



Contact: Katrina Carl
805.884.6430
kcarl@sbma.net



Luca Cambiaso, *The Infant Jesus Taking His First Steps*, ca. 1570. Pen and ink, mounted on cardboard. Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Gift of the Women's Board.



Carlo Saraceni, *The Holy Family in Saint Joseph's Workshop*, c. 1615. Oil on canvas. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund

SBMA Goes *Behind the Scenes with Drawings* to Provide Glimpse of the Making of Masterpieces

April 29 – July 9, 2006

April 26, 2006 - The first of a series of European drawing exhibitions, curated by SBMA Consulting Curator of European Drawings, Dr. Alfred Moir, *Behind the Scenes with Drawings: Renaissance to Rococo* opens April 29 and showcases selected drawings from the collections of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and a local private collector. While none of the 21 individual works included in this show was made specifically for any one of the splendid works in the *Renaissance to Rococo* exhibition, on view through May 28, each, in some way, relates to one or several of the paintings – by style, artist, or subject or theme. The purpose of the exhibition is to emphasize the importance of the role of drawing in the process of making paintings, and also to confirm the appeal that this medium has on its own.

All of the drawings, rich in line, form and nuance, affirm the status of this medium in the history of art and also the uniqueness of its quality. Drawings are quite different from paintings. They are usually smaller, monochromatic, and fragmentary. They are more easily portable but tend to be more sensitive to abuse by dirty fingers, scissors, spilled liquids, mold, and the like. Light can also be destructive of drawings, making their inclusion in exhibitions rare.

Before the invention of photography in the mid-nineteenth century, drawings were essential to the process of creating a painting. Art students began their basic training by learning to draw. They continued to draw to perfect their skill throughout their careers. When artists made paintings, they would assemble multiple relevant sketches and work from there to create a detailed composition. The design was then presented to patrons, with the hope of gaining the support necessary to produce a finished painting.

Because drawings were considered only as ancillary to the process of making paintings, they were not often preserved and were rarely signed and dated. With a few very notable exceptions, collectors did not begin to acquire drawings until the 18th century. And only recently have drawings attracted substantial interest from collectors and museums.

Dr. Alfred Moir, longtime art historian and collector of old master drawings, is one of the few with such an interest in this important medium. "I had acquired my first works of art in 1948 on my initial trip to Europe. But by 1970 it was becoming increasingly difficult to find any painting that was both within my means and up to the standards of quality that I'd learned. Old master drawings were still relatively inexpensive and very much to my liking." Because of their rarity and importance in the art world, these drawings have since become prized collectables.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is a privately funded, not-for-profit institution that provides internationally recognized collections and exhibitions and a broad array of cultural and educational activities as well as travel opportunities around the world.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA. Open Tuesday - Sunday 11 am to 5 pm. Closed Monday. Free every Sunday. 805.963.4364 www.sbma.net