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## *Undisturbed by Color: Art and the Early Photographic Album*, on View Through September 16, 2007



Raphael

Sistine Madonna

Illustrated in Hanfstangl's "Die Vorzuglichsten Gemälde der Konlichen Gallerie zu Dresden...", 1860  
National Gallery of Art, Washington

Washington, DC –The invention of photography dramatically shifted the study of art by creating a form of documentation that could be disseminated more easily than the previous lithographs and engravings. **Undisturbed by Color: Art and the Early Photographic Album** draws from the wealth of holdings in the National Gallery of Art Library's Department of Image Collections to illustrate the major role of photography in the development of the field of art history. The focus exhibition continues through September 16 in the West Building.

Highlighting the fusion of art and science, the exhibition tracks the transformation of artistic study and marks the roots of a form of artistic expression. On view are the first photographically illustrated auction catalogue, issued in London in 1860; the first photographic facsimile of a manuscript, the *Manuscript Sforza* (1860); and an album from the 1850s representing one of the first attempts to photograph the drawings collection of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. In contrast to such commercially available books, a personal photograph album of snapshots and purchased images that was compiled over several years offers glimpses of life in Victorian England.

Photographic reproductions gradually became the preferred means by which connoisseurs could study painting and sculpture without having to travel to distant places. Photographs became the art dealer's preferred method of reproduction, and ownership of albums of works of art demonstrated a collector's resourcefulness. Black-and-white reproductions were used for study and classroom instruction until the second half of the 20th century, when they began to be replaced by color images. With the development of mechanical reproductive processes such as photogravure, text and images could be printed simultaneously, making art books available to a much wider audience.

### **Exhibition Curator**

The curator is Gregory P.J. Most, chief of library image collections, National Gallery of Art.

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## General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit [www.nga.gov/renovation](http://www.nga.gov/renovation) (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at [www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov). Follow the Gallery on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt](http://www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt) and on Twitter at [twitter.com/ngadc](http://twitter.com/ngadc).

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

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