

## The Italian Masters Series

The Parkville Frame Gallery is pleased to offer **The Italian Masters Series**. This series is a collection of images created by some of the most well-known and well-respected Italian artists. These reproductions can be purchased either already framed in the gallery, or we can order these images, and many others, in a variety of sizes, and frame them to your specifications. These paintings have some great “back-stories”.



***Birth of Venus*** (ca.1484)

Sandro Botticelli

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

**Date painted:** ca.1484-1486

**How originally painted:** Tempera on canvas

**Size:** 5' 8" x 9' 2" (172.5 x 278.5 cm)

**Where on display:** Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy

**The Artist: Alessandro di Mariano Filipepi** (Sandro Botticelli) (Italian, 1445 - 1510)

At the height of his fame, the Florentine painter and draughtsman Sandro Botticelli was one of the most esteemed artists in Italy. His graceful pictures of the Madonna and Child, his altarpieces and his life-size mythological paintings, such as 'Venus and Mars', were immensely popular in his lifetime. The son of a tanner, he was born Alessandro di Mariano Filipepi, but he was given the nickname 'Botticelli' (derived from the word 'botticello' meaning 'small wine cask').

**The Art: *Birth of Venus*** Known as the “Birth of Venus”, the composition actually shows the goddess of love and beauty arriving on land, on the island of Cyprus, born of the sea spray and blown there by the winds, Zephyr and, perhaps, Aura. The goddess is standing on a giant scallop shell, as pure and as perfect as a pearl. She is met by a young woman, who is sometimes identified as one of the Graces or as the Hora of spring, and who holds out a cloak covered in flowers. Even the roses, blown in by the wind are a reminder of spring. The subject of the painting, which celebrates Venus as the symbol of love and beauty, was perhaps suggested by the poet Agnolo Poliziano.



Before Restoration



After Restoration



Framed

***Salvatore Mundi*** (ca. 1500)

Leonardo da Vinci

May be destined for the Louvre in Abu Dhabi

**Date painted:** ca. 1500

**How originally painted:** Oil on walnut panel

**Size:** 25.8 by 19.2 inches

**Where on display:** Unclear, may be destined for the Louvre in Abu Dhabi (Capital of the United Arab Emirates)

**The Artist: Leonardo da Vinci**, (Italian: “Leonardo from Vinci”) was born in 1452, in Anchiano, near Vinci, Republic of Florence, Italy. He died in 1519, in Cloux, now Clos-Lucé, France. Leonardo was a painter, draftsman, sculptor, architect, and engineer whose genius, perhaps more than that of any other person, epitomizes the Renaissance humanist ideal.

**The Art: *Salvatore Mundi*** (Latin for 'Savior of the World') depicts Jesus in Renaissance dress, making the sign of the cross with his right hand, while holding a transparent, non-refracting crystal orb in his left hand representing the 'celestial sphere' of the heavens. The painting may have been originally created for Louis XII of France. It is one of fewer than twenty known works (paintings) by Leonardo. The painting sold at auction at Christie's in New York in 2017, for \$450 million (\$450,312,500 including fees). The frame alone, which was purchased from a dealer, is valued at \$50,000.

**Editor's Note:** Note the positive impact that a proper frame makes.



***The Crucifixion*** (Probably mid-1450)

Paolo Uccello

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

**Date painted:** Probably mid-1450

**How originally painted:** Tempera on gold ground (wood panel)

**Size:** Varies by panel

**Where on display:** The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

**The Artist:** This portable “triptych” may, with some confidence, be attributed to **Paolo Uccello**, one of the most fascinating painters of the first half of the fifteenth century. He is best known for his battle scenes for the Medici palace and for frescoes in the cloister of Santa Maria Novella, Florence, Italy; however, he also painted small devotional panels. Uccello worked with Lorenzo Ghiberti on that artist’s first set of bronze doors for the Florentine baptistery (ca. 1412–16).

**Editor’s Note:** Lorenzo Ghiberti is well known for his bronze doors which adorn the Baptistery of the Cathedral of Florence, Italy. A recreation of those doors can be seen in the Nelson-Atkins Art Museum in Kansas City.

**The Art: *The Crucifixion*** This portable, hinged, “triptych” (three-fold panel) includes the depiction of a nun of the Brigittine order at the foot of the cross, identified by an inscription as Sister Felicity. It was for her private devotions in her cell at the Brigittine convent of Santa Maria del Paradiso near Florence that the triptych was painted. A Felicità di Francesco Casavecchia joined the order in January 1455, which is about the date of the painting.





***The Madonna of the Pinks*** (ca. 1506)  
(‘La Madonna dei Garofani’)  
Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino  
The National Gallery, London

**Date painted:** ca. 1506

**How originally painted:** Oil on yew wood panel

**Size:** (original) 11 x 8.8 inches

**Where on display:** The National Gallery, London

**The Artist: Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino** (1483--1520) was born in 1483 in the town of Urbino, Italy. He was a painter and architect during the High Renaissance period. Compared to other Masters of the time, Raphael remained productive, running a workshop that included 50 students and assistants. Much of his works remain, since they were done mainly for the Vatican. His artworks are commonly organized into three phases: his early career, which conveyed the influence of his teacher; the Florentine period, when Raphael went to the city for four years; and his final years in which he produced his best works.

**The Art: *The Madonna of the Pinks*** In 1991, this small painting was seen hanging in a corridor in Alnwick Castle, England (Harry Potter films). It was originally thought to be a copy; however, scientific examination conducted by The National Gallery in London showed a Raphael-style “under-drawing”.

Director Nicholas Penny and the National Gallery team undertook a complex process of research into the authenticity of this work – not only checking the style and technique of the Renaissance master in that stage of his career, but also undertaking further scientific analysis that would not have been possible even 20 years ago. The painting was determined to be a genuine and it was purchased by the gallery for £34.88 million (about \$60 million at that time).



***Libyan Sibyl*** (1511)  
Michelangelo Buonarroti  
Cappella Sistina, Vatican

**Date painted:** 1511

**How originally painted:** Fresco

**Size:** 12.9 x 12.4 feet (395 x 380 cm)

**Where on display:** Cappella Sistina, Vatican

**The Artist:** **Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni**, (Italian, 1475--1564) was considered the greatest living artist in his lifetime, and ever since then he has been held to be one of the greatest artists of all time. A number of his works in painting, sculpture, and architecture rank among the most famous in existence. Although the frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (Vatican) are probably the best known of his works today, the artist thought of himself primarily as a sculptor.

**The Art:** The Libica, or ***Libyan Sibyl*** is a figure from Michelangelo's ceiling fresco in the Sistine Chapel (created from 1508 to 1512 BCE) in the Vatican in Rome Italy. Sibyl is derived from the ancient Greek word "sibylla" which means prophetess. There are twelve prophets or seers painted on the ceiling and they represent seven Jewish characters who prophesied or heralded the coming of the Messiah in the Tanakh or "Old Testament." The five sibyls are characters from classic mythology who represent the arrival of change. The Libyan Sibyl was one of the last of these figures to be painted and the overall area of her section measures roughly fifteen by twelve and a half feet. Her composition was broken into twenty giornate or sections of plaster and was probably executed in twenty days with Michelangelo's full sized cartoons being transferred to the wet plaster by pricking pinholes along the lines of the drawing and then pounding a cloth bag filled with charcoal along these lines. Transferring a drawing to plaster this way is known as spolvero.



***Riva degli Schiavoni*** (1734)  
Antonio Canaletto  
Sir John Soane's Museum, London

**Date painted:** 1734

**How originally painted:** Oil on canvas

**Size:** 126.2 x 204.6 cm

**Where on display:** Sir John Soane's Museum, London, England

**The Artist: Antonio Canaletto** (Giovanni Antonio Canale) (Italian, 1697 – 1768) was a son of the painter Bernardo Canal, hence his mononym Canaletto ("little Canal"). Canaletto was born in Venice in 1697, to Bernardo Canal and Artemisia Barbieri. He served his apprenticeship with his father and his brother. He began in his father's occupation, that of a theatrical scene painter. Canaletto was inspired by the Roman vedutista Giovanni Paolo Pannini, and started painting the daily life of the city and its people. Much of Canaletto's early artwork was painted 'from nature', differing from the then customary practice of completing paintings in the studio. Some of his later works do revert to this custom, as suggested by the tendency of distant figures to be painted as blobs of color - an effect produced by using a camera obscura, which blurs farther-away objects. However, his paintings are always notable for their accuracy.

**The Art: *Riva degli Schiavoni*:** Sir John Soane (1753-1837) was a brilliant architect and a compulsive collector. Crowded into his house – which is actually three town houses knocked together to form one domicile – are numerous objects from antiquity, beautiful furnishings, and priceless works of art. Soane purchased three paintings by Canaletto, including the *Riva degli Schiavoni*, one of the Italian painter's greatest works, which hangs opposite the doorway to the Soane museum's picture room. Depicting an almost photographically-rendered view of the famous promenade in Venice, with the Salute, San Giorgio and San Marco visible in the distance, the painting also gives a snapshot of life in the city, with a myriad of ships moored in the lagoon and figures from all walks of life depicted in immaculate detail.





***Doleful Premonition*** (1862)  
Girolamo Induno  
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan



***The Kiss*** (Hanging behind girl)  
Francisco Hayez  
Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan

**Date painted:** 1862

**How originally painted:** Oil on Canvas

**Size:** 67 x 86 cm.

**Where on display:** Brera Art Gallery, Milan, Italy

**The Artist: Girolamo Induno** (Italian, 1825--1890) was born in Milan, where his father was a chef and butler at the Milanese court. He took his first formal art lessons at the Brera Academy, where he studied with Luigi Sabatelli from 1839 to 1846. His first exhibit was in 1845; composed of portraits and a scene from *The Betrothed* by Alessandro Manzoni (now lost). In 1848, he and his brother Domenico were participants in the Five Days of Milan and had to flee to avoid reprisals by the Austrian government. They spent two years in Ticino, then returned and settled in Florence. His brother went back to painting, but Girolamo enlisted in a volunteer regiment led by General Giacomo Medici and fought against the French during their siege of Rome. He also managed to produce numerous sketches of the war.

**The Art: *Doleful Premonition*** This work echoes the sentimental and patriotic interpretation of the painting *The Kiss* by Francisco Hayez, but in a more contemporary vein. In a modest room, seated on a bed, a girl contemplates a portrait of her beloved, a patriot fighting in the wars as we can tell from a bust of Garibaldi, prints of *The Kiss*, and a battle scene hung on the window. Girolamo Induno and his brother Domenico, both painters and followers of Garibaldi, were the leading exponents of genre painting which used personal, domestic images to draw the uneducated classes to art. Girolamo made a reproduction of this painting in 1871, titled *La fidanzata del garibaldino* (The garibaldino's fiancée), in which he modified the lady's face and some of the details of the furniture.



***The Visitation*** (ca.1528)

Jacopo Carucci

Parrocchia di San Michele Arcangelo Carmignano

**Date painted:** ca. 1528

**How originally painted:** Oil on panel

**Size:** 80 x 61 inches

**Where on display:** Parrocchia di San Michele Arcangelo Carmignano

**The Artist: Jacopo Carucci** (Italian, 1494 – 1557) was one of the most radical individuals in the history of Italian Renaissance art. Recognized primarily as a religious painter, he received widespread praise too for a number of perceptive portraits. Rubbing shoulders with some of the great masters of the High Renaissance, including his friend Michelangelo, Pontormo (unlike his esteemed compatriots) looked towards the art of northern Europe where he found inspiration in the engravings and woodcuts of German and Dutch art. The hallmarks of his mature Mannerist style were evident in the spiritual, rather than physical, presence of his figures; in his vivid use of color; his fluid contoured lines; and in his ambiguous approach to pictorial space.

**The Art: *The Visitation*** The setting for this painting is the visitation of the Virgin Mary on her pregnant but aged cousin Elisabeth who was the wife of Zacharias. The two figures in the painting with their interlinked arms form a lozenge shape. This intertwining of figures was one of Pontormo's trademarks as was the way he makes the characters seem to be almost floating. The two main characters, Elizabeth and Mary, who are painted in profile, gracefully embrace each other as they exchange glances of mutual affection. They dominate the canvas as they stand on the threshold of Zacharias's house. The two figures in the background may be servants awaiting their instructions. The original painting was restored in 2014.

**Editor's Note:** See these two sites: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fj17foaKAVU>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uq1azLoVhoQ>



**Early Fresco**

Jacopo Carucci

Santissima Annunziata, Florence