

RUBENS

PORTRAITS PRINCIERS

MUSÉE DU LUXEMBOURG

FROM 4 OCTOBER 2017 TO 14 JANUARY 2018

This exhibition has two heroes: a queen and a painter. The former, Marie de' Medici (1573-1642), widow of Henry IV and mother of Louis XIII, is a key figure in the political and diplomatic history of the first third of the 17th century. The latter, Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), was the most famous painter of his time. Their influence extended throughout Europe. Marie de' Medici was connected to all the ruling dynasties through her family origins and the alliances forged by her children. Through his travels, and more than any other painter in the Baroque period, Rubens worked in every major centre of art, at times mixing creativity with diplomacy. This exhibition reveals a little-known yet essential part of the artist's vast, multifaceted body of work: his portraits of kings and queens, princes and princesses. The Musée du Luxembourg is the setting here, within the walls of the palace that Marie de' Medici had built in 1615 and for which she commissioned Rubens to create a series of monumental paintings for its walls to illustrate her life. The exhibition also serves as a Marie de' Medici family album. Portraits painted by rivals of Rubens, using the same models and with similar dates, reveal the master's originality in an arena as codified as it was prestigious.

#ExpoRubens

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<http://tinyurl.com/rubensappli>



1. A PAINTER AND HIS LEGENDS

Today, Rubens' reputation is sometimes - and rather anachronistically - reduced to that of a painter of portly women and a kind of businessman who ultimately painted very little, instead delegating his vast production to his studio. Even his personal life was subject to speculation, with some in the 19th century believing that Marie de' Medici actually lived with him in Antwerp after her final exile from France in 1631. This is also an implicit recognition of the important role that Marie de' Medici played in his career and, in return, just how instrumental Rubens was in shaping her own image. Without him, would anyone remember this queen? In his royal portraits (some 50 paintings out of a total of around 1,500), Rubens used his studio to help him produce several replicas from his own prototype, which in turn would be created from drawings of the model and some small study paintings. Rubens also disseminated these prestigious portraits through high-quality engravings, which furthered his own reputation as much as that of his subjects.

2. THE ITALIAN EXPERIENCE

Unlike his rivals, Rubens was not the son of a painter, but born into a wealthy family in Antwerp, where his father practised law. He received a humanist education and served for a time as squire to a Flemish noblewoman, both of which experiences helped teach him how to behave in a royal court. Like many of his contemporaries, upon arriving in Italy - where he stayed between 1600 and 1608 - he sought to perfect his training, and was very quickly employed by Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, thus also becoming a court painter. As such, he produced paintings, and especially portraits, for his patron. More than just an

artist, he was part of the Mantuan escort that attended the marriage of Marie de' Medici in Florence, before being sent by the Duke in 1603 to deliver diplomatic gifts to the Spanish Court. In Rome, Genoa and Mantua, Rubens earnestly studied past and contemporary works. The principal influences on his official portraiture were Titian, whom he discovered mainly in Madrid, and the work of his friend Pourbus the Younger, also a Gonzaga Court painter. At that time in Italy, the Flemish had a reputation as excellent portraitists. But Rubens aspired to more, as an erudite painter with the ability to paint holy, mythological, allegorical and historic subjects above all.

3. RUBENS AND THE COURT OF BRUSSELS

In late 1608, his mother's illness led Rubens to return to Antwerp. While there, he received an offer he could not refuse: the Flanders royals asked him to become their official painter. Both Hapsburgs, Archduke Albert (from the Austrian, and therefore imperial, line) and Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia (daughter of King Philip II of Spain) ruled the Southern Netherlands (now Belgium) - a Catholic territory controlled by the Kingdom of Spain - together from 1598, when the northern, Protestant provinces (now the Netherlands) established their independence. Rubens opted to live in Antwerp rather than Brussels, the seat of the Archdukes' Court. He was free to paint for clients of his choice, as long as he gave priority to the paintings requested by his royal patrons, especially their official images. Rubens was very close to the Archduchess who, upon being widowed in 1621 and adopting a nun's habit, employed him as a peacekeeping diplomat. On her death in 1633, the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand, brother of King Philip IV of Spain, was appointed Governor of Flanders, and the following year Rubens oversaw the

temporary decoration of Antwerp for his “Triumphal Entry” into the city (17 April 1635). Temporary triumphal arches adorned the city, delivering political messages. The portraits of the Archduke and Archduchess, on loan from the Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts in Belgium, were part of this decoration.

4. RUBENS AT THE SPANISH COURT

In 1628, Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia sent Rubens to Madrid to inform King Philip IV of his diplomatic activities and paint the members of her family, the royal family. Philip IV also commissioned several paintings, including an equestrian portrait. Now destroyed, this royal image is known by Velázquez's painting, on loan from the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Combining portraiture and storytelling, the composition depicts the royal in action, surrounded by allegorical figures. During his eight months in Madrid, Rubens was able to study the work of Titian, rediscovering it with the younger Velázquez, official painter to the King, whom he advised to travel to Italy.

5. RUBENS IN PARIS

In 1621, Rubens was asked to paint for the French Court. Marie de' Medici, who in 1615 negotiated the dual marriage of her older children, Louis XIII and Elisabeth, with Anne of Austria and her brother, the future Philip IV, commissioned two cycles from him for the galleries of the Palais du Luxembourg, to tell the story of her life and that of Henri IV, her deceased husband. So, in 1622, Rubens travelled to Paris to sign the contract and discuss various elements of the project. He used this opportunity to capture the features of the queen mother and the royal couple, Louis XIII and Anne of Austria. Throughout her reign and beyond, Marie de' Medici used

artists to shape a certain image of herself that legitimised her political position and erased the more unpleasant or controversial aspects of it. Rubens and his friend Pourbus, as well as Van Dyck, all excelled in this technique. The portraits exhibited here detail her physical and political evolution, from queen and regent to mother in conflict with her son, and finally exiled princess. Marie de' Medici fought to remain in power, from which she was ousted in 1630. In 1631, she left France for good to live in Antwerp, like Rubens, before spending her final years in Cologne.

6. THE GALLERY OF MARIE DE' MEDICI

Grand-daughter of an emperor, daughter of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, sister of the Duchess of Mantua, wife of King Henri IV who was assassinated in 1610, Marie de' Medici was also the mother and mother-in-law of some of the most powerful royals of her time. Her son ruled France and her daughters married the kings of Spain, England and the Crown Duke of Savoy. At the time Rubens depicted her life in 24 paintings, the queen mother's public image was beset by contrast. She and her son had been through armed conflict, and her situation remained precarious. Commissioned in 1621 in an attempt to magnify the queen mother's image, the cycle decorated a gallery of the Palais du Luxembourg. It was opened in 1625 for the wedding of her daughter, Henrietta Maria, to King Charles I of England. Held at the Musée du Louvre and represented here by engravings from the early 18th century, the Galerie Médicis does not directly belong to the genre of royal portraiture; instead, it combines historic events with allegory, portraits with mythological figures. Another cycle was planned for Henry IV but, as Marie de' Medici was exiled, it was never finished.

7. PORTRAIT AND ALLEGORY

Royal portraiture has several purposes. Its main function is to convey a prestigious, majestic image of the royal who, for these official images, is depicted with the costumes, attributes and symbols of power. Equestrian portraiture, in its ambition and format, takes this aspiration to its zenith.

These portraits also play more intimate roles: unveiling the features of a potential pretender to the throne or future spouse, keeping beloved figures close even when separated, or immortalising their memory.

Royal portraiture can also draw on the genres of history, mythology and allegory. The latter can help highlight the qualities of a subject and emphasise their moral values over their physical resemblance. The 17th century was marked by the "heroification" of certain princes and princesses, thereby witnessing the triumph of allegorical language in painting.

Unlike the Hapsburgs, who retained an ancient and almost divine legitimacy, Henri IV and Marie de' Medici - among other royals during the Baroque period - used the artists of their time to legitimise their power.

8. PAINTER OF PRINCES, PRINCE OF PAINTERS

When, in 1623, a courtier wished to give the Prince of Wales, and future Charles I of England, a painting by Rubens, he received a self-portrait. At the time, the image of this living artist was not considered beneath the appreciation of royals and their castles, but rather reflects the pride and reputation of Rubens, seen as one of Europe's greatest painters ever since. No other artist had such a broad clientele, with patrons and clients belonging to the elite of various European centres of art. Upon his death, an inventory

was taken in his grand Antwerp residence, now a museum. In addition to original paintings and his copies of Titian was a large number of the portraits of princes he had painted. Rubens lived his life surrounded by these royals, and his painting brought him wealth and fame. Thanks to his education and character, he became the chosen painter not just of a single court, but of the most important royals of his time. For a time, the erudite artist also presided over true diplomacy. A painter and gentleman, Rubens' mastery of portraiture and, to a certain extent, the close relationship he had with his subjects, allowed him to imbue his work with the codified elements inherent in the genre, thereby rendering the powerful, prestigious figures of his time yet more illustrious and alive.

Curators:

Dominique Jacquot, Chief curator at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Strasbourg.

This exhibition has also benefited from the advice and support of Alexis Merle du Bourg, art historian and scientific advisor to the curator.

Exhibition design: Véronique Dollfus

Graphics: Claire Boitel, Atelier JBL

Lighting: Sarah Scouarnec

Audiovisual: Sébastien Lerévérénd, RMN-Grand Palais

This exhibition is organised by the Réunion des Musées nationaux - Grand Palais.



AROUND THE EXHIBITION

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

PUBLIC LECTURES, 6.30 PM

Lectures are free to attend.

Registration required at museeduluxembourg.fr

They are held at the Palais du Luxembourg, 26 Rue de Vaugirard.

PRESENTATION OF THE EXHIBITION

Tuesday 10 October

Presented by Dominique Jacquot, head curator at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Strasbourg and curator of the exhibition, and Cécile Maisonneuve, scientific advisor at the Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais. In the form of a discussion, the two speakers will explain how the royal portraits form an essential and prestigious corpus within Rubens' broader work.

RUBENS: PUBLIC PORTRAITS, PRIVATE PORTRAITS

Thursday 30 November

With Nadejje Laneyrie-Dagen, professor of art history at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. What place do royal portraits occupy in Rubens' work? What was their purpose, how were they disseminated and do they have the same aesthetic energy as the painter's more intimate portraits?

THE ROYAL COSTUME

Thursday 7 December

With Bénédicte Lecarpentier-Bertrand, doctor of modern history, Université Paris-Est, CRHEC. How is power expressed in a portrait? Costumes, jewellery, ruffs and armour - discover these symbols of power and their meaning.

RUBENS' MEDICI CYCLE: FROM THE PALAIS DU LUXEMBOURG TO THE MUSÉE DU LOUVRE

Thursday 14 December

With Julien Bastoen, teacher-researcher at the École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris-Belleville. Of the two cycles commissioned from Rubens by Marie de' Medici in 1622, only that devoted to the queen was exhibited at the Palais du Luxembourg, before being transported to the Palais du Louvre. Whether a godsend or a poisoned chalice, we look back at an artistic - and museographic - journey.

SPECIAL EVENING EVENTS

NUIT BLANCHE (DUSK TO DAWN ART EVENT)

Saturday 7 October, from 7.30 pm, last entry at midnight, free entry, no booking required

An evening featuring four concerts based on the theme of power from the 17th century to today, performed by students of the Conservatoire Jean-Philippe Rameau in the Museum's reception area, at 8, 9, 10 and 11 pm respectively.

TOUR TO SONG

For ages 13 and over, Tuesday 24 October and Wednesday 22 November, 6.30 pm to 8 pm, performance at 7 pm

Grégoire Ichou, tenor and tour guide, will take you around the exhibition combining great history, descriptions of artworks and songs performed by Grégoire himself.

Bookings required at museeduluxembourg.fr

SKETCHBOOK EVENING

Wednesday 15 November, 7 pm to 9.30 pm

Whether a seasoned illustrator or a complete beginner, make the Musée du Luxembourg your studio.

Booking required at museeduluxembourg.fr

Free for those under 26 years.

FILM SCREENINGS - LES 3 LUXEMBOURG

67, rue Monsieur Le Prince 75006 Paris.

Practical information is available on the website:

lestroisluxembourg.com

LA REINE MARGOT (QUEEN MARGOT), 1994, Patrice Chéreau

Thursday 19 October, 8 pm

A look back on the remarkable event of Saint-Barthélémy through the eyes of Patrice Chéreau, who recounts the diplomatic intrigue and alliances surrounding Catherine de' Medici, Henry IV and Charles IX, which endured up to Marie de' Medici and Louis XIII.

UNE PARTIE DE CAMPAGNE (A DAY IN THE COUNTRY), 1974, Raymond Depardon

Thursday 23 November, 9 pm

This film, long-censured despite being commissioned by ex-President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, questions the use of image and art by the media and its possible contributions to power.

PUBLICATIONS

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE, published by Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais, 2017. 21.5 x 28 cm, paperback with dust jacket and no gatefold, 240 pages, 150 illustrations, €35

EXHIBITION ALBUM, published by Réunion des Musées Nationaux - Grand Palais, 2017. Written by Raphaël Masson. 21.5 x 28 cm, 48 pages, 45 illustrations, paperback, €10

"PRINTS" COLLECTION, *Rien que Rubens (Nothing but Rubens)*, by Philippe Forest, published by Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais, 2017. 12.5 x 19 cm, 112 pages, bound, headband, bookmark, €14.90

EXHIBITION FILM

Peindre l'Europe (Painting Europe), by Jacques Loeuille.

Co-production ©2017 by Zadiq productions and Réunion des musées nationaux - Grand Palais, with the participation of France Télévisions.

Broadcast on France 5.

PARTNERSHIP WITH *QUELLE HISTOIRE*, publication of a children's booklet on the theme of Rubens and a free activity book for visitors to the exhibition.

CULTURAL MEDIATION

Bookings at museeduluxembourg.fr

AUDIOGUIDES

In-situ, in French, English, Spanish and German. Tour for young people in French.

Price: €5 Sésame+ pass: €4

With the app: €3.49 on Google Play and the App Store:
<http://tinyurl.com/rubensappli>

GUIDED TOURS IN FRENCH

Tour for ages 13 and over. Duration: 75 minutes

Discover the political intrigue and hidden symbols behind the effigies of kings, queens, princes and princesses whose portrait Rubens painted.

Daily at 12.15 pm, with an additional session on Friday at 7 pm. During the school holidays, an additional tour will be held at 2.30 pm and 4.15 pm, depending on the day.

Family tour, Figures of power

For ages 6 and over. Duration: 1 hour

What makes a king or a princess? Decipher the codes and symbols used by the artist in these royal portraits to magnify the subjects and their power!

Sundays at 2.30 pm, except 14 January. During the school holidays, an additional tour will be held on Tuesdays and Fridays at 2:30 pm.

Themed tour, Royal intrigue

For ages 13 and over. Duration: 75 minutes

Your guide will lift the lid on the diplomatic intrigue of the 17th century hidden inside Rubens' royal portraits and which led him on a journey through the highest courts in Europe. Thursday 2 November at 4.15 pm and Wednesday 3 January at 2.30 pm.

Audio-guided tour for the visually impaired

For ages 13 and over. Duration: 105 minutes

Discover the exhibition, first through a tactile workshop based on 3D plates representing paintings in the exhibition, then with our tour guide on an audio-guided tour of the exhibition rooms.

Tour for school pupils, The symbols and allegories of royal portraits

Duration: 60-75 minutes, depending on year level

From symbols to political intrigue, from allegory to diplomatic strategy, discover portraits that tell us a great deal about 17th century art and political history in Europe.

Tour for school pupils +

Duration: 90 minutes up to and including secondary level, 105 minutes for higher levels

After the tour, delve into more detail in a discussion with the tour guide, using an educational tool on the history of the portrait.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP TOUR IN FRENCH

Ruffs, armour, jewellery: create your royal self-portrait!

For ages 6 and over. Duration: 2 hours

After a tour of the exhibition, children work with an artist on their own royal self-portrait featuring costumes found in Rubens' time, before leaving with their creation.

25 and 26 October, 1 and 2 November, 27 and 28 December 2017 and 4 January 2018 at 2.15 pm.

Extras: A children's activity book is available for free from the museum reception. Visit the **young visitors** section on the museum website to find games and information linked to the exhibition.

MULTIMEDIA



THE EXHIBITION APPS

on Google Play and the App Store:
<http://tinyurl.com/rubensappli>

THE AUDIOGUIDE: €3.49

RUBENS' MAGIC FRIEZE FOR CHILDREN (partnership with *Quelle Histoire*): free

Characters from the exhibition come to life inside and outside the museum on a fun, augmented-reality treasure hunt!

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GRAND PALAIS

IRVING PENN

21 September 2017 - 29 January 2018

2017 marks the centenary of the birth of Irving Penn, one of the greatest photographers of the 20th century. In partnership with the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Grand Palais pays tribute to this talented artist, famous for his photographs of major personalities such as Pablo Picasso, Yves Saint Laurent, Audrey Hepburn and Alfred Hitchcock. His work is characterised by its elegant simplicity and remarkable rigour, from the studio through to the meticulous care taken by Penn in the darkroom. Staying true to studio photography, Penn created his signature, true intimacy with his model in each portrait.

GAUGUIN, THE ALCHEMIST

11 October 2017 - 22 January 2018

Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) was one of the key French painters of the 19th century and one of the most important pioneers of modern art. The exhibition at the Grand Palais looks back at his extraordinary career, over the course of which he explored a wide variety of art forms, including painting, drawing, engraving, sculpture and ceramics. The masterpieces brought together here showcase the artist's work with raw materials, as well as his creative process involving the repetition of certain themes and recurring motifs.

FROM 4 OCTOBER 2017 TO 14 JANUARY 2018

AT THE MUSÉE DU LUXEMBOURG, 19 RUE DE VAUGIRARD 75006 PARIS

OPEN EVERY DAY FROM 10.30 AM TO 7 PM

LATE-NIGHT OPENING EVERY FRIDAY UNTIL 10 PM

LATE-NIGHT OPENING UNTIL 10 PM ON MONDAYS FROM 13 NOVEMBER
TO 18 DECEMBER INCLUSIVE

OPEN FROM 10:30 AM TO 6 PM ON SUNDAY 24 AND 31 DECEMBER

RUBENS PORTRAITS PRINCIERIS

ANGELINA

Paris depuis 1903

During the *Rubens* exhibition. *Portraits Princiers (Royal Portraits)*: the *Angelina* Salon de Thé invites you to try **Le Médecin**, a delicious cake created specially for the occasion as a tribute to Marie de' Medici.

Our partners



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