



The Renaissance Nude
The Sackler Wing of Galleries
3 March - 2 June 2019

In March 2019, the Royal Academy of Arts will present *The Renaissance Nude*, an exhibition exploring the nude and how it inspired some of the most renowned masterpieces of the western canon. Arranged thematically, *The Renaissance Nude* will bring together around 90 works in a variety of media and from different regions of Europe, examining the emergence of a dynamic visual tradition that permanently altered the character and values of European art. The exhibition will feature works by artists including Lucas Cranach the Elder, Albrecht Dürer, Jan Gossaert, Michelangelo, Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci.

Upon its completion in 1541, Michelangelo's monumental *Last Judgement* in the Sistine Chapel in Rome was celebrated as a triumph. Soon, however, the mural's vast array of nudes proved to be so controversial that, shortly after the artist's death in 1564, Pope Pius IV ordered concealing draperies to be painted over some of the figures. Until then, the nude had flourished in Renaissance Europe. Even in the face of objections and consternation, it had achieved an increasingly dominant role in the visual arts across the continent, with artistic training itself closely focused on the study of the unclothed body. It appeared in sacred and secular contexts, from small, intimate objects to monumental decorative programmes filling church interiors and stately palaces. *The Renaissance Nude* will look at the developments that elevated the subject to such a pivotal role between 1400 and 1530, exploring the way humanist culture, new artistic attitudes and spiritual beliefs shaped the appearance, meaning and reception of the nude.

Looking at art made both north and south of the Alps, the exhibition will be organised around five main themes. *The Nude and Christian Art* will focus on episodes from the Old and New Testament that provided artists with the opportunity to depict the nude figure. *Humanism and the Expansion of Secular Themes* will be devoted to mythological stories and the rediscovery of the antique. *Artistic Theory and Practice* will explore life drawing and the study of anatomy and proportion, while *Beyond the Ideal Nude* will look at the vulnerability of the human condition. The final section, *Personalising the Nude*, will highlight the role of Renaissance patrons, focusing on Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, one of the few female patrons of the time.

The exhibition will feature works in a range of media, including paintings and sculptures as well as drawings, prints and illuminated manuscripts. Highlights will include Italian masterpieces such as Titian's *Venus Rising from the Sea* (*Venus Anadyomene*), c. 1520

(National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh) and Agnolo Bronzino's *Saint Sebastian*, c. 1533 (Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), alongside celebrated works from the north of Europe including Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Adam and Eve*, 1504 (Los Angeles County Museum of Art), Lucas Cranach the Elder's *A Faun and His Family with a Slain Lion*, c. 1526 (The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles) and Jan Gossaert's *Hercules and Deianira*, 1517 (The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham, Birmingham). The exhibition will also include drawings by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael and Michelangelo (Royal Collection Trust).

Notes to Editors

Organisation

The Renaissance Nude is organised by the Royal Academy of Arts and the J. Paul Getty Museum.

The exhibition is curated by Thomas Kren, Senior Curator Emeritus at the J. Paul Getty Museum, in collaboration with Per Rumberg, Curator at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Accompanying Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully-illustrated catalogue published by Getty Publications, edited by Thomas Kren with Jill Burke and Stephen J. Campbell.

Dates and Opening Hours

Press Day **Thursday 28 February 10am - 1pm**

Open to public: Sunday 3 March – Sunday 2 June 2019
 10am – 6pm daily (last admission 5.30pm)

Late night opening: Fridays until 10pm (last admission 9.30pm)

Admission

Standard Adult tickets £16 (£14 without Gift Aid donation); 50% off with National Art Pass: £7; concessions available; children under 16 and Friends of the RA go free.

Tickets

Tickets are available daily at the RA or visit royalacademy.org.uk. Group bookings: Groups of 10+ are asked to book in advance. Telephone 020 7300 8027 or email groupbookings@royalacademy.org.uk

Images

Publicity images for *The Renaissance Nude* can be obtained from Picselect, the Press Association's image service for press use. Please register at www.picselect.com and once registered go to the Royal Academy of Arts folder in the Arts section of Picselect.

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#RenaissanceNude

About the Royal Academy of Arts

The Royal Academy of Arts was founded by King George III in 1768. It has a unique position in being an independent, privately funded institution led by eminent artists and architects whose purpose is to be a clear, strong voice for art and artists. Its public programme promotes the creation, enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts through exhibitions, education and debate.

The Royal Academy has launched a new campus as part of the celebrations of its 250th anniversary year. Following a transformative redevelopment, designed by the internationally-acclaimed architect Sir David Chipperfield RA and supported by the National Lottery, the new Royal Academy of Arts reveals more of the elements that make the RA unique – sharing with the public historic treasures from its Collection, the work of its Royal Academicians and the Royal Academy Schools, and its role as a centre for learning and debate about art and architecture – alongside its world-class exhibitions programme. Royalacademy.org.uk

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