

Captured Emotions

BAROQUE PAINTING IN BOLOGNA, 1575-1725

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THE GETTY MUSEUM BRINGS TOGETHER MASTERPIECES OF ITALIAN BAROQUE PAINTING FROM CARRACCI TO CRESPI

Exhibition explores the panorama of Bolognese painting through generous loans from the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden and Southern California collections



Captured Emotions: Baroque Painting in Bologna, 1575-1725

Co-organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

At the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center
December 16, 2008 – May 3, 2009

"To write the history of the Carracci and their followers is virtually to write the history of painting in all Italy for two centuries, down to the present day."
– Luigi Lanzi, *History of Painting in Italy*, 1789

LOS ANGELES— Ludovico Carracci (1555–1619) and his two cousins, the brothers Agostino (1557–1602) and Annibale (1560–1609) Carracci, together brought about a revolution in the study and practice of painting that forever changed the history of art. The repercussions on European painting—a measured classicism and the expression of genuine emotion that characterized Baroque art—lasted for the next 250 years. On view at the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center, December 16, 2008 through May 3, 2009, ***Captured Emotions: Baroque Painting in Bologna, 1575-1725*** is co-organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister (Old Masters Picture Gallery), Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden State Art Collections), and continues the collaboration between the Getty and the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden that began back in 1999.

"This collaboration has given our curators the opportunity to show side by side works from the Getty's collection with works from the 11 extraordinary museums that comprise the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden," says Michael Brand, director of the J. Paul Getty Museum. "Having access to such magnificent collections and such brilliant colleagues has allowed the Getty to share previously untold narratives of the history of art with our visitors, as in 2006 with *From Caspar David Friedrich to Gerhard Richter*, in 2007 with *The Herculaneum Women and the Origins of Archaeology*, and now in 2008, with the story of the golden age of Baroque painting in Bologna."

Martin Roth, director general of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, said, "We are delighted to lend so many masterpieces from our collection—many of which, due to both their size and importance, have not left Dresden since the 18th century—to the Getty and to its broad audiences in Los Angeles. This collaborative exhibition is yet another example of the successful partnership between Dresden and the Getty, and we are very pleased to have had the opportunity to work together again on this important project."

Captured Emotions unites the impressive collections of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden with a rich group of Bolognese pictures from various Los Angeles area collections—the Getty, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Norton Simon Museum, and the Timken Museum of Art in San Diego.

"By uniting the two cities' collections," says Scott Schaefer, senior curator of paintings at the J. Paul Getty Museum, "the full panorama of Bolognese painting emerges—from the Carracci to the artistic genius of Giuseppe Maria Crespi, that is, from 1575 until 1725—and creates one of the most significant surveys of the material ever mounted."

The captivating city of Bologna sits at the crossroads of the most important transport routes in Italy. In the late 1500s, this charming Italian town became the seedbed of one of the most significant transformations in the history of art—the dawn of the great age of Baroque painting. The art of painting had declined from the great days of the High Renaissance, and the Carracci rejected the highly artificial style of Mannerism that had emerged. They sparked a reform in painting that was characterized by their refined blend of naturalism and classicism and unparalleled ability to capture emotions on the canvas.

A section of the exhibition will be devoted to the Carracci and include several of the masterpieces that illustrate their distinctive style and uncanny ability to imbue epic religious narratives with genuine emotion and to render the natural colors and softness of human flesh. One of the highlights of this section will be Annibale Carracci's monumental altarpiece

Madonna Enthroned with Saint Matthew (1588). The composition pays homage to the Carracci's great Venetian predecessor Titian, as saints surround the enthroned Virgin and Child. The painting is stunning in its naturalistic description of textures and fabrics; the appearance of direct light at full intensity, darkening into the shadows; the masterful use of chiaroscuro that lends the figures a sense of three-dimensionality; the powerful illusionism of the throne and the column; and the softness of the flesh tones that give a sense of life rather than the hardness of polished stone.



The Carracci's contributions to the history of painting are not limited to their own work, but also include the countless talents they fostered in the academy they founded in 1582. Through their teaching, the Carracci influenced an extraordinary group of younger painters whose work will also be included in the exhibition, among them Guido Reni (1575–1642), Francesco Albani (1578–1660), Domenichino (1581–1641), Giovanni Lanfranco (1582–1647), and Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (1591–1660), known as Il Guercino because of his congenital squint (*guercio*).



One of the highlights will be an iconic and powerful image of Christ in agony titled *Christ with the Crown of Thorns* (c. 1640) by Guido Reni, among the most important pupils of the Carracci. Reni portrays Christ's imminent death through his upwardly turned head and eyes, which recall the famous classical model of the dying Alexander. The artist's portrayal captures the duality of Christ as a dying man—through his naturalistic depiction of light and flesh—and as the Son of God, a spiritual icon of inner strength and beauty.

The exhibition will also include important works by Guercino, who was never a student at the Carracci Academy but fell under the spell of Ludovico's influence at an early age. Guercino's early period is represented in the exhibition by four paintings of the Evangelists (Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) with their respective attributes (1615)—profound psychological studies which exemplify Guercino's mastery of spotlighted chiaroscuro. In addition, Guercino's later work is superbly represented in the exhibition with *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (1655), *Lot and His Daughters* (1650), and *Disegno and Colore*



(1640). Guercino's talent for psychological penetration permeates each of these compositions, but they differ from his early works in that his compositions possess a classical clarity and are rendered in evenly diffused light with a brighter palette.

The great century of Bolognese painting culminates with the brilliant painter Giuseppe Maria Crespi (1665–1747), who was deeply versed in the tradition of Bolognese painting and its mastery of chiaroscuro and naturalism. Crespi was himself a master of chiaroscuro and he utilized his talent for the portrayal of genre scenes—episodes directly observed from everyday life—and even infused these details in his religious paintings. Crespi's artistic genius and unique working style will be represented in the exhibition by his *Seven Sacraments*. This series of seven masterpieces illustrates the sacraments of the Catholic faith—Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Confession, Extreme Unction, Ordination, and Matrimony—with a profound human empathy and a close observation of natural effects. The *Sacraments* are the visual climax of the dominance of Bolognese painting, encapsulating the reformation that occurred in painting as a result of the Carracci while anticipating the next generation of masters who would further transform the history of art, especially Goya.



The Bolognese School at the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister

At the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden, the artworks of the Bolognese School form a chief focus of the collection of the Department of Italian Painting, which was mostly acquired by Augustus III. (1696-1763), Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. Being primarily interested in well-known artists of the Bolognese Baroque, he paid special attention to the works of Annibale Carracci, Guido Reni, Francesco Albani, Domenichino, and Guercino, whose oeuvres are well-represented in the collection, as well as the cornerstone of this special exhibition.

Captured Emotions: Baroque Painting in Bologna, 1575–1725 is co-organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. The exhibition is curated by Getty senior curator of paintings Scott Schaefer and Andreas Henning, curator of Italian painting of the Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister. The exhibition will be accompanied by a companion book featuring large color illustrations of all the works in the exhibition as well as 11 concise chapters illuminating the exhibition's key themes.

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The Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden numbers among the most prominent museums in the world. Situated in the South East of Germany, the combined holdings of the eleven museums in Dresden offer a remarkable thematic diversity ranging from paintings, sculptures, arts-and-crafts, folk art, porcelain up to ceremonial arms and weapons. These museums originated in the collections of the Saxon electors and Polish kings. In the 18th century, they systematically developed cabinets of curiosities, which were accessible to select circles in their day and still form the core of the wonderful art treasures of the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden today. Collecting and researching activities continued in subsequent centuries transforming the collection into a modern and lively site of science and art.

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Carlo Cignani, *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*, about 1670-1680, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Photo © Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Photographer: H.-P. Klut

Annibale Carracci, *Madonna Enthroned with Saint Matthew*, 1588, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Photo © Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Guido Reni, *Christ with the Crown of Thorns*, about 1640, oil on panel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Photo © Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Guercino, *Matthew the Evangelist*, about 1615, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Photo © Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

Giuseppe Maria Crespi, *Confirmation*, about 1712, oil on canvas, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Photo © Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden