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EXHIBITION FEATURING WORK OF LEONARDO DA VINCI TO OPEN AT HIGH MUSEUM IN ATLANTA OCTOBER 2009

*First Exhibition to Explore Leonardo's Significant Role in Renaissance Sculpture;
Many Works Traveling to U.S. For First Time*

Features Restored Altarpiece, Revealing Figures Newly Attributed to Leonardo

ATLANTA, September 30, 2009—The first exhibition to explore Leonardo da Vinci's profound interest in and influence on sculpture will premiere at the High Museum of Art in October 2009. "Leonardo da Vinci: Hand of the Genius" will feature approximately 50 works, including more than 20 sketches and studies by Leonardo, some of which will be on view in the United States for the first time. The exhibition will also feature work by Donatello, Rubens, Verrocchio, and Rustici—including Rustici's three monumental bronzes from the façade of the Baptistery in Florence that comprise "John the Baptist Preaching to a Levite and a Pharisee," which was recently restored and has never left Florence. Also included are works from world-renowned collections, including those of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Vatican Museums, the Musée du Louvre, the British Museum, and the Museo Nazionale del Bargello in Florence.



The exhibition will shed new light on Leonardo's seminal role in the development of Renaissance sculpture and the work of artists who followed him through an examination of the sculpture that Leonardo studied, the sketches and studies he created for his own sculptural projects (the majority of which were never realized), and his interactions with other Renaissance sculptors. Organized by the High Museum of Art, "Leonardo da Vinci: Hand of the Genius" will premiere in Atlanta October 6, 2009, through February 21, 2010. A modified version of the exhibition will travel to the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles (March 23 through June 20, 2010).

"Though Leonardo was only able to create a small number of sculptures and few of them survive, this exhibition will reveal the enormous impact that Leonardo had on the field of sculpture, and how his study of ancient and Renaissance sculpture influenced future generations," said Michael E. Shapiro, Nancy and Holcombe T. Green, Jr. Director of the High Museum of Art. "Following in the tradition of "Verrocchio's David" and "Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise," this exhibition underscores the High's commitment to collaborative partnerships that promote new research, advance scholarship, support conservation and bring great works of art to Atlanta and other major U.S. cities."

A Rediscovered Leonardo

The High will also unveil works newly attributed to Leonardo da Vinci, which double the number of extant examples of Leonardo sculpture. The recent cleaning of Andrea del Verrocchio's "Beheading of the Baptist" (1477–1483) relief for the Silver Altar of the Florentine Baptistery enabled a detailed examination of its individual components, revealing that two of the figures were made very differently than the others. Gary Radke, guest curator of the exhibition and Dean's Professor of the Humanities at Syracuse University, recently proposed that the two figures, each of which is little more than 8 inches high, were created by Leonardo da

Vinci and not Verrocchio, who was his teacher. All the figures in the relief were created separately and inserted into the background, allowing for more than one artist to have contributed to the composition.

The new attribution is based on comparisons of the figures in the relief to one another and to similar works by Verrocchio and Leonardo. Two figures, the youth with the salver at the far left and the turbaned officer with a baton seen from the rear on the right, stand out from the other five. Unlike the other figures, which are all posed parallel to the relief plane and chased with insistent linearity, the youth and officer are conceived and modeled with remarkable three-dimensionality and naturalistic detail. As a youth Leonardo was already renowned for his obsessive observation of the world around him, leading Radke to conclude that the two figures were most likely produced by Leonardo just as he was becoming an independent artist. On view for the first time outside of Florence, the relief will be a focal point of “Leonardo da Vinci: Hand of the Genius.”

Leonardo, Sculptor

The initial section of the exhibition, “Leonardo, Master Sculptor,” will feature drawings associated with Leonardo’s plans for works of sculpture, including an in-depth examination of Leonardo’s plans to create the world’s largest and most technically complex statue, a work which was to depict Duke Francesco Sforza mounted on horseback. By November of 1493, Leonardo had completed a 26-foot tall clay model of the horse alone. When war interrupted his work the planned bronze casting was halted and the clay model was subsequently destroyed. A 26-foot-high recreation of the Sforza horse, manufactured by the Opera Laboratori Fiorentini S.p.A., will be on display on the Sifly Piazza at the High.

In addition to the Sforza monument, the exhibition will examine two of Leonardo’s other equestrian projects for Gian Giacomo Trivulzio and King Francis I of France through the artist’s compositional and anatomical studies as well as drawings for proportioning, modeling, and casting. Many of these detailed horse drawings are being loaned from the collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Leonardo, Student of Sculpture

The exhibition will also look at Leonardo’s wide ranging interest in sculpture, including an examination of those sculptors whose influence can be seen in his work. “Leonardo, Student of Sculpture” will pair Leonardo’s drawings with the works of ancient and early Renaissance sculpture that inspired him, illustrating the process of his three-dimensional drawings. A life-sized bearded prophet executed in marble by Donatello from the Florence Campanile (ca. 1418–1420), the model for the standing figure in Leonardo’s unfinished “Adoration of the Magi,” has never been seen outside of Florence, Italy, and has been restored by the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore in preparation for this exhibition.

To demonstrate the influence of earlier generations of sculptors on Leonardo, the exhibition will look specifically at the relationship between Leonardo and his master Andrea del Verrocchio. Through an examination of two terra cotta angels from the collection of the Musée du Louvre, one usually attributed to Verrocchio (ca. 1480), the other to Leonardo (ca. 1480), visitors will be able to see the influences of teacher on student yet also detect where their styles diverged.

Leonardo, Model and Mentor

The exhibition will conclude with a look at Leonardo’s influence on a younger generation of sculptors. “Leonardo, Model and Mentor” will examine works that Peter Paul Rubens and Giovan Francesco Rustici created in response to Leonardo’s monumental “Battle of Anghiari” fresco in the Palazzo Vecchio, which has since been painted over. Two terracotta battle groups by Rustici, Leonardo’s most faithful student of sculpture, will be presented alongside Peter Paul Rubens’ masterful copy of Leonardo’s original fresco. Additional small bronze horses and warriors inspired both by the “Battle of Anghiari” and Leonardo’s equestrian projects will demonstrate the range and depth of Leonardo’s influence.





The final section of the exhibition will also feature Giovan Francesco Rustici's three larger-than-life-sized bronze figures that comprise "John the Baptist Preaching to a Levite and a Pharisee," which has been recently restored and will be shown outside of Florence for the first time. Leonardo has long been credited with greatly influencing the work, as much of the group was modeled between March and September 1508 while Leonardo and Rustici were both living in houses owned by the Martelli family. Artist and biographer Giorgio Vasari acknowledged Leonardo's involvement in the project:

"[Leonardo] proved himself in sculpture with the three bronze figures over the north door of San Giovanni which were executed by Giovan Francesco Rustici but finished with Leonardo's advice; they are the most beautiful casts both for their design and for their perfection that have yet been seen in the modern age."

Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) is widely recognized as a scientist, inventor, philosopher, writer, designer, sculptor, architect, and painter. His artistic apprenticeship took place in Florence in the workshop of painter and sculptor Andrea del Verrocchio. In the early 1480s, he left Florence for the court of Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan, where he was to spend much of his career. During his early Milanese period he painted his iconic Last Supper. He fled Milan after the French invasion of the city in 1499 and returned to Florence, where he painted the Mona Lisa, and continued his technological, geographical, and scientific studies. He returned to Milan in 1506, and after spending some time at the Papal Court in Rome, accepted an invitation from Francis I, King of France, to work at his court, where he remained until his death.

Exhibition Organization and Support

"Leonardo da Vinci: Hand of the Genius" is organized by the High Museum of Art in association with the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, and in collaboration with the Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore and the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence, Italy. The exhibition is generously supported by Lead Corporate Partner Delta Air Lines and sponsor Campanile Plaza. Support has also been provided by The Samuel H. Kress Foundation and Leonardo Society members Loraine P. Williams, Mrs. Thornton Kennedy, Lanier-Goodman Foundation, Morgens West Foundation, and Mr. and Mrs. Gary W. Rollins, with additional support from the Atlanta Foundation and the Dorothy Smith Hopkins Exhibition Endowment Fund. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. Generous support for the Sforza horse is provided by Art Partners. In-kind support comes from Superior Rigging and UPS. The accompanying publication, "Leonardo da Vinci and the Art of Sculpture," is supported by the Friends of Florence, a non-profit international foundation based in the United States. The exhibition is curated by Gary M. Radke, Dean's Professor of the Humanities at Syracuse University and Consulting Curator of Italian Art at the High Museum of Art. Restoration of Rustici's "John the Baptist Preaching to a Levite and a Pharisee" from the façade of the Baptistery in Florence was sponsored by the Friends of Florence.

High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art, founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 11,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American art; significant holdings of European paintings and decorative art; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High's Media Arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. In November 2005 the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the

Museum's size, creating a vibrant "village for the arts" at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. *For more information about the High, please visit www.High.org.*

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. A not-for-profit center for performing and visual arts, its campus comprises the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta College of Art, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art, Young Audiences and the 14th Street Playhouse.

The J. Paul Getty Museum

The J. Paul Getty Museum collects in seven distinct areas, including Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture, and decorative arts, and European and American photographs. The Museum's mission is to make the collection meaningful and attractive to a broad audience by presenting and interpreting the works of art through educational programs, special exhibitions, publications, conservation, and research.

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Leonardo da Vinci (Italian, 1452–1519), "Studies for the Trivulzio Monument," ca. 1508–1510, pen and ink on paper, lent by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Royal Library, Windsor Castle, 12355, Royal Collection © 2009 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Italian Copy After Leonardo da Vinci, Restored and Reworked by Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577–1640), "The Fight for the Standard of the *Battle of Anghiari*," 16th century, black chalk, pen, ink, and watercolor on paper, Musée du Louvre, Paris, Department of Graphic Arts, Photo: Michèle Bellot, Réunion des Musées Nationaux / Art Resource, NY.

Giovan Francesco Rustici (Italian, 1474–1554) "John the Baptist Preaching to a Levite and a Pharisee," 1506–1511, bronze, North Façade, Baptistery of St. John, Florence.