

## ITO, Takuma. The Young Raphael and Perugino's Fano Altarpiece

This essay discusses how young Raphael developed his early style by studying the Fano (Durante) altarpiece (1488–97) painted by Pietro Perugino, the presumed master of the artist. Special attention is given to geographical context, as theorized by Enrico Castelnuovo and Carlo Ginzburg (1979). Although Raphael was only fourteen years old when the altarpiece was completed in 1497, Roberto Longhi (1955) attributed the *Nativity of the Virgin* in its predella to the young artist during his apprenticeship in Perugino's workshop. This attribution has created much dispute among scholars, some of whom have even denied the master–pupil relationship between the two painters.

Visual analysis reveals that some of the figures in Raphael's early works were based on the Fano altarpiece. They included the Virgin and St. Augustin in the Baronci altarpiece, the artist's first documented work completed in 1501. The same gestures and poses were further developed in the *Marriage of the Virgin*, painted in 1504. Raphael incorporated details from the Fano altarpiece into his artistic vocabulary during his training period and consistently applied them in his early works.

Raphael's interest in the Fano altarpiece did not necessarily imply his apprenticeship with Perugino. Perugino painted the altarpiece on site in Fano, a small city in the Marche region. Although he was one of the most sought-after painters in central Italy, most of his earlier works were found in Florence, Rome, and cities in the Umbria region. The Fano altarpiece, therefore, was particularly important for patrons and artists in the east coast regions of the peninsula. It was promptly studied by Giovanni Santi, Raphael's father, even before its completion. Raphael also must have been keenly interested in the altarpiece, regardless of whether or not he participated in its creation.

Conversely, in Umbria, the Fano altarpiece initially had little impact on the followers of Perugino. One of the first works that showed clear influence was the Montone altarpiece painted by Berto di Giovanni between 1506 and 1507, which adopted three scenes from the Fano altarpiece predella. At the same time, Berto's altarpiece reveals that he also studied Raphael's works in Perugia. Berto was a collaborator of Raphael in Perugia. Raphael's presence in the city, where he resided around 1503–04, clearly stimulated the local painters' interest in the Fano altarpiece.

The essay concludes that through his study of the Fano altarpiece, Raphael was able to gain access to Perugino's early style. Perugino's artistic language changed significantly in the 1490s. In his works made around 1500, he increasingly resorted to planar compositions characterized by bright colors. The Fano altarpiece, however, was defined by its clear architectural space and carefully modelled figures. Since the painting of the altarpiece probably began in 1490, seven years before its completion, its qualities might have reflected Perugino's early style established through his training and initial activities in Florence. Raphael could thus simultaneously study Perugino's early style in Fano and his mature works in Perugia, evolving his own artistic language into an alternative classicism.