

# Arcadia

Education

## *Like a Virgin - Four Madonnas & a Child*



The Marian subject is central to Christian iconography in the Art of the early Renaissance onwards in particular, despite her relatively limited appearance in the Bible. She is the embodiment of the cardinal virtues, of chastity, piety and maternal devotion. Her role as protectress, mourner and intercessor has preoccupied seminal artists such as Masaccio, Bellini and Raphael of the Italian Quattrocento and Cinquecento respectively. The *Hortus Conclusus*, white rose and lily are ubiquitous symbols in Art History synonymous with the mother of Christ, and she is always afforded the precious lapis lazuli for her mantle of celestial blue.

This illustrated talk explores Marian depictions in Art such as the *Mater Dolorosa*, recipient of the Annunciation and the source of proleptic symbolism in devotional art after the Middle Ages. Alongside Renaissance archetypes, we will explore how Chris Ofili's subversive image of the Holy Virgin Mary caused a 'Sensation' in 1996.