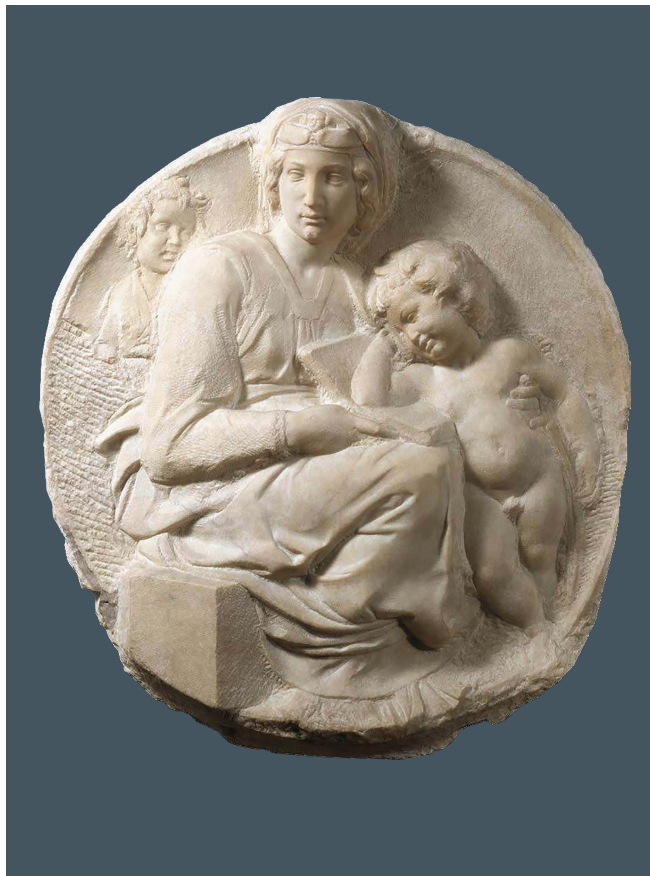


Michelangelo
MICHELANGELO

Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni (Florence 1475 – 1564 Rome)

TONDO PITTI

c 1503 – 1504



Diameter 32"

Medium: Cast Marble

Limited Edition of 100 plus 12 foundry proofs



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In the Tondo Pitti group (commissioned by Bartolomeo Pitti), any formal frame is ignored and this outline is slightly oval. The Madonna and Child are simpler and more clearly formed than in the Tondo Taddei. With her left hand she embraces the infant Jesus, who leans his whole weight against her, bracing his head with a bent arm resting on the open book (which symbolizes wisdom) lying on her lap. This posthumous Tondo Pitti is a precise 1:1 casting that is faithful to Michelangelo's original.



The Madonna is seated on a low block of stone, filling the entire composition. But owing to the slightly oval format, and to her head breaking the tondo's edge, she does not appear to be crowded. Her features are more sharply defined here than those of Michelangelo's earlier Madonnas. Full locks of hair frame her angular face, with its deep dimples and more prominent chin. She wears an unusual ornamental head covering — the first in a series later employed by the master — which heightens the expression of watchfulness in her face.



As in the Tondo Pitti, the approaching figure of Saint John also plays a subordinate role and is unfinished. He appears to have caught the Madonna's attention as she looks back over her shoulder.

"Not only is she the main figure; but Michelangelo has concentrated in her all his sense of nobility. Wound about her brow is a broad royal band ornamented with the angel's head with wings spread wide. As usual, she also wears a kerchief. To underline her dominance, Michelangelo has employed a simple device to unique effect."

Georg Brandes

Michelangelo's original Tondo Pitti marble sculpture is located at the Bargello Museum, Florence, Italy.



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