woman on horseback. China, T'ang Dynasty.....	Purchased
Korean wall painting. Korai period.....	Purchased

Near Eastern Art:

Faience mosaic tile, from the Mosque of Jafar, Persia, dated 1482.....	Purchased
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Italian Art:

Twelve bronze plaquettes. Italian, XV-XVI Century.....	Purchased
Painting, "Madonna and Child," by Guido da Siena.....	Purchased
Painting, "The Crucifixion." Florentine School, XIV Century.....	Gift of Mr. Ralph H. Booth
Painting, "The Procession to Calvary," by Stefano di Giovanni.....	Purchased
Painting, "Madonna and Child;" by Segna di Buonaventura.....	Purchased
Painting, "Virgin and Child," by Sano di Pietro	Gift of Sir Joseph Duveen
Painting, "Virgin and Child with Angels" by Benvenuto di Giovanni.....	Purchased

Textiles:

Alpajurra rug. Spanish, XVIII Century.....	Purchased
Embroidered altar covering. Swiss, XVI Century.....	Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Modern Art:

Two bronze statuettes of female figures, by Aristide Maillol.....	Purchased
Wrought iron clock, executed by Frank Kora- lewsky.....	Gift of Mr. George G. Booth

JANUARY EVENTS AT THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

704 E. JEFFERSON AVENUE

CALENDAR OF EXHIBITS

- January 9th to 23rd.* Loan Exhibition of Great Dutch Masterpieces.
January 26th to February 9th. Exhibit of Fifty Books of 1924.
January 1st to 31st. Children's Museum. Exhibition of European Peasant Art.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- January 4th, Sunday, 3:30 P. M.* Concert by Chamber Music Society of Detroit. (New Year's Program.)
January 6th, Tuesday, 8:15 P. M. Lecture by Professor Jean Capart on "Queen Elizabeth at the Tomb of Tutankhamen," (Under the auspices of the Archaeological Society of Detroit.)
January 11th, Sunday, 3:30 P. M. Dr. Lynn Harold Hough will speak on "The Expression of the Human Spirit in Architecture."
January 12th, Monday, 8:00 P. M. Meeting of the Print Club at the Society of Arts and Crafts.
January 18th, Sunday, 3:30 P. M. Dr. Chester Emerson will speak on "A Ramble in Spain." (Illustrated.)
January 20th, Tuesday, 8:15 P. M. Lecture by Professor I. B. Stoughton Holborn on "The Perfect City." (Illustrated with stereoptican and blackboard drawings.)
January 24th, Saturday, 10:00 A. M. Entertainment for school children from the seventh grades through the High School grades. (Moving pictures, Community Singing, Short Art Talk on Some Object in the Museum Collection.)
January 25th, Sunday, 3:30 P. M. Lecture by Professor John G. Winter on "The Roman Cities of North Africa."
January 31st, Saturday, 10:00 A. M. Entertainment for school children from the seventh grade through the High School grades.
February 1st, Sunday, 3:30 P. M. Mr. Paul Honore will speak on "Prints as Art and Decoration" in connection with the "Exhibit of Fifty Books of 1924."
February 2nd, Monday, 8:30 P. M. Opening of Michigan Artists Exhibition.
February 3rd, Tuesday, 8:15 P. M. Lecture by Frank Alvah Parsons on "The How and Why of an Artistic Home."

The galleries are open Friday Evenings from 7:30 to 9:30. At this time also classes in drawing and pastel are conducted free to the public by the Recreation Commission of Detroit.