

Art Adventure I Sam Dalkilic-Miestowski

Madonna and Child

One of the most cherished images at Christmas is Baby Jesus lying in a manger surrounded by Joseph, Mary, the three wise men, little lambs, camels and donkeys. My husband, daughter and I recently visited the live nativity presented by the Lake Hills Baptist Church. We were transported in a magic time machine by our guide who took us back to Bethlehem. We visited a series of rooms that led to the birth of Jesus. The people in the scenes were dressed authentically and interacted with the tour group. We were asked to buy fish, pay taxes and become part of the village. It felt real. I would call it a reality show from Bethlehem.

During this time of the year Nativity scenes flourish in homes, churches and even some businesses. This is one of the most recognizable themes in all of art history. For centuries both the known and unknown artists have painted and sculpted this event.

One of the most significant painters of religious Madonnas was Sanzio Raphael. This great Italian painter (1483-1520) was famous for his beautiful religious paintings. While he was not con-

sidered the most creative, he was considered more influential than Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo Buonarroti. After his death, his work was used as a model for artists.

Raphael's "The Sistine Madonna" was a commissioned piece for a church. The Madonna stands on a cloud carrying a baby looking



straight at the viewer. Curtains at the top of the painting seem to imply there is a stage or window separating the Madonna and Child from its viewers. At the bottom of the painting is a small ledge.

Perched on this ledge are two small angels with eyes rolled to one side.

They appear to be in a trance looking above at the beautiful mother and child. One has his arms crossed in front and the other has his chin perched on his palm in deep reflection. These angels are beautiful, adorable, chubby, cute and inspiring.

This small portion of this painting is probably one of the most often used images at Christmas. It's seen on Christmas cards, wrapping papers, material,

album covers, advertisements, posters, coasters, handbags, magnets, ties, notebooks, sketchbooks, etc.

Another well-known Madonna painting by Raphael is "Madonna della Sedia." Painted in 1514 this oil on panel is a circular shape. In this painting, the Madonna is a young mother dressed in period clothing cuddling a child tightly in her arms. The mother and child are part of our world. She's sitting in a chair with one leg raised to brace the child. The mother's eyes look directly at the viewer while the child's eyes shyly look at the stranger. An accompanying child watches the reaction of the mother and child. A faint gold halo surrounds the mother and child.

Our gallery has several Madonna and Child images. They are portrayed differently as they are painted in different centuries. One oil painted after Annibale Carracci has similar qualities to Raphael. It has the classic beauty of Raphael, but with Carracci's own interpretation of Baby Jesus.



Congratulations to **Paul Mish** for committing WPM to putting in curbs in Cedar Lake on the west side of Morse Street around the new Harbor condos and on the east side around Holiday Liquors. WPM also is making a \$10,000 donation to the town for engineering design to correct the drainage problems on the corner of Morse and 133rd.

... Hip, hip hurrah! Lowell Clerk-Treasurer **Judy Walters** has a new granddaughter.

Claire Marilyn Benton was born Nov. 10 and came in at 7 pounds, 8 ounces. Claire joins her proud big brother, **Carter**, keeping her parents,

The baby is not angelic; it almost looks like a man in the face.

In the late 1800s a Canadian Monk started an Illuminated Manuscript illustrating many religious events in the Catholic religion. One of the events depicted was the advent of Christmas titled "The Nativity of Our Lord, or the Birth Day of CHRIST, commonly

called Christmas Day." This beautiful and elaborately decorated page of devotion has Baby Jesus resting on a pillow with his hand

Kitty Conley's Scratching Post

Heather and Todd, busy.

Claire received her middle name to honor her great-grandmother **Marilyn Hamm**, who died four years ago.

... Read it here first. It is no longer a maybe. Mayor **Dan Klein** is bringing the White Sox World Championship trophy to Crown Point. Date, time, and place to be announced.

... Flaming main-course meals and desserts are a hit at most restaurants. Most are truly not difficult. They just

extended to the Madonna. The color is brilliant; the landscape is a pastoral setting; the feeling is magnificent inspiration. The gold leaf decoration throughout the border and on the Holy Family appears to have been applied today. These Illuminated Manuscripts are not on display at the gallery but are available for viewing with a scheduled appointment.

For the past 20 years, the U.S.

require sensible planning, care and safety. Anything with an open flame does.

... **Todd Kleven** bought his bride, **Tracie**, a toy yorkie for a wedding present.

They named the 1 1/2-pound puppy **Harley**. Why? The fur colors match Todd's fat-boy Harley motorcycle. That's a big name for a tiny dog.

... **Bill Condron**, R-4th, introduced a request to direct Crown Point Clerk-Treasurer **Patti Olson** to direct all interest earned by the funds in the retired employees non reverting insurance account into that fund.

Post Office has issued a Christmas

stamp featuring a famous Madonna painting, "Madonna and Child" by the famous Italian Monk Lorenzo Monaco was issued in October 2004. He painted Illuminated

Manuscripts, choir books and miniatures. Select a piece of art for your holiday greetings.

Contact Sam at The Steeple Gallery at (219) 365-1014 or at samowner@sbcglobal.net.



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