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Peter Paul Rubens The Flemish painter and diplomat Peter Paul Rubens was not only the unquestioned leader of the Flemish baroque school but one of the supreme geniuses in the history of painting. During the last troubled decades of the 16th century the Flemish school of painting fell into a kind of tepid and uninventive mannerism which gave little promise of bringing forth a great master. Yet it was in this school that Peter Paul Rubens received his first training as an artist and acquired that belief in the humanistic values of classical antiquity that was to continue undiminished throughout his career. Within his own lifetime Rubens enjoyed a European reputation which brought him commissions from Italy, Spain, France, England, and Germany as well as from his homeland, the southern Netherlands. His boundless imagination, immense capacity for work, and sheer productivity were legendary. In 1628, when he was not yet 45 years old, an English visitor to Antwerp described him as "the master workman of the world. In Cologne he entered into an adulterous relationship with the wife of William the Silent, Prince of Orange, as a result of which he was thrown into prison. Released after 2 years owing to the devoted and untiring efforts of his wife, Maria Pypelinckx, Jan Rubens was permitted to take up residence at Siegen in Westphalia. It was there that their second son, Peter Paul, was born on June 28, 1629. The family, which had now become Catholic, lived for some years in Cologne until Jan Rubens died in 1634, at which time his widow returned to Antwerp, bringing her three children with her. After a period of schooling which included instruction in Latin and Greek, the young Rubens became a page to a noblewoman, Marguerite de Ligne, Countess of Lalaing. This early experience of court life, though he was glad to be released from it, was undoubtedly useful to the future artist, much of whose time was to be passed in aristocratic and royal circles. Returning to his home in Antwerp, he now decided to follow the profession of painter. Italian Period, In Rubens set out on a journey to Italy, where within a short time he entered the service of Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, whose palace housed a notable art collection. Since Rubens was not expected to remain always at the ducal court in Mantua, he found time to visit other cities in Italy, especially Rome, Florence, and Genoa. In Rome, Rubens completed his education as an artist, studying with unflagging enthusiasm the sculptures of antiquity and the paintings of the High Renaissance, especially those of Raphael and Michelangelo. During his first sojourn in the papal city he painted three altarpieces for the Church of Sta Croce in Gerusalemme now in the Hospital at Grasse. In Duke Vincenzo sent Rubens on a diplomatic mission to Spain; here he made the impressive equestrian portrait of the Duke of Lerma and saw for the first time the Spanish royal collection, with its wealth of paintings by Titian. Late in Rubens was again in Rome; he now contrived to remain there for almost 3 years. During this time he was commissioned to decorate the high altar of S. Maria in Vallicella—an extraordinary honor for a foreigner. His first solution, an altarpiece showing the Madonna and Child with St. Gregory and other saints now in the Museum at Grenoble, did not make a good impression owing to unfavorable lighting conditions in the church, and he obligingly replaced it by a set of three pictures painted on slate. Though he did not know it at the time, he was never to see Italy again. Antwerp Period, Rubens arrived at his home to learn that his mother had died before he left Rome. Although it was surely his intention to return to Italy, he soon found reasons for remaining in Antwerp. The Archduke Albert and his consort, Isabella, the sovereigns of the Spanish Netherlands, appointed him court painter with special privileges. The humanistic atmosphere of Antwerp that appealed so strongly to Rubens is epitomized in the so-called Four Philosophers. Walburga now in the Cathedral of Antwerp. With this bold and intensely dramatic work Rubens at once established himself as the leading master of the city. It was followed by another triptych, equally large and no less successful, the Descent from the Cross in the Cathedral. Nevertheless it must not be concluded that the master took no responsibility for his paintings but was simply content to let them be carried out by his studio. The principal works exhibit no falling off in quality. Indeed the masterpieces crowd so closely upon one another at this time that it is difficult to select a few representative examples. Of the mythologies the Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus is one of the most dazzling. Among the finest of the

ecclesiastical works are the two altarpieces glorifying the first saints of the Jesuit order, the Miracles of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the Miracles of St. Francis Xavier, which fairly overwhelm the observer by their huge scale, richness of color, and depth of feeling. In Rubens was commissioned to execute a series of 39 ceiling paintings for the Jesuit church in Antwerp. It was the largest decorative cycle that the artist had yet undertaken, and as such it called into play all his powers of invention and organization. The entire complex of ceiling paintings was destroyed by fire in 1718. In International Fame, The Jesuit cycle was followed by an even larger commission from France. The first of these projects, the incomparable series of 21 large canvases illustrating the life of Marie now in the Louvre, Paris, was finished in 1668. The subject matter was decidedly unpromising, but Rubens, undaunted as always, succeeded in transforming the dreary history of the Queen into one of the most brilliant and most spectacular of all baroque decorative programs. Despite his being involved in these and other great undertakings, Rubens found time to paint important altarpieces for churches in Antwerp: Catherine for the church of the Augustinians in 1632. Some of his most memorable portraits also belong to these years. As the agent of the Infanta, he went first to Spain, where in addition to carrying out his political duties he found a new and enthusiastic art patron in King Philip IV and renewed his acquaintance with the works of Titian in the royal collection. His mission to England was equally successful. Charles I knighted the artist-diplomat, and the University of Cambridge awarded him an honorary master of arts degree. Rubens returned to Antwerp in March 1634. In December he married Helena Fourment, a girl of 16. Though he had hoped, on returning to Antwerp, to withdraw from political life, he was obliged to act once more as confidential agent for the Infanta in the frustrating and unsuccessful negotiations with the Dutch. At length he succeeded in being released from diplomatic employment. In 1635 he purchased a country estate, the Castle of Steen, situated some miles south of Antwerp, and henceforth divided his time between this rural retreat and his studio in town. The enchanting Garden of Love, with its complex interweaving of the classical and the contemporary, may serve as an illustration. A new interest in nature, inspired perhaps by his residence in the country, found expression in a series of magnificent landscapes, among them the Castle of Steen. The portraits of this period, especially those of his wife, Helena, and their children, are characterized by informality and tender intimacy. A lyrical quality pervades even the traditional Christian and classical subjects. In the Ildefonso Altarpiece the scene of the saint receiving a vestment from the Virgin Mary is transfigured by a silvery radiance. The secular counterpart to this work is the Feast of Venus, in which Rubens pays tribute both to the art of antiquity and to the paintings of Titian. The almost dreamlike poetry of the late mythologies is beautifully exemplified by the Judgment of Paris and the Three Graces, in which the opulent nudes seem to glow with light and color. Rubens continued to carry out monumental commissions during his last decade. For Charles I he executed the ceiling paintings of the Banqueting House at Whitehall—the only large-scale decorative cycle by the artist that still remains in the place for which it was designed. In the Whitehall ceiling, which is a glorification of King James I and the Stuart monarchy, the artist profited from the experience gained in the decoration of the Jesuit church some years earlier. In 1635, when the new governor of the Netherlands, Cardinal Infante Ferdinand, made his "joyous entry" into Antwerp, Rubens was given the task of preparing the temporary street decorations. Swiftly mobilizing teams of artists and craftsmen to work from his designs, the master created a stupendous series of painted theaters and triumphal arches which surpassed all expectations by their magnificence. Toward the end of his life Rubens was increasingly troubled by arthritis, which eventually compelled him to give up painting altogether. One of the most moving documents of the last years is the Self-portrait in Vienna, in which the master, though already touched by suffering, wears an air of calm and serenity. He died in Antwerp on May 30, 1640. The standard biography is Max Rooses, *Rubens*, translated by H. Two shorter biographies, both handsomely illustrated, are recommended: Also enlightening is the lengthy essay by the 19th-century historian Jacob Burckhardt, *Recollections of Rubens*, translated by M. Hottinger, with an introduction and additional notes by H. Selected Drawings, and Ludwig Burchard and R.

Chapter 2 : The World of Rubens: by C.V. Wedgwood

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He was named in honour of Saint Peter and Saint Paul , because he was born on their solemnity. The family returned to Cologne the next year. Religion figured prominently in much of his work, and Rubens later became one of the leading voices of the Catholic Counter-Reformation style of painting [5] he had said "My passion comes from the heavens, not from earthly musings". Apprenticeship[edit] Portrait of a Young Scholar, from In Antwerp, Rubens received a Renaissance humanist education, studying Latin and classical literature. By fourteen he began his artistic apprenticeship with Tobias Verhaeght. Rubens completed his education in , at which time he entered the Guild of St. Luke as an independent master. There, he studied classical Greek and Roman art and copied works of the Italian masters. This journey marked the first of many during his career that combined art and diplomacy. He returned to Italy in , where he remained for the next four years, first in Mantua and then in Genoa and Rome. From to , he was mostly in Rome. The subject was to be St. Gregory the Great and important local saints adoring an icon of the Virgin and Child. He continued to write many of his letters and correspondences in Italian, signed his name as "Pietro Paolo Rubens", and spoke longingly of returning to the peninsulaâ€”a hope that never materialized. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. However, she died before he arrived home. He received special permission to base his studio in Antwerp instead of at their court in Brussels , and to also work for other clients. He remained close to the Archduchess Isabella until her death in , and was called upon not only as a painter but also as an ambassador and diplomat. Rubens further cemented his ties to the city when, on 3 October , he married Isabella Brandt , the daughter of a leading Antwerp citizen and humanist, Jan Brandt. Descent from the Cross , Hermitage Museum In Rubens moved into a new house and studio that he designed. Now the Rubenshuis Museum, the Italian-influenced villa in the centre of Antwerp accommodated his workshop, where he and his apprentices made most of the paintings, and his personal art collection and library, both among the most extensive in Antwerp. During this time he built up a studio with numerous students and assistants. His most famous pupil was the young Anthony van Dyck , who soon became the leading Flemish portraitist and collaborated frequently with Rubens. He also often collaborated with the many specialists active in the city, including the animal painter Frans Snyders , who contributed the eagle to Prometheus Bound c. The "High House" was built next to the village church. Family of Jan Brueghel the Elder, â€” This painting has been held as a prime example of Baroque religious art. In , Rubens embarked upon a printmaking enterprise by soliciting an unusual triple privilege an early form of copyright to protect his designs in France, the Southern Netherlands, and United Provinces. Rubens also designed the last significant woodcuts before the 19th-century revival in the technique. He relied on his friendship with Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc to get information on political developments in France. He also made several trips to the northern Netherlands as both an artist and a diplomat. At the courts he sometimes encountered the attitude that courtiers should not use their hands in any art or trade, but he was also received as a gentleman by many. Prado, Madrid His stay in Antwerp was brief, and he soon travelled on to London where he remained until April In , Rubens bought an estate outside Antwerp, the Steen , where he spent much of his time. He also drew upon the Netherlandish traditions of Pieter Bruegel the Elder for inspiration in later works like Flemish Kermis c. Death[edit] Rubens died from heart failure, a result of his chronic gout , on 30 May Many of his descendants married into important noble families of Antwerp. Descendants by Isabella Brant:

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Peter Paul Rubens would have been perfectly at home in the contemporary world of entrepreneurship. In the 17th century, a painter of Rubens status didn't work alone, but managed a studio "producing a massive quantity of artworks for wealthy patrons.

Not only was he an enormously successful painter whose workshop produced a staggering number of works; but he also played an important diplomatic role in 17th-century European politics. Peter Paul Rubens was born in Siegen in Germany, but from the age of 10 he lived and went to school in Antwerp. His first job, at the age of 13, was as court page to a countess. It was a prestigious position for a young man, but Rubens found it stifling and began training as an artist. As soon as he had completed his training, he set out for Italy in order to see for himself the great Renaissance and classical works that he knew from copies. For eight years, he travelled and worked in Spain, copying and incorporating the techniques of Renaissance and classical art. He left immediately for Antwerp, but by the time he arrived she had died. Once home, Rubens decided to stay in the city. His reputation had preceded him, and in at the age of 33 he was appointed court painter to the rulers of the Netherlands, the Archduke Albert and his wife Isabella. The following year, he married his own Isabella - Isabella Brandt. Rubens could now afford to buy a grand house in a fashionable part of Antwerp. He built a large studio to accommodate his pupils and assistants he received far too many commissions to complete them all single-handedly. He designed it himself in an Italian style. He also added a circular sculpture hall, based on the Pantheon, to the house. A diligent and disciplined man, he rose at 4am each day and worked until 5 in the evening before going out riding to keep himself physically fit. While painting, he would have someone read to him from a work of classical literature. Two entire galleries were to be decorated with scenes from the lives of the queen and her late husband. The commission was a fraught one. Maria was awkward and changeable; and her favourite, Cardinal Richelieu, saw Rubens as a political threat. After years of wrangling, the project was abandoned half completed when Maria was banished from court. In the plague reached Antwerp. Rubens moved his family to Brussels until the worst of it had passed. Rubens threw himself into his diplomatic work in order to distract himself. He spent several months in England where he carried out several commissions for Charles I who was a passionate collector of art. One of the commissions that Rubens was to carry out for Charles was the decoration of the roof of his new Banqueting House at Whitehall. Court artist From the mids Rubens become increasingly busy with diplomatic duties. Antwerp, in the southern Netherlands, was part of an empire ruled by Catholic Spain. The Protestant northern Netherlands were united under Dutch rule. Both sides hoped to unite the Netherlands under their own regime. In the truce came to an end and just at this crucial time, the sovereign Archduke Albert died. His consort, Isabella, continued as governor but her situation was a precarious one as Spain, France and England tried to decide who they should ally themselves with, and against whom. Rubens was called upon to negotiate in France and England on behalf of Isabella as the representative of the Spanish Netherlands. Because painters often had reason to travel to foreign courts, he was well placed to carry out secret or delicate visits without his presence arousing suspicion. He became a close confidante of Isabella and she valued his advice. Last years After 18 months abroad, Rubens had had enough of the thankless task of politicking. He returned to Antwerp to see his children and to look after his domestic affairs. He could also dedicate himself entirely to painting. One of his most important patrons in the s was King Philip IV of Spain who commissioned over 80 paintings. In , at the age of 53, Rubens married again. During his last years Rubens spent increasing amounts of time with his new young family in his country house, the Chateau de Steen. He began to paint more landscapes, often for his own enjoyment, rather than for sale. Having suffered painfully from gout for several years, in a particularly bad attack left Rubens unable to paint and he died a few months later in May

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He is considered the most influential artist of Flemish Baroque tradition. His unique and immensely popular Baroque style emphasized movement, color, and sensuality, which followed the immediate, dramatic artistic style promoted in the Counter-Reformation. Rubens specialized in making altarpieces, portraits, landscapes, and history paintings of mythological and allegorical subjects. In addition to running a large studio in Antwerp that produced paintings popular with nobility and art collectors throughout Europe, Rubens was a classically educated humanist scholar and diplomat who was knighted by both Philip IV of Spain and Charles I of England. Rubens was a prolific artist. He painted portraits, especially of friends, and self-portraits, and in later life painted several landscapes. Rubens designed tapestries and prints, as well as his own house. He also oversaw the ephemeral decorations of the royal entry into Antwerp by the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand in 1635. His drawings are predominantly very forceful but not overly detailed. He also made great use of oil sketches as preparatory studies. He was one of the last major artists to make consistent use of wooden panels as a support medium, even for very large works, but he used canvas as well, especially when the work needed to be sent a long distance. For altarpieces he sometimes painted on slate to reduce reflection problems. He was named in honour of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, because he was born on their solemnity. His father, a Calvinist, and mother fled Antwerp for Cologne in 1609, after increased religious turmoil and persecution of Protestants during the rule of the Habsburg Netherlands by the Duke of Alba. Jan Rubens became the legal adviser and lover of Anna of Saxony, the second wife of William I of Orange, and settled at her court in Siegen in 1610, fathering her daughter Christine who was born in 1611. The family returned to Cologne the next year. In Antwerp, Rubens received a Renaissance humanist education, studying Latin and classical literature. By fourteen he began his artistic apprenticeship with Tobias Verhaeght. Rubens completed his education in 1617, at which time he entered the Guild of St. Luke as an independent master. In 1618 Rubens travelled to Italy. With financial support from the Duke, Rubens travelled to Rome by way of Florence in 1618. There, he studied classical Greek and Roman art and copied works of the Italian masters. He was also influenced by the recent, highly naturalistic paintings by Caravaggio. During this first stay in Rome, Rubens completed his first altarpiece commission, *St. Rubens*. Rubens travelled to Spain on a diplomatic mission in 1628, delivering gifts from the Gonzagas to the court of Philip III. While there, he studied the extensive collections of Raphael and Titian that had been collected by Philip II. This journey marked the first of many during his career that combined art and diplomacy. He returned to Italy in 1629, where he remained for the next four years, first in Mantua and then in Genoa and Rome. He also began a book illustrating the palaces in the city, which was published in 1631 as *Palazzi di Genova*. From 1629 to 1633, he was mostly in Rome. The subject was to be St. Gregory the Great and important local saints adoring an icon of the Virgin and Child. However, she died before he arrived home. He received special permission to base his studio in Antwerp instead of at their court in Brussels, and to also work for other clients. He remained close to the Archduchess Isabella until her death in 1633, and was called upon not only as a painter but also as an ambassador and diplomat. Rubens further cemented his ties to the city when, on 3 October 1634, he married Isabella Brandt, the daughter of a leading Antwerp citizen and humanist, Jan Brandt. In 1634 Rubens moved into a new house and studio that he designed. Now the Rubenshuis Museum, the Italian-influenced villa in the centre of Antwerp accommodated his workshop, where he and his apprentices made most of the paintings, and his personal art collection and library, both among the most extensive in Antwerp. During this time he built up a studio with numerous students and assistants. His most famous pupil was the young Anthony van Dyck, who soon became the leading Flemish portraitist and collaborated frequently with Rubens. He also often collaborated with the many specialists active in the city, including the animal painter Frans Snyders, who contributed the eagle to *Prometheus Bound*, and his good friend the flower-painter Jan Brueghel the Elder. This painting has been held as a prime example of Baroque religious art.

Chapter 7 : Peter Paul Rubens (-) | National Gallery, London

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Chapter 8 : Peter Paul Rubens | blog.quintoapp.com

"Peter Paul Rubens () was a prodigious artist and one of the most extraordinary figures of the seventeenth century. He eventually became the dominant international painter of his generation, and this book traces his progress from hesitant beginnings in the late s through to the first works made after his triumphant return to.

Chapter 9 : Time-Life Library of Art "The World of" Series (20 book set) - Download Free EBooks

Peter Paul Rubens was born in Siegen in Germany, but from the age of 10 he lived and went to school in Antwerp. His first job, at the age of 13, was as court page to a countess. It was a prestigious position for a young man, but Rubens found it stifling and began training as an artist.