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**BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART TO PRESENT FIRST MAJOR U.S. EXHIBITION
OF 16TH-CENTURY GENOESE MASTER LUCA CAMBIASO**

Over 60 paintings and 80 drawings from 40 museums in U.S.
and Europe have been brought together by the Blanton in
partnership with Genoa's Palazzo Ducale

***Luca Cambiaso, 1527-1585* is first international traveling
exhibition to be presented in the new Blanton Museum at The
University of Texas at Austin**

AUSTIN, Texas - The first major U.S. exhibition of paintings by one of the principal figures of late-16th-century painting, Luca Cambiaso, will be on view from September 19, 2006 through January 14, 2007, at the Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin. The Blanton will be the exclusive U.S. venue for *Luca Cambiaso, 1527-1585*, providing a rare opportunity for the public to see first-hand some 60 paintings and 80 drawings by a fascinating artist whose work has largely remained in his native Genoa.

The Blanton has organized the exhibition in partnership with the Palazzo Ducale, Genoa, Italy, where it will travel following its Austin presentation. Major support for the exhibition has been provided by AT&T.

"Given his singular style and tremendous influence on later generations of artists in Genoa, Luca Cambiaso is one of the most under-recognized artists of the late Renaissance," said Jonathan Bober, the Blanton's curator of Prints, Drawings and European Paintings and the sole American member of the scholarly committee for the exhibition.

Blanton Museum Director Jessie Otto Hite said, "The Blanton's magnificent treasure trove of works by Cambiaso is a distinctive hallmark of our permanent collection. We have

looked forward eagerly to the day when, in our new home, we could properly showcase his works and mount this exhibition. We are proud to be working with the museums of Genoa to bring this insufficiently known master at last to the attention of American audiences."

With seven paintings by Luca Cambiaso in its permanent collection, the Blanton Museum of Art owns more than half of the paintings by the artist in the United States. The Blanton's Cambiaso holdings are part of its Suida-Manning Collection of European Art, assembled by William Suida, a pioneering scholar of the school of Genoa, his daughter, Bertina and son-in-law Robert Manning. In the course of their study, they collected works by Cambiaso as well as other important Renaissance and Baroque artists. In 1998, The University of Texas at Austin acquired the entire Suida-Manning Collection, which now forms the artistic and historic core of the Blanton's Old Master collection.

The Blanton opened its new 124,000-square-foot Michener Gallery Building in April 2006, and this exhibition will be the first major international exhibition to be housed in its temporary exhibition galleries.

Most of the paintings in the exhibition are being lent by museums and churches in Genoa, where Cambiaso lived and worked exclusively until his last four years. With rare exceptions, the works have never before been displayed in the United States and few have been displayed outside of Italy. Additional paintings and drawings are coming to Austin from an international roster of distinguished institutions, including the Art Institute of Chicago, the British Museum, the Louvre Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Morgan Library, the National Gallery of Art and the Uffizi Gallery, among others.

The exhibition is the product of an international committee of scholars including Jonathan Bober of the Blanton; Piero Boccardo, Director of the Musei di Strada Nuova - Palazzo Rosso and Gabinetto dei Disegni e Stampe,

Genoa; Franco Boggero, Superintendent of Cultural Assets of Liguria; Clario De Fabio, Director of the Musei di Strada Nova - Palazzo Bianco and the Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genoa; and Lauro Magnani, Professor of Modern Art History, University of Genoa.

About the Artist

Luca Cambiaso is a fundamental figure in the history of Italian painting and drawing. He was born in 1527 in Moneglia, near Genoa. He received early art instruction from and collaborated with his father, Giovanni. Travel to Rome exposed him to the works of Michelangelo, among others. With these works as inspiration, Cambiaso developed the most advanced style in Genoa and laid the foundation for the city's distinctive school of art. Elegant but rigorous, his painting was suited to both grand secular decoration and compelling religious imagery, and he counted all the wealthy merchant families of Genoa among his patrons. Better known than his paintings, his drawings were produced in vast number and mark the beginning of widespread appreciation of the medium.

Later in his career, partly in relation to the dictates of the Counter-Reformation, Cambiaso developed an extraordinarily abstract and systematic style. In his paintings this was often relieved by naturalistic effects, such as nocturnal light, that anticipates the interest of Caravaggio, Georges de La Tour, and other masters of the early Baroque. The "cubic" style of his later drawings prefigures forms of the early 20th century.

Cambiaso's career flourished in Genoa; however, near the end of his life, in 1583, he traveled to Spain at the behest of King Philip II to work on the monumental frescoes in the Escorial, the palatial monastery outside Madrid. There the artist died in 1585.

About the Exhibition

Luca Cambiaso, 1527-1585, is the first monographic exhibition of the artist's work in half a century, and the first ever in the United States. The range of works featured spans his entire development, showing the influence of Raphael and Michelangelo in his early years, the highly sophisticated and stylized Mannerism of his mature work, and the hints of early Baroque style that penetrate his later period.

The exhibition begins with a section devoted to Cambiaso's precedents and precursors. This includes paintings and drawings by major artists of the preceding generation, like Raphael's pupil Perin del Vaga, who worked in Genoa, and Domenico Beccafumi in Pisa, whose work Cambiaso surely saw. There are also drawings attributed to Cambiaso's father and another Genoese artist, Nicolosio Granello, representing the most advanced local efforts around the beginning of Luca's activity.

Cambiaso's early development is vividly illustrated by four successive variations upon the subject of the Madonna and Child. A series of representations of the Madonna and Child reveals the artist's emerging control of composition and richness of paint handling. Cambiaso's development from unbridled energy toward controlled virtuosity is further revealed in a parallel series of drawings that culminate in the Blanton's own *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*.

The next section explores Cambiaso's mature style, which corresponds to his prolific activity for the major Genoese families. A series of major altarpieces, including the *Nativity* on panel from the church of San Francesco da Paola, the nocturnal *Nativity* from the Pinacoteca at Bologna, and the *Martyrdom of St. George* from that saint's church in Genoa--none previously seen outside Italy--will provide a dramatic viewing experience. Forming another section, many of his finest mythological works reveal a sensual, painterly style that was in part a response to the art of Correggio and contemporary Venetians like Veronese.

Perhaps Cambiaso's greatest achievement was his fresco decoration of many of the major palaces and chapels of Genoa's churches. This aspect of his mature career is represented in the exhibition by groups of preparatory studies, and many of the most important surviving drawings, for these projects.

In Cambiaso's late activity, from around 1570, his style became increasingly concentrated and austere. Partly in response to the dictates of the Council of Trent and its intended "reform" of religious painting, his altarpieces became less extravagant and more schematic. The grand, sober, fourteen-foot high canvas of the *Deposition from the Cross* from the suppressed church of Santa Chiara is a prime example of this late development.

During the same period, Cambiaso created a number of stunning nocturnes, using complex light effects and an intimate tone to stir a devout feeling in the viewer. The exhibition includes several of the finest examples of these celebrated devotional subjects: the so-called *Madonna of the Candle*, from Genoa's Palazzo Bianco; the *Arrest of Christ* from the Accademia Ligustica; and the Blanton's own *Madonna and Child with St. Catherine and an Angel*.

While drawings will be displayed throughout the exhibition—including several of the startlingly modern, almost cubistic works which emerged in his later years—one section of the exhibition will focus on Cambiaso's influence as a draughtsman. Curator Bober notes, "Cambiaso's drawings have always been understood as a primary manifestation of his genius, and they have usually enjoyed at least the reputation of his paintings. Our exhibition will examine the important role that this artist played in establishing the appeal of rapidly executed drawings as collectible objects in their own right, conveying the ideas and personality of the artist, not simply as preparatory sketches."

The final section of the exhibition is dedicated to the work of Cambiaso's principal Genoese followers: Lazzaro

Tavarone, Bernardo Castello, Giovanni Battista Paggi, Giulio Benso, Simone Barabino, and Giovanni Ansaldo. Each is represented by one of his finest paintings and at least one comparable drawing, demonstrating Cambiaso's immediate influence and explaining the foundation of a distinctive school.

Exhibition Catalogue

A 384-page catalogue will be published in both English and Italian editions. It will present extensive new research in eight essays by leading scholars as well as individual catalogue entries for every work in the exhibition, an appendix of documents, and extensive illustration. It will be only the third major publication on the artist and the first ever in English. The catalogue is being published by Silvana Editoriale, Milan, and will be available at the Blanton Museum Store for \$45.00 in softcover.

Exhibition Support

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Blanton Museum of Art

The Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin is one of the foremost university art museums in the country with the largest and most comprehensive collection of art in Central Texas. The museum welcomes and engages all visitors by offering personal, extraordinary experiences

that connect art and ideas, reaching within and beyond the University of Texas campus to stimulate the thriving, creative community that is Austin, Texas, and beyond. The Blanton's permanent collection of more than 17,000 works is recognized for its European Old Master Paintings, modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, and an encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings. Located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue, the museum is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 10-5, Thursday 10-8 (free admission day), and Sunday from 1-5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders and children under 12, \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, and \$3 for youth. For information call (512) 471-724 or visit www.blantonmuseum.org.

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