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**FRICK AND NORTON SIMON EXCHANGE PROGRAM CONTINUES  
THIS FALL WITH THE EXCLUSIVE NEW YORK LOAN OF  
GUIDO CAGNACCI'S MASTERPIECE THE REPENTANT MAGDALENE**

October 25, 2016, through January 22, 2017



Guido Cagnacci, *The Repentant Magdalene*, ca. 1660–63, oil on canvas, 90 1/4 x 104 3/4 inches, Norton Simon Art Foundation, Pasadena, California

Guido Cagnacci (1601–1663) is among the most eccentric painters who worked in seventeenth-century Italy. His works, mostly religious in subject, are known for their unashamed, often unsettling, eroticism. Even though his pictorial style was influenced by some of the greatest Italian baroque painters—the Carracci, Guercino, and Guido Reni—his figurative language always remained individual and highly recognizable. The unconventionality of his work led to his being almost entirely forgotten during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. After exhibitions in Rimini and Bologna in 1952 and 1959, respectively, Cagnacci was rediscovered by Italian art historians and writers, but he still remains unjustifiably little known outside of Italy.

Cagnacci's ambitious *Repentant Magdalene*, a large canvas acquired in 1982 by the Norton Simon Art Foundation in Pasadena, CA, is considered a masterpiece of seventeenth-century Italian art. For the first time since its acquisition almost thirty-five years ago, the painting will be on loan, traveling from the Norton Simon Museum to New York's Frick Collection this fall. Accompanying the exhibition in the museum's East Gallery will be the publication *The Art of Guido Cagnacci* by Xavier F. Salomon, Peter Jay Sharp Chief Curator. Principal funding for the exhibition is generously provided by the Robert H. Smith Family Foundation. Major support for the exhibition and the accompanying book, *The Art of Guido Cagnacci*, is provided by Fabrizio Moretti, with additional support from Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Horvitz, Ayesha Bulchandani, and Mark Fisch and Rachel Davidson.

Trained between Bologna and Rome, Cagnacci spent most of his life producing idiosyncratic pictures for religious and aristocratic patrons in his native Romagna, an area of northeastern Italy between the Apennine Mountains and the Adriatic Sea. He worked in different cities of the region, in particular, Rimini and Forlì. For nearly ten years, in the 1650s, he was based in Venice, after which, in 1658, he moved to Vienna, where he died in 1663. Cagnacci was known for his unconventional lifestyle. In 1628, he was caught after unlawfully eloping with an aristocratic woman, and he was often described as living with attractive young women disguised as male apprentices.

## **ABOUT THE REPENTANT MAGDALENE**

Highly theatrical in composition, *The Repentant Magdalene* is based on contemporary literary sources and religious plays. It depicts an event from the life of Mary Magdalene, the courtesan who converted to Christianity and gave up her sinful life after her encounter with Christ. Shown in her room after meeting with Jesus in the Temple, Mary is on the floor at the center of the composition, her long blonde hair cascading down her side, her face reddened by high emotion, her body barely covered by a white sheet around her waist. She has discarded her worldly possessions, throwing away her luxurious clothes and jewels, which are scattered all over the floor, creating an astonishing still life. Her sister Martha has found her in this state. Simply dressed, Martha sits on one of the cushions on the floor, consoling Mary. Behind them, two servants are leaving the room after having found their mistress in such a state. To the left, two allegorical figures are depicted: a standing angel, its hair blown by the divine wind that ruffles its evanescent wings, banishes a levitating devil, complete with horns and tail, who approaches the window in an attempt to flee the room. These fighting figures represent Virtue and Vice locked in combat as Mary chooses to follow her virtuous new Christian life.

The *Repentant Magdalene* was probably painted in the early 1660s in Vienna for Emperor Leopold I. By 1665, however, the canvas was in Italy, in the collection of Carlo II Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, at La Favorita, his villa outside of Mantua. The Gonzagas were closely related to the imperial family, so this may have been a diplomatic gift to them, or an acquisition from Leopold I. In 1711, it entered the possession of the Bentinck family in England, first at Bulstrode House and then at Welbeck Abbey, where it remained until 1981, when it was sold at auction.

## **BASIC INFORMATION**

**General Information Phone:** 212.288.0700

**Web site:** [www.frick.org](http://www.frick.org)

**Building project:** [www.frickfuture.org](http://www.frickfuture.org)

**E-mail:** [info@frick.org](mailto:info@frick.org)

**App:** [frick.org/app](http://frick.org/app)

**Museum entrance:** 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

**Library entrance:** 10 East 71st Street

**Museum Hours:** Open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited

hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

**Library Hours:** [frick.org/visit/library/hours](http://frick.org/visit/library/hours)

**Museum Admission:** \$22; senior citizens \$17; students \$12; "pay what you wish" on Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**First Fridays:** Museum admission and gallery programs are free from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the first Friday evening of the month (except January and September)

**Library:** open to the public and free of charge

**PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS:** Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection

**Subway:** #6 local to 68th Street station; #Q to 72<sup>nd</sup> Street station; Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

**Tour Information:** Included in the price of museum admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

**Shop:** The shop is open the same days as the museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

**Group Museum Visits:** Please call 212.288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

**Public Programs:** A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Associate Director of Media Relations & Marketing; Phone: 212.547.6866; E-mail: [rosenau@frick.org](mailto:rosenau@frick.org)