

## 8 Raphael (Raffaello Santi)

1483–1520

The Procession to Calvary, c.1504

Egg tempera and walnut oil on wood  
24.4 × 85.5 cm  
NG 2919

RAPHAEL was born in Urbino, where his father, Giovanni Santi, was court painter. As a youth, Raphael probably spent a period in the workshop of Perugino. He went on to paint altarpieces for churches in Umbria and Tuscany, as well as exquisite small-scale works for courtly patrons. His style was transformed by his study of works by Leonardo and Michelangelo in Florence. He was summoned to Rome in 1508 to work for Pope Julius II, whose library and private apartments (the Stanze) he decorated with monumental frescoes in a grand classical style. His friends were intellectuals, poets and members of the papal court, who shared his interest in antiquity. He ran a large workshop, which increasingly carried out the commissions he received according to his designs. After Julius's death he was retained at the court of Pope Leo X and also worked for important private patrons, painting frescoes, portraits, altarpieces, and designing tapestries and buildings. His amorous exploits were said to have been the cause of his premature death, at the age of thirty-seven.

Fig. 211  
RAPHAEL, *The Procession to Calvary*  
[NG 2919], c.1504



The *Procession to Calvary* shows the scene mentioned briefly in all four Gospels in which Christ, having been interrogated by Pilate and condemned to death by the crowd, is led away to Golgotha to be crucified. Christ, carrying the cross, is accompanied by five foot-soldiers, one of whom drags him along by a rope. Behind him, Simon of Cyrene helps bear the weight of the cross. The procession is led by two horsemen, the foremost of whom is turbaned and carries a standard. On the left, the Virgin Mary, fainting at the spectacle, is supported by the other three Marias. Saint John the Evangelist, beside her, wrings his hands in distress.

The *Procession to Calvary* was the centrepiece of the predella of an altarpiece painted by Raphael for the Franciscan church of Sant' Antonio, Perugia. The main panel, showing the *Madonna and Child enthroned with Saints* (Fig. 213), along with a lunette depicting *God the Father blessing with Two Angels*, are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Five elements of the predella survive. The *Procession to Calvary* was originally flanked on the left by the *Agony in the Garden* (also in the Metropolitan Museum; Fig. 214) and on the right by the *Pietà* (Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum). Two smaller panels depicting the Franciscan saints Francis and Anthony of Padua are in the Dulwich Picture Gallery. There are no documents for the commission, but the altarpiece was most likely carried out by Raphael between 1503 and 1505. It remained intact *in situ* until 1663 when the nuns of Sant' Antonio sold the predella to an agent of Queen Christina of Sweden. A few years later (1677–8), they also sold the main panel and lunette to Antonio Bigazzini of Perugia, who in turn sold them to the Colonna family in Rome (the altarpiece subsequently became known as the 'Pala Colonna').

The panel with the *Procession to Calvary* consists of a single plank of wood, probably poplar, horizontal in grain, with a slight convex warp. The gesso ground is covered by a creamy-white priming, composed of lead white mixed with a small amount of lead-tin yellow. This priming mixture, apparently favoured by Raphael,



has been observed on three other paintings by him in the National Gallery: the *Garvagh Madonna* (Cat. 9), the *Mond Crucifixion* (NG 3943) and the predella of the *Ansidei Madonna* depicting *Saint John the Baptist Preaching* (NG 6480). It was, however, also used by other artists, not just in Italy.

The infrared reflectogram mosaic (Fig. 212) reveals that the composition was bisected horizontally and vertically with ruled lines in what appears to be a dry black material. These lines may have helped with the alignment of the cartoon that was used to transfer the design to the panel, though such marks are present in many other drawings and underdrawings by Raphael (see Cat. 9), regardless of whether the design was to be transferred or not. Raphael seems frequently to have marked out his compositional fields in this way before embarking on a work, to assist him in laying out the design (here for example the horizontal establishes the waist level for all the figures on foot). The reflectogram confirms that a pricked cartoon was used, since traces of pouncing are clearly evident beneath the underdrawn outlines of the figures (see for example Fig. 219). Although the cartoon for the *Procession to Calvary* does not survive, a pricked cartoon for the flanking predella scene of the *Agony in the Garden*, in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York (Fig. 215), offers further evidence that this was indeed the method of transfer used for these small narrative paintings.

The reflectogram of the *Procession to Calvary* reveals that the lost cartoon must have been very extensively pricked, with large numbers of closely spaced holes along every outline. Such painstaking pricking is evident in many surviving cartoons for Raphael's small-scale paintings of this period. Two outstanding examples are the cartoon for the National Gallery's *Vision of a Knight* of 1504–5 (Figs 217 and 218), and that in the Uffizi for the *Saint George* in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, of 1505–6. The delicacy and sensitivity of the pricking in these and

Fig. 212 (below)  
Infrared reflectogram mosaic of  
Fig. 211

Fig. 213 (right)  
RAPHAEL, *Colonna Altarpiece*  
*Madonna and Child Enthroned, with Saints*  
Tempera, oil, gold on wood,  
172.4 × 172.4 cm  
New York, The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art  
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916  
inv. 16.30a

Fig. 214  
RAPHAEL, *Colonna Altarpiece*  
Predella panel: *The Agony in the Garden*  
Tempera and oil on wood,  
24.1 × 28.9 cm  
New York, The Metropolitan  
Museum of Art  
Funds from various donors, 1932  
inv. 32.130.1

Fig. 215  
RAPHAEL, Cartoon for *The Agony in the Garden*  
Pen and wash, pricked for transfer,  
22.6 × 26.5 cm  
New York, The Pierpont Morgan  
Library, inv. I,15



other examples suggest that Raphael consistently carried out the transfer of the designs himself (the quality of his cartoons is such that Raphael might reasonably have been reluctant to delegate this invasive and potentially hazardous procedure to an assistant). In the case of the *Procession to Calvary*, it is remarkable just how many outlines Raphael actually pricked. Every drapery fold (right down to the Peruginesque pot-hook flourishes at their ends), and each curl of hair, was anticipated with a dense sequence of underlying pounced dots. The way in which they were subsequently joined with a fine line in a liquid medium is characteristic of Raphael's own drawing style. Raphael's cartoons always include indications of light and shade, conveyed either by hatching and cross-hatching when using pen, or a mixture of hatching and stumping (smudging) when using chalk. However, since only the linear elements of a composition could be reproduced by pouncing, Raphael frequently added freehand hatchings to his transferred designs, to provide additional modelling. These touches are well illustrated in the underdrawing of the *Procession to Calvary*, in the soldier dragging Christ (Fig. 219), whose figure is enlivened by passages of rapid parallel hatching in the folds down the right side of his torso, and in the flesh above and below his left knee, as well as by cross-hatching in the folds of his tunic where it billows out from his hips.

Features in the *Procession to Calvary* that required geometrical instruments such as a ruler and compass were omitted from the cartoon stage (that is, they were not pounced) and were incised into the gesso with a fine needle-like point after the design had been transferred. The haloes of Christ, the Virgin and the Holy Woman behind her left shoulder were incised with the aid of a compass (the two other Holy Women and Saint John do not have incised haloes).

In addition to these minor interventions, Raphael introduced certain more fundamental modifications to the composition thus far delineated. It appears, for instance, that in the cartoon, the Virgin was supported by only one of the Holy





Women (the one who bears the Virgin's arm on her shoulder), with Saint John the Evangelist looking on. This can be deduced from the fact that there is no trace of pouncing beneath the female figures whose heads flank that of the Virgin (Fig. 216). Raphael drew these two figures directly onto the panel around his transferred design, before he began painting. He subsequently left the figures in reserve, painting the sky and ground around their drawn contours. The underdrawing for both these figures is more fluent in appearance than the lines joining up the pounced dots, and there is a *pentimento* for the leg of the woman on the left, offering further evidence that she was a late addition to the transferred design. The fact that the incised profile of the Virgin's halo passes through her head confirms this.

Although pounced dots are clearly evident beneath the contours of the two horsemen, their mounts do not appear to have been transferred using a cartoon. In fact, there are faint indications of changes to the positions of the horses' legs, implying a more freehand type of drawing. It is odd that the riders should have been transferred to the panel independently of their mounts, and the reason for this remains a mystery.

In addition to the pouncing, incisions and freehand additions, certain elements were painted directly onto the panel without any prior preparation. The most significant of these is the background landscape, which was neither transferred by pouncing nor subsequently drawn in. This implies that prior to the cartoon stage, Raphael conceived the composition purely in terms of the figures. When re-examined, these can be seen to divide into three distinct groups: the two horsemen at the front of the procession; Christ, Simon of Cyrene and the five soldiers; and the Virgin, the Holy Women and Saint John. It is therefore possible that the composition was composed using more than one cartoon. Smaller square cartoons would have been easier to store and could have been reused in a variety of permutations or combined with other cartoons for different projects. There is no underdrawing or incising beneath the brown horse's tail, and the similarly calligraphic tips of the pennant fluttering in the breeze; these were dynamic elements that Raphael knew he was going to include, but did not bother to draw in advance, presumably preferring to improvise these passages in order to convey an impression of fluidity and spontaneity. The leaves of the tree and the flower held by the voluptuous woman on the right in the *Vision of a Knight* were similarly omitted from the cartoon (Fig. 218).

Of Raphael's numerous surviving drawings, as many as one sixth are either pricked for transfer or drawn over pounce marks, while further evidence of his systematic use of pricked cartoons is emerging as more paintings are examined with infrared reflectography. Raphael's practice of reproducing his designs by means of pouncing, as well as his use of plumbines and horizon lines for design construction, have their roots in his early association with Perugino's workshop. The tradition of design replication in Umbria and the Marches was strong and reflected the conservatism of patronage in these regions. Two features of Raphael's method are exceptional, and represent a departure from such derivative and repetitive practices. The first is the degree of personal control he exercised – at least in this early period – throughout the design and transfer process. Not only are his



Fig. 216 (left)  
Detail of Fig. 212

Fig. 217  
RAPHAEL, *An Allegory*  
(*Vision of a Knight*) [NG 213], c.1504  
Tempera on poplar, 17.1 x 17.1 cm

Fig. 218  
RAPHAEL, Cartoon for *An Allegory*  
(*Vision of a Knight*)  
Pen over silver-point, pricked for transfer, 18.2 x 21.4 cm  
London, The British Museum



Fig. 219 (below)  
Detail of Fig. 212



surviving cartoons exquisite, but so also is the meticulous pricking of the outlines, which frequently affords evidence of intelligent choice in the selection of the lines to be pricked or left unpricked. The second remarkable feature of Raphael's practice is that, unlike Perugino, whom Vasari criticised for the repetitive nature of his designs, his methods of design replication were not ends in themselves, but part of an ongoing creative process. In addition to making very detailed cartoons, and faithfully transferring them to his chosen support, Raphael continued subtly to enliven, alter and improve his designs, both at the underdrawing stage, and during the course of painting, as the infrared reflectogram of the *Procession to Calvary* vividly demonstrates. It was precisely the dynamic design of this composition which caught Vasari's eye, when, in his description of the altarpiece, he singled out 'the very beautiful movements of the soldiers' in this predella panel for particular praise.

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## 9 Raphael (Raffaello Santi)

The Madonna and Child with the Infant Baptist  
(The Garvagh Madonna), c.1509–10

Oil on wood, 38.9 × 32.9 cm  
NG 744

The Virgin is seated on a simple bench or plinth with her left leg tucked beneath her body. She wears a full-sleeved blue undershirt beneath a red dress, the neck and sleeve of which are trimmed with a simple gold border. She is wrapped about in a darker blue drapery, the colour of which contrasts pleasingly with that of her undershirt. Her light brown hair is parted and gathered in braids at the nape of her neck. She wears a blue and green striped headscarf decorated with gold. With her right hand she gathers a bunch of drapery and draws it around the bare back of her son, the infant Christ, who is seated naked on her lap. Both mother and son gaze down at Christ's cousin, the infant John the Baptist, who proffers the Christ Child a red carnation, a symbol of his future Passion. Saint John is also nude but for a camel skin pelt wrapped loosely about his torso. The Virgin holds it in place, her left hand plunged into its furry texture. In his right hand, Saint John holds a green reed cross bound with twine, another allusion to Christ's future sacrifice. Christ's halo is decorated with a cross, for the same symbolic purpose.

Behind the figures, to left and right, two arched openings give onto a distant landscape. Visible through the left arch is a church with a bell tower and a hemispherical apse, and a misty landscape and mountains beyond. Visible through the right arch is a larger building, perhaps also a church, buttressed and ringed by perimeter walls. Beyond what appears to be a stretch of water, more of the city can be seen, including a fortified keep.

The *Madonna and Child with the Infant Baptist* is first recorded in 1787 in the apartments of Prince Aldobrandini in the Palazzo Borghese in Rome. Sometimes referred to as the 'Aldobrandini Madonna', it is also known as the 'Garvagh Madonna' from the English family who subsequently owned it in the nineteenth century. The original circumstances of its commission are not known, but its small scale and exquisite finish imply a discriminating patron and a private context. Although it is not signed, it has always been accepted as by Raphael on grounds of style and quality. The underdrawing (Fig. 223) provides further proof of Raphael's authorship (as well as revealing much about the genesis of the composition).

The painting is generally acknowledged to date from the early years of Raphael's stay in Rome. It is very similar in style to a tondo of the same subject, but with the

Fig. 220  
RAPHAEL, *The Madonna and Child with the  
Infant Baptist (The Garvagh Madonna)*  
[NG 744], c.1509–10





Virgin seated on the ground and in an open landscape, known as the *Alba Madonna*, in the National Gallery of Art in Washington (Fig. 221). The paintings have many points in common, such as the pose of the Christ Child, the treatment of the Baptist's pelt and the misty landscape, as well as the cool colouring and geometric harmony. The *Garvagh Madonna* and the *Alba Madonna* are usually compared to the frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura, the first room in the Vatican that Raphael was given to decorate by Pope Julius II (1508–11).

The panel is a single plank of wood, probably poplar, and was prepared for painting with layers of gesso and a creamy-coloured priming extending to all four edges. Before embarking on the underdrawing, Raphael ruled a border inside all four edges (with a slightly wider margin along the bottom) to delineate the confines of the picture field.

The extensive underdrawing for the composition, executed in a dry material, is visible in places to the naked eye, where the paint has become more transparent over time, but the infrared reflectogram mosaic allows us to appreciate its full beauty (Fig. 223). Since the first comprehensive discussion of the underdrawing, samples have been taken from the bottom edge where underdrawn lines for Saint John extend outside the painted area. Contrary to expectations, the underdrawing was not executed in silver-point or black chalk, but in an alloy composed of tin and lead. This was one of several different varieties of metal-point available in Raphael's lifetime that were used for drawing by inserting a short piece of wire into a holder. Both lead and tin make a soft, slightly smudgy line, but in this combination produce the soft, fluent quality of line seen here.

Much of the harmonious effect of Raphael's paintings derives from his habit of careful geometric preparation. The infrared reflectogram mosaic reveals that he divided the picture field vertically and horizontally into four quadrants by means of ruled lines (as in *The Procession to Calvary*, Cat. 8). This may have been done to aid the positioning of his figure group as he copied the design onto the panel (a simplified form of squaring – another technique Raphael often used for scaling up larger works such as the *Ansidei Madonna* in the National Gallery and the Baglioni *Entombment* in the Galleria Borghese). However, the ruled registration lines so frequently employed by Raphael both in his drawings and in the underdrawings of his paintings were more than just an aid to copying. He seems to have found them useful as a means of structuring and anchoring his designs. In the *Garvagh Madonna*, the figure group forms a tall pyramid about the central axis, a formula established by Raphael in the Madonnas of his earlier Florentine period (1504–8). The ruled vertical bisecting the picture field acts as a plumbline around which the twisting pose of the Virgin coils. A similar vertical line provides the foundation for the serpentine pose of Raphael's *Saint Catherine*, also in the National Gallery (interestingly this features in the underdrawing of the painting (Fig. 222), but not in the scale cartoon for the work in the Louvre). The ruled horizontal in the underdrawing of the *Garvagh Madonna* coincides with the top of the parapets of the two window embrasures in the background. The geometrical centre of the composition, established by the intersection of the ruled lines, is located in the gap between the hands of the two infants, giving an extra charge to the symbolic impact



Fig. 221  
RAPHAEL, *The Alba Madonna*, c.1510  
Oil on panel transferred to canvas,  
diameter 94.5 cm  
Washington, National Gallery of Art  
Andrew W. Mellon Collection, 1937  
1937.1.24

Fig. 222 (below)  
RAPHAEL, *Saint Catherine* [NG 168],  
c.1507–8  
Infrared reflectogram mosaic, detail

Fig. 223 (opposite)  
Infrared reflectogram mosaic  
of Fig. 220





Fig. 224  
Detail of Fig. 223

Fig. 225  
Detail of Fig. 223



of the Baptist's gift. Raphael adapted the perspective of the plinth on which the Virgin is seated to conform to this vanishing point, as can be seen from the *pentimento* in the underdrawing at its corner. The Baptist is neatly confined to the bottom right quadrant, the diagonals of which determine his pose.

Raphael drew out the whole design on the panel in some detail, not omitting to indicate drapery folds and landscape details in the background. The drawing is confident, with relatively few revisions. There is no indication of pouncing and the design does not give the impression of having been traced using a cartoon. On the contrary, it seems likely that the composition was drawn freehand, probably with reference to a pre-existing compositional study. This freedom is particularly evident in the plump forms of the children, some of whose outlines he drew several times,

searching for the optimum contour (see for example the curve of Christ's right hip, or the upper contour of the Baptist's raised left arm). As well as defining the outlines of his composition in the underdrawing in some detail, Raphael also used parallel hatching to indicate the internal modelling of the figures, which he planned to be strongly lit from the left.

The underdrawing, while full, is at the same time relatively schematic, particularly in the features of the figures. These are broken down into loose circles and arcs, as in the drawing of the Virgin's cheeks and eyelids (Fig. 224), the forehead and crown of Christ's head (Fig. 225), the muscles of his right arm, and the knuckles of all the figures' hands. The slightly stilted appearance of some of the lines, for example in the Virgin's drapery, may be explained by the act of copying.

Raphael made a few alterations to the composition as he drew on the panel. At an early stage, he adjusted the positions of the figures themselves. All three were originally drawn slightly further to the right. This is most easily seen in the first outline of the long side of the Virgin's neck, and more faintly her chin and jaw (Fig. 224). The hatching visible in the region of her right temple is a remnant of her hair in this first configuration. The position of the Baptist's head was also altered, his features just discernible tilted into more of a three-quarters view slightly further to the right. The contour of the Christ Child's right side (running from his shoulder through his thigh) is also visible to the right of its present position. It is noteworthy that these preliminary outlines are very difficult to see, perhaps because Raphael tried to erase them. Another more minor adjustment, which Raphael did not erase, is visible in the Christ Child's right foot, which was originally lower.

One of the most significant changes Raphael made was in the landscape background which in the underdrawing can be seen extending uninterrupted across the entire width of the upper half (Fig. 226). He subsequently introduced the central pier, presumably in order better to offset the Virgin's head. The dark brown

Fig. 226  
Detail of Fig. 223





of the pier in the painting acts as a foil to her face, which would otherwise have lost definition against the pallor of the sky and the distracting shapes of the distant townscape. The underdrawing reveals how the perfect oval of the Virgin's head is 'held' in place between two ruled verticals of the background architecture. The vertical architectural members to the left and right of the window embrasures are on top of the painted landscape and thus must have been an even later afterthought introduced at the painting stage. They are presumably intended to be read as projecting elements of the building, but Raphael's principal motive in adding them was probably to contain and push back the landscape views.

The only elements of the painting which were not underdrawn are the two symbolic attributes of the Baptist. The graceful S-shaped carnation is simply painted with a swift calligraphic touch where Christ's fingers had been drawn to receive it. The Baptist's reed cross is drawn only in the section that passed between his finger and thumb. The rest of the shaft was not drawn but incised subsequently (using an extraordinarily fine point and a ruler) into the paint. As in the case of the standard in the *Procession to Calvary*, Raphael knew he could easily improvise the positioning of the slender cross and the sinuous flower, once the arrangement of the figures had been settled.

The sure touch of the underdrawing in the *Garvagh Madonna* implies that the composition had already been rather fully worked out elsewhere, but no studies exactly anticipating the finalised design – whether composition studies or figure studies drawn from life – survive. During his early Roman period, Raphael made many drawings on the theme of the Madonna and Child in which he experimented with ideas for a range of different compositions. Some hints as to the genesis of the *Garvagh Madonna* can be gleaned from a group of drawings now in Lille which may once have formed part of a drawing book, known as the 'Pink Sketchbook' (from the pink ground with which the paper is prepared). Among these are studies showing the Virgin seated with one leg folded under her (Figs 227–230), which may contain the seeds of ideas for the *Garvagh Madonna*, though they also have points in



Fig. 227 (below left)  
 RAPHAEL, *Study for a Virgin and Child*  
 (detail)  
 Brush and brown ink over stylus indentations and leadpoint,  
 12 x 16.2 cm  
 Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts  
 inv. Pl. 455 (verso of Fig. 229)

Fig. 228  
 RAPHAEL, *Study for the Virgin and Child*  
 Metal-point on pink prepared paper,  
 16.2 x 11.2 cm  
 Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts  
 inv. Pl. 436



Fig. 229 (above)  
 RAPHAEL, *Studies for the Virgin and Child*  
 Metal-point on pink prepared paper,  
 12 x 16.2 cm  
 Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts  
 inv. Pl. 454 (recto of Fig. 227)

Fig. 230 (above right)  
 RAPHAEL, *Studies for the Virgin and Child*  
 and the Infant Saint John the Baptist.  
 Metal-point on pink prepared paper,  
 11.1 x 14.3 cm  
 Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts,  
 inv. Pl. 437



common with the *Alba Madonna* and other Madonnas. One sheet containing several rapidly executed studies of the Virgin and Child (Fig. 229) shows Raphael exploring a similar arrangement in reverse, with the Virgin's knees to the right. The Baptist is not present and the Virgin is holding a book. Although more freely drawn, there are notable similarities between the studies on this sheet and the underdrawing of the *Garvagh Madonna*. The schematic facial features (particularly of the Virgin), the tendency to reduce the forms to simple arcs and circles, the quest for outline, especially in the contours of the baby, and the controlled cross-hatching in areas of shadow, all find parallels in the underdrawing. These studies are also comparable to the underdrawing in technique: although they were executed in metal-point (usually hard and scratchy), the line is nevertheless similarly soft and fluent.

Raphael was one of the greatest draughtsmen of the Italian Renaissance and his innate feeling for design underpins his entire oeuvre. His method of working out compositions with a series of drawn preparatory studies, usually culminating in a scale cartoon, derives from Central Italian working procedures, which he absorbed from Perugino's workshop and during his Florentine sojourn. Few painters were as particular as he in planning his compositions and adhering closely to his prepared designs. Although he favoured the use of cartoons, even for small-scale works (and this was the secret of his success in Rome where he increasingly delegated the execution of his designs in different media to his huge workshop), the *Garvagh Madonna* offers a fascinating example of Raphael bypassing the cartoon process. The underdrawing was almost certainly copied from a well-worked up compositional draft, no longer extant, but Raphael continued to elaborate and modify his design on the panel. The assured yet delicate touch of the underdrawing is reflected in the fresh, dynamic quality of the painting, and is a measure of Raphael's growing confidence, during his early years in Rome, in his unique talent for graceful and harmonious design.