





SIMON MARMION "MADONNA AND CHILD" (Panel, 15 in. x 11½ in.)  
Felton Bequest, 1954

The Counts Czartoryski of Cracow from whose descendants the Felton Bequest recently acquired the Madonna and Child by Simon Marmion, were owners of one of the most famous and oldest art collections in Poland. In the Cracow Madonna, another masterpiece has been added to our fine group of Flemish Primitives.

The Cracow Madonna has never been reproduced before, and has hitherto only been known in art literature as a "replica" of the Kleinberger-Goudstikker Madonna also illustrated here. Our picture is however no whit inferior in quality and vastly superior in state of preservation to the latter and must rank as the more important of the two pictures.

The connection of these two paintings of the Madonna with Marmion's most famous masterpiece, the S. Bertin altarpiece of 1459 in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum at Berlin, is borne out by the following features: the brocade cloth behind the Madonna has exactly the same pattern as the cloth hanging behind the donor of the S. Bertin altarpiece; and the high rock, which appears to the left in our picture, is similar to the rock in the "Dedication and Building of a New Monastery" in the same altarpiece, and recurs in other works ascribed to Marmion. The S. Bertin altarpiece further resembles our Madonna and Child in its utter stillness, its spirit of mystic withdrawal and its austere linear purity.\*

The Madonna offering the breast to the Child Christ is a theme which enjoyed special popularity among 15th century patrons. Rogier van der Weyden had inaugurated this subject in his "Lucas Panel", where the Madonna and Child sit for their portrait to St. Luke. The well-known Virgin and Child by Dierick Bouts in the London National Gallery, based on the Madonna of the Lucas panel, with its inclined head, pointed chin, lowered eyelids and black ribbon holding back regular strands of wavy hair, clearly inspired the features of the Cracow Madonna.

Two unusual motifs occur in the Cracow picture. Firstly, Marmion shows the Madonna in an attitude of prayer. In Rogier van der Weyden's "Lucas panel" and in the Madonnas derived from it, the Madonna grasped the Child with one hand while offering her breast with the other. In a half-figure picture at Caen however, Rogier invented a variation on his "Lucas" Madonna and joined her hands in prayer, thus preparing the way for Marmion.

The second unusual feature is the open sky which surrounds the head of the Madonna. Half-figure Madonnas, as a rule, appeared in earlier 15th century painting with a plain background, or against the wall of an interior, sometimes hung with brocade. Even when a Virgin and Child are set against an open arcade, as in Memlinc's altarpiece of 1475 in Granada, a brocade hanging is suspended between the two central pillars to create a formal background for the Madonna. Only after 1485 in certain works by Gerard David and Hans Memlinc does the head of the Madonna appear outlined against the open sky. It is therefore likely that our picture with its open view through an arcade is later than the Kleinberger-Goudstikker version with its brocade background. The date of the Cracow Madonna could tentatively be supposed to be somewhere between 1485 and 1489. The harmony of cool colours consisting largely of dark blue, light blue, green and some neutral browns, offset only by the maroon note in the right pillar would also indicate a date fairly near the end of the 15th century.

URSULA HOFF



SIMON MARMION "MADONNA AND CHILD" (Panel, 14 3/8 in. x 10 3/8 in.) Formerly colls.: Kleinberger, Paris; Goudstikker, Amsterdam

\*Other works by Marmion are listed and reproduced in "Grete Ring, A Century of French Painting," Phaidon Press, plates 98-104, Cat. Nos. 171-200.

In 1952 Mr. Tomas Harris of London, to whom the National Gallery is indebted for previous generous gifts, presented a stone relief group of the *Lamentation of Christ* to our collection. Sir Leigh Ashton and Mr. Pope Hennessy have expressed the opinion that our group is "very probably by Bellano".

Bartolomeo Bellano (born c. 1434) is the most prominent sculptor of the Paduan School in its early Renaissance phase, and the master of the best-known sculptor of this school, Andrea Riccio (1470-1532), supreme in the field of the small Renaissance bronze. The best-known 16th century sources (Michiel, Scardeone, Vasari) all concur in calling Bellano a pupil of Donatello, and this fact is further confirmed by the earliest known reference to Bellano, in the dialogue "De Scultura" printed in 1504, less than ten years after Bellano's death, by the poet and humanist Pomponius Gauricus, who had been professor at the University of Padua, the great centre of humanism in Northern Italy. Here is the relevant passage: "But also the pupil of Donatello, your Bellanus,



BARTOLOMEO BELLANO, workshop replica, "DAVID" (Bronze statuette)  
Howard Spensley Bequest 1939

Leonicus (one of the two protagonists in the dialogue) sculptors of Padua) though only an artist of little skill (at then fashionable classicist style that the humanist Gauricus sentative of an out-of-date naturalism. This naturalistic s Donatello. Bellano, who had gone to Florence, probably as Perugia and Rome, reappeared in Padua in 1469. In the marble frames for a reliquary in the sacristy of the Santo later he executed his main work, a set of bronze reliefs for an art, based on the naturalistic expressionism of Donatello, replacing Donatello's conception of a relief field, organized archaic Gothic system of panoramic space representation. and the two phases of Bellano's work in the Santo has not are not sufficiently detailed.

The general stylistic character of our *Lamentation* indicates. The relief technique used is a modified form of that *rilievo schiacciato* (schiacciato) and flattened out between two Donatello's Paduan and late Florentine relief style, but a relief technique. (It is only in his last style of the nineteenth relief form.)

The protrusion of a foreground motif over the relief, occurs not infrequently in the work of Donatello, but reliefs. It serves to heighten the naturalistic, illusionist impact of the faces refers equally back to Donatello, but reminds of Andrea Mantegna. The *Madonna of our Lamentation* by Mantegna as the *Three Maries* in the predella of the San Zaccaria famous Brera Pietà. The mouth, half open in an outcry occurs also in Mantegna's early work, and continues to appear in century naturalism, e.g., in the early work of Andrea Riccio (Civico; St. Sebastian, formerly Figdor Collection, Vienna).

Of all the works attributed to Bellano, the *Entombment* (Catalogue No. 314—1878) lends itself most readily to a comparison. One of this stone relief is clearly very close to our work. But the *Entombment* is in a more schiacciato manner, and shows altogether more forcefully the "that wild dramaticism of the San Lorenzo pulpit". A feature of the upper register is close in character to that of our *Madonna of our Lamentation* lower left of the *Victoria and Albert* piece. There is further similarity between our relief and that of the *Victoria and Albert Entombment* (probably the donor) shows considerable resemblance to our relief, in its sharp and clear profile definition.

But the considerable discrepancies both of quality and quantity between the *Victoria and Albert* relief is a very much more forceful and dramatic. The characteristic stylistic details are treated rather differently. The *Victoria and Albert* relief, with its angular fold-lines with their angular breaks, is rhythmically very different from our relief, corresponding to its purer schiacciato character more graceful and less striking in the treatment of the sleeves: the sleeve of the *Victoria and Albert* relief with the system of massed parallel folds which appears invariably in Bellano's typical hair treatment in twisted strands, almost as much as the feebler and flatter treatment in our relief. The *Victoria and Albert* relief, with the documented early work of Bellano, especially the *Entombment*, that it can be safely regarded as from his hand. Our relief is of a different and coarser and feebler hand, probably a product of the studio in the seventies.

The cutaway character of our relief, i.e., the lack of a stone relief, but a similar treatment in bronze occurs in the *Victoria and Albert* Museum (Catalogue No. 8552—1863) ascribed to Donatello, built into a wall: instances of this practice occur not only in the *Madonna*, built into the wall of the Eremitani church in Padua, but also in the *Interpreting* of Donatello's late naturalistic

be mentioned amongst them (i.e., the ineptus)". It is from the height of the s down at the "inept" Bellano, the repre- Bellano largely inherited from his teacher assistant of Donatello, and later worked in ear he was commissioned to make the church of S. Antonio), where fifteen years e apse of the Santo. These reliefs reveal Paduan and late Florentine style, but means of linear perspective, with a more ose comparison between our Lamentation n possible, since the reproductions at hand

clearly a North Italian-Paduan-provenance. *giacciato*, in which the figures seem to be y narrow planes; it is derived from ches in our piece more towards a high at Bellano changes definitely to the high

plane, such as the hand of Christ in our in the Santo and the San Lorenzo pulpit of the work. The grimacing emotionalism even more strongly of the early style of a great resemblance to such works of Itarpiece (Louvre) or the Madonna in the ief and showing the upper row of teeth, n works of the Northern Italian late 15th Bellano's pupil (Madonna, Padua Museo

ent in the Victoria and Albert Museum arison with our Lamentation. The style relief type follows more strictly the rilievo our piece Donatello's last phase of style, ke that of the man with uplifted arms in , and so is that of the Magdalene on the ome resemblance between the St. John of nd the profile of an elderly cleric there atment to the kneeling donor of our

detail outweigh these similarities: the d expressive work than ours and two he drapery style, with its hard parallel ch richer than that in our work and lly conceived: the contrast is specially donna in our relief completely lacks that oughout the work of Bellano. Similarly, ring like plaits, varies considerably from nd Albert relief has so much in common sty marble reliefs in the Santo (1469-72) ears to me fairly close to his style, but of some Paduan or other North Italian

the background field, is rather unusual for ief of a Lamentation in the Victoria and . It is probable that our relief had been quently, e.g., the Bellano relief of a . We know well that Bellano was by no ' His style, characteristic of late 15th

century Paduan sculpture . . . and its naturalism is popular and favoured by the people (Planiscig: Andrea Riccio). Our Lamentation is a typical example of this late 15th century popular naturalism of North Italy, which had its centre in Padua and amongst whose main representatives was Bartolomeo Bellano.

More closely connected with Bellano than the Harris relief is a bronze statuette of David, part of the Howard Spensley Collection which was presented to the Gallery in 1939. The figure, 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" high, shows David standing over the head of Goliath. It is a replica of a figure in the Louvre, which Planiscig described as "workshop of Bellano". This figure itself is a variant of a David figure in the Foule Collection, Paris, given by all authorities to Bellano and dated at the period of the Santo reliefs (i.e., c. 1485). Bellano's David figure is obviously a descendant of Donatello's famous bronze David (in the Bargello)—it was for a long time considered to be by him—though the intermediary model for Bellano's figure was a little statuette in the Louvre (Planiscig, fig. 40) cast from an unfinished wax model, which had been claimed for Michelangelo, later by Bode for Donatello and which Planiscig attributes tentatively to Bertoldo. We have here then another instance of the close link between the beginning of Renaissance sculpture in Padua and the Florentine (Donatellesque) inspiration, which as we saw in our Lamentation is so decisive for the whole development of North Italian sculpture. But in this case it is Donatello in his more classicist middle period rather than in his gothic-naturalistic late style.

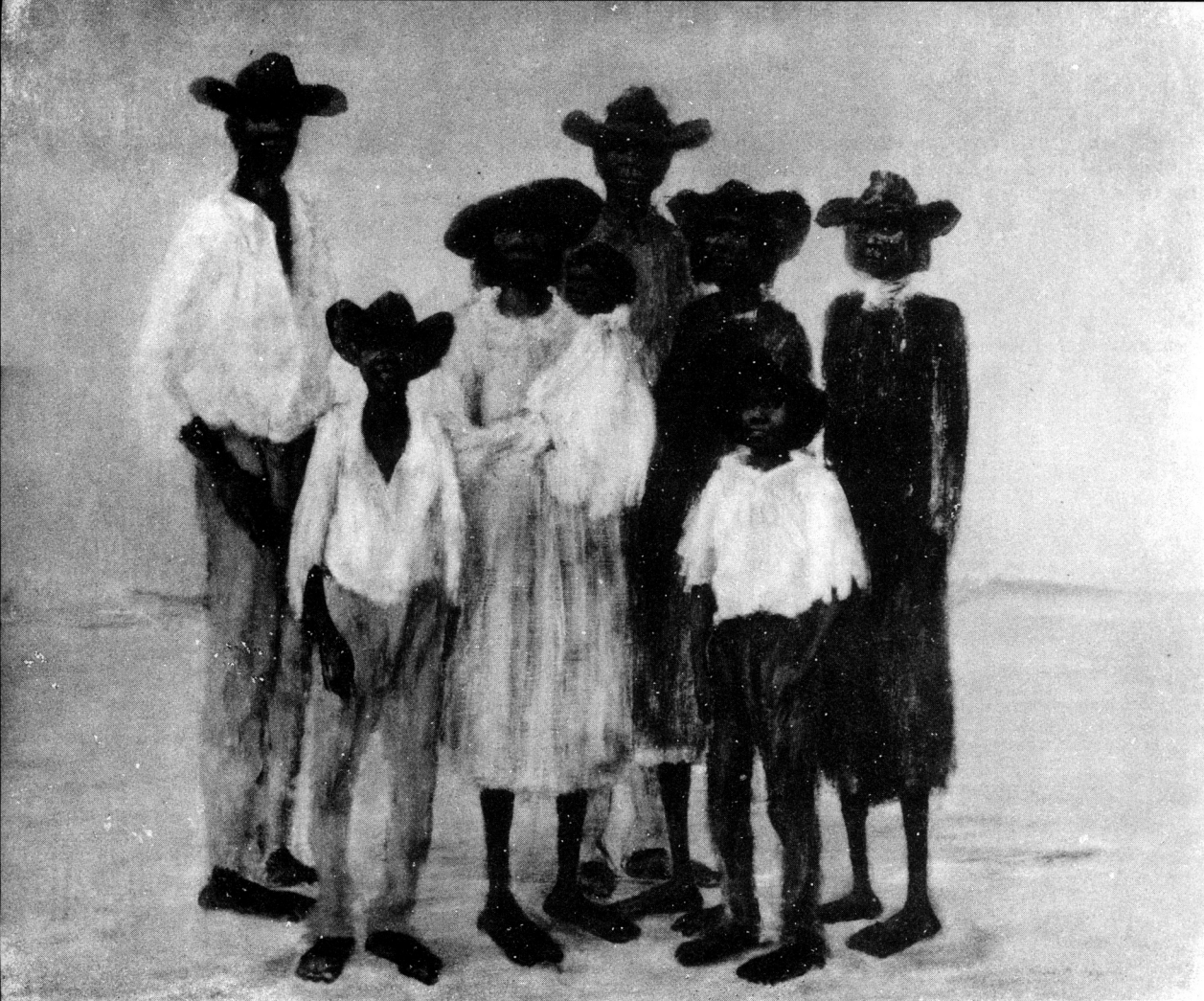
FRANZ PHILIPP, B.A.

Senior Lecturer, Department of Fine Arts, University of Melbourne.



BARTOLOMEO BELLANO, attr. to, "LAMENTATION OF CHRIST" (Stone relief, h. 3 ft.)

Presented by Tomas Harris, Esq., London



RUSSELL DRYSDALE, "STATION BLACKS, CAPE YORK, 1953" (Oil on board, 30 in. x 20 in.)

Purchased, 1953

1. STATION BLACKS, CAPE YORK, by RUSSELL DRYSDALE.
2. THREE WISE MEN, by MICHAEL KMIT.

Two contemporary works recently acquired by the National Gallery. Differing widely in scope and execution but alike in an artistic integrity that lifts them out of the realm of the smart, the fashionable and the clever.

1. There are no shadows in this timeless afternoon—only the seven vertical figures standing in a sort of frozen immobility against a brooding sky that lightens to a melancholy lime green where the horizon meets a desert of shimmering sand. Look closely at the faces. All have the dusky bloom of a ripe damson but each one is the face of an individual, very carefully observed. The young mother in green, the heavy child in pink (the clothes are handled with a masterly simplicity of thinly dragged paint), the gangling boys and girls. All the figures are starkly upright, all gazing out at nothing, all crowned by the preposterous hats whose horizontal brims so adroitly stabilise the group as a whole. There is something monumental about this painting. One feels that it IS a monument . . . perhaps to a lost and dying race.

2. In jewelled purity of emerald, red and sapphire blue, the flat pattern lined and accentuated with heavy black, Michael Kmit's *Three Wise Men* sings across the room like a stained glass window set in the wall.

This is a serious work, the product of a lively contemporary mind deeply rooted in the past. By birth Ukrainian, Kmit inherits the powerful tradition of Central European religious art. Last year he was the winner of the important Blake Prize, and in his entry for 1954 shown on this page, we feel his natural unforced affinity with the primitive paintings of Byzantium and the Near East. Bizarre, exotic, the figures of the *Three Wise Men* are rigidly stylised—the long tapering hands (those of the central figure a brilliant red) the beards that trim the three chins like fantastic embroidery, the rich impasto of the robes, the crowns, the little turned in feet in vermilion shoes.

As with Drysdale's Aboriginal Group on the opposite page, the units of the design conform to the pattern as a whole, yet each of the faces is treated individually—one glowing, one swarthy, one snow pale ; all three linked in humanity by the dark gentle Eastern eyes.

JOAN LINDSAY.

MICHAEL KMIT, "THE THREE WISE MEN" (Oil on canvas, 31 in. x 21½ in.)

Purchased. 1954



RECENT ACQUISITIONS TO THE ART GALLERY INCLUDE :

Oils :

Station Blacks, Cape York, by Russell Drysdale	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
The Three Wise Men, by Michael Kmit	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
The Public Servant, by Edwin Tanner	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Man Asleep on the Steps, by Bob Dickerson	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Landscape, South Yarra, by Frederick McCubbin	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
The Waterhole, by Arthur Boyd	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
The Road Round the Bay, by Frank Medworth	..	..	..	..	..	..	Purchased
Portrait of Nancy Cunard, by Alvaro Guevara	..	..	..	..	..	..	Felton Bequest

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. . . . .	
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The following publications and reproductions are on sale at the Swanston Street entrance :

Catalogue of the Gallery (5/-). Gallery Guide (1/-). Catalogue of Selected Masterpieces with 30 illustrations (1/6). Ten large colour reproductions (25/- each). A selection of small reproductions including Christmas cards.

THEATRETTE :

**DOCUMENTARY FILMS :** Every TUESDAY at 1.15 p.m.  
**LECTURES :** NATIONAL GALLERY LECTURE—Third Thursday.  
 PUBLIC LIBRARY LECTURE—First Thursday.  
**MUSICAL RECORDINGS—**Second and Fourth Thursdays.

The cover design for this issue is a terracotta relief by Benedetto Buglione of a Madonna and Child Felton Bequest, 1953/4.