

ARTISTS LUCAS CRANACH , JEAN BRENGHEL AND JACOB JORDAENS.

# Lucas Cranach the Elder

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## Lucas Cranach the Elder



Portrait of Lucas Cranach the Elder at age 77 by [Lucas Cranach the Younger](#) (1550), at the [Uffizi Gallery, Florence](#)

<b>Birth name</b>	Lucas Maler
<b>Born</b>	4 October 1472 <a href="#">Kronach</a>
<b>Died</b>	16 October 1553 (aged 81) <a href="#">Weimar</a>
<b>Field</b>	<a href="#">Painting</a>
<b>Movement</b>	<a href="#">German Renaissance</a>

**Lucas Cranach the Elder** (*Lucas Cranach der Ältere*, 4 October 1472 – 16 October 1553), was a [German Renaissance painter](#) and [printmaker](#) in [woodcut](#) and [engraving](#). He was [court painter](#) to the [Electors of Saxony](#) for most of his career, and is known for his portraits, both of German princes and those of the leaders of the [Protestant Reformation](#), whose cause he embraced with enthusiasm, becoming a close friend of [Martin Luther](#). He also painted religious subjects, first in the Catholic tradition, and later trying to find new ways of conveying [Lutheran](#) religious concerns in art. He continued throughout his career to paint nude subjects drawn from mythology and religion. He had a large workshop and many works exist in different versions; his son

[Lucas Cranach the Younger](#), and others, continued to create versions of his father's works for decades after his death.

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## [\[edit\]](#) Early life

He was born at [Kronach](#) in upper [Franconia](#) and learned the art of drawing from his father *Hans Maler* (his [surname](#) meaning "painter" and denoting his profession, not his ancestry, after the manner of the time and class). His mother, with surname Hübner, died in 1491. Later, the name of his birth-place was used for his surname, another custom of the times. How Cranach was trained is not known, but it was probably with local south German masters, as with his contemporary [Matthias Grünewald](#), who worked at [Bamberg](#) and [Aschaffenburg](#) (Bamberg is the capital of the diocese in which Kronach lies). There are also suggestions that Cranach spent some time in [Vienna](#) around 1500.

According to Gunderam (the tutor of Cranach's children) Cranach demonstrated his talents as a painter before the close of the 15th century. His work then drew the attention of Duke [Friedrich III, Elector of Saxony](#), known as Frederick the Wise, who attached Cranach to his court in 1504. The records of [Wittenberg](#) confirm Gunderam's statement to this extent that Cranach's name appears for the first time in the public accounts on the 24 June 1504, when he drew 50 gulden for the salary of half a year, as *pictor ducalis* ("the duke's painter"). Cranach was to remain in the service of the Elector and his successors for the rest of his life, although he was able to undertake other work.

Cranach married Barbara Brengbier, the daughter of a [burgher](#) of [Gotha](#) and also born there; she died at [Wittenberg](#) on 26 December 1540. Cranach later owned a house at Gotha, but most likely he got to know Barbara near Wittenberg, where her family also owned a house, that later also belonged to Cranach.

## [\[edit\]](#) Career



*The Stag Hunt of the Elector [Frederick the Wise](#).*



Signature of Cranach the Elder from 1508 on: winged snake with ruby ring (as on painting of 1514)

The first evidence of Cranach's skill as an artist comes in a picture dated 1504. Early in his career he was active in several branches of his profession: sometimes a decorative painter, more frequently producing portraits and [altarpieces](#), woodcuts, engravings, and designing the [coins](#) for the electorate.

Early in the days of his official employment he startled his master's courtiers by the realism with which he painted still life, game and antlers on the walls of the country palaces at [Coburg](#) and Locha; his pictures of deer and wild boar were considered striking, and the duke fostered his passion for this form of art by taking him out to the hunting field, where he sketched "his grace" running the stag, or Duke John sticking a boar.

Before 1508 he had painted several altar-pieces for the [Castle Church](#) at Wittenberg in competition with [Albrecht Dürer](#), [Hans Burgkmair](#) and others; the duke and his brother John were portrayed in various attitudes and a number of his best woodcuts and copper-plates were published.

In 1509 Cranach went to the Netherlands, and painted the [Emperor Maximilian](#) and the boy who afterwards became [Emperor Charles V](#). Until 1508 Cranach signed his works with his initials. In that year the elector gave him the winged snake as a emblem, or [Kleinod](#), which superseded the initials on his pictures after that date.

Somewhat later the duke conferred on him the [monopoly](#) of the sale of medicines at Wittenberg, and a printer's patent with exclusive privileges as to [copyright](#) in [Bibles](#). Cranach's presses were used by Martin Luther. His apothecary shop was open for centuries, and was only lost by fire in 1871.

Cranach, like his patron, was friendly with the [Protestant Reformers](#) at a very early stage; yet it is difficult to fix the time of his first meeting with Martin Luther. The oldest reference to Cranach in Luther's correspondence dates from 1520. In a letter written from [Worms](#) in 1521, Luther calls him his "gossip", warmly alluding to his "[Gevatterin](#)", the artist's wife. Cranach first made an engraving of Luther in 1520, when Luther was an Augustinian [friar](#); five years later, Luther renounced his religious vows, and Cranach was present as a witness at the betrothal festival of Luther and [Katharina von Bora](#). He was also godfather to their first child, Johannes "Hans" Luther, born 1526.

The death in 1525 of the Elector [Frederick the Wise](#) and Elector [John](#)'s in 1532 brought no change in Cranach's position; he remained a favourite with [John Frederick I](#), under whom he twice (1531 and 1540) filled the office of burgomaster of [Wittenberg](#).

In 1547, John Frederick was taken prisoner at the [Battle of Mühlberg](#), and Wittenberg was besieged. As Cranach wrote from his house to the grand-master [Albert of Brandenburg](#) at [Königsberg](#) to tell him of John Frederick's capture, he showed his attachment by saying,

I cannot conceal from your Grace that we have been robbed of our dear prince, who from his youth upwards has been a true prince to us, but God will help him out of prison, for the [Kaiser](#) is bold enough to revive the Papacy, which God will certainly not allow.

During the siege Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, remembered Cranach from his childhood and summoned him to his camp at [Pistritz](#). Cranach came, and begged on his knees for kind treatment to Elector John Frederick.

Three years afterward, when all the dignitaries of the Empire met at [Augsburg](#) to receive commands from the emperor, and [Titian](#) came at Charles's bidding to paint King [Philip II of Spain](#), John Frederick asked Cranach to visit the city; and here for a few months he stayed in the household of the captive elector, whom he afterward accompanied home in 1552.

He died at age 81 on October 16, 1553, at [Weimar](#), where the house in which he lived still stands in the marketplace.

Cranach had two sons, both artists: [Hans Cranach](#), whose life is obscure and who died at [Bologna](#) in 1537; and [Lucas Cranach the Younger](#), born in 1515, who died in 1586. He also had three daughters. One of them is Barbara Cranach, who died in 1569, married to Christian Brück (Pontanus), ancestors of [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe](#).

**[[edit](#)] Veneration**

Cranach is honoured together with [Albrecht Dürer](#) and [Matthias Grünewald](#) with a [feast day](#) on the [liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church \(USA\)](#) on August 5.

He is commemorated as a saint by the [Lutheran Church](#) on April 6, <sup>[\[citation needed\]](#)</sup> along with Durer and Burgkmair.

## [\[edit\]](#) Works and art



[Adam & Eve](#) woodcut.

The oldest extant picture by Cranach is the *Rest of the Virgin during the Flight into Egypt*, of 1504. The painting already shows remarkable skill and grace, and the pine forest in the background shows a painter familiar with the mountain scenery of [Thuringia](#). There is more forest gloom in landscapes of a later time.

Following the huge international success of Dürer's prints, other German artists, much more than Italian ones, devoted their talents to woodcuts and engravings. This accounts for the comparative unproductiveness as painters of [Albrecht Dürer](#) and [Hans Holbein the Younger](#), and also may explain why Cranach was not especially skilled at handling colour, light, and shade. Constant attention to contour and to black and white, as an engraver, seems to have affected his sight; and he often outlined shapes in black rather than employing modelling and [chiaroscuro](#).

The largest proportion of Cranach's output is of portraits, and it is chiefly thanks to him that we know what the German Reformers and their princely adherents looked like. He painted not only Martin Luther himself but also Luther's wife, mother and father. He also depicted leading Catholics like [Albert of Brandenburg](#), [archbishop elector of Mainz](#), [Anthony Granvelle](#) and the [Duke of Alva](#).



*The Ill-Matched Couple, 1532.*

A dozen likenesses of [Frederick III](#) and his brother John are dated 1532. It is characteristic of Cranach's prolific output, and a proof that he used a large workshop, that he received payment at Wittenberg in 1533 for "sixty pairs of portraits of the elector and his brother" on one day. Inevitably the quality of such works is variable.

Cranach's religious subjects reflect the development of the [Protestant Reformation](#), and its attitudes to religious images. In his early career, he painted several Madonnas; his first woodcut (1505) represents the Virgin and three saints in prayer before a [crucifix](#). Later on he painted the marriage of [St. Catherine](#), a series of [martyrdoms](#), and scenes from the [Passion](#).

After 1517 he occasionally illustrated the old subjects, but he also gave expression to some of the thoughts of the Reformers, although his portraits of reformers were more common than paintings of religious scenes. In a picture of 1518, where a dying man offers "his soul to God, his body to earth, and his worldly goods to his relations", the soul rises to meet the [Trinity](#) in heaven, and salvation is clearly shown to depend on faith and not on good works. Other works of this period deal with [sin](#) and [divine grace](#). One shows [Adam](#) sitting between [John the Baptist](#) and a prophet at the foot of a tree. To the left God produces the tables of the law, [Adam and Eve](#) partake of the forbidden fruit, the brazen serpent is reared aloft, and punishment supervenes in the shape of death and the realm of [Satan](#). To the right, the Conception, Crucifixion and [Resurrection](#) symbolize redemption, and this is duly impressed on Adam by John the Baptist. There are two examples of this composition in the galleries of [Gotha](#) and [Prague](#), both of them dated 1529.

Towards the end of his life, after Luther's initial hostility to large public religious images had softened, Cranach painted a number of "Lutheran altarpieces" of the [Last Supper](#) and other subjects, in which Christ was shown in a traditional manner, including a [halo](#), but the apostles, without halos, were portraits of leading reformers. He also produced a number of violent anti-Catholic propaganda prints, in a cruder style, directed against the Papacy and the Catholic clergy. His best known work in this vein was a series of prints for the pamphlet [Passional Christi und Antichristi](#), where scenes from the [Passion of Christ](#) were matched by a print mocking practices of the Catholic clergy, so that Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple was matched by the Pope, or [Antichrist](#), signing indulgences over a table spread with cash (see gallery below).



*The Glogów Madonna*, 1518. One of the most distinguished and elaborated of the Cranach's Madonnas.

One of his last works is the altarpiece, completed after his death by Lucas Cranach the Younger in 1555, for the Stadtkirche (city church) at [Weimar](#). The [iconography](#) is original and unusual: Christ is shown twice, to the left trampling on Death and Satan, to the right crucified, with blood flowing from the lance wound. [John the Baptist](#) points to the suffering Christ, whilst the blood-stream falls on the head of a portrait of Cranach, and Luther reads from his book the words, "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin."



*Venus and Cupid*, 1508. An early nude, with Italian influence, and that of Dürer.

Cranach was equally successful in somewhat naive mythological scenes, in which at least one slim female figure, naked except for a transparent drape, and perhaps for a large hat, nearly always features. These are mostly in narrow upright formats; examples are several of [Venus](#), alone or with [Cupid](#), who has sometimes stolen a honeycomb, and complains to Venus that he has been stung by a [bee](#) (Weimar, 1530; Berlin, 1534). [Diana](#) with [Apollo](#), shooting a bow, and [Hercules](#) sitting at the spinning-wheel mocked by [Omphale](#) and her maids are other such subjects. A similar approach was taken with the biblical subjects of [Salome](#) and [Adam and Eve](#). These subjects were produced early in his career, when they show Italian influences including that of [Jacopo de' Barberi](#), who was at the court of Saxony for a period up to 1505. They then become rare until after the death of Frederick the Wise. The later nudes are in a distinctive style which abandons Italian influence for a revival of Late Gothic style, with small heads, narrow shoulders, high breasts and waists. The poses become more frankly seductive and even exhibitionist.<sup>[1]</sup>

Humour and pathos are combined at times with strong effect in pictures such as *Jealousy* (Augsburg, 1527; Vienna, 1530), where women and children are huddled into groups as they watch the strife of men wildly fighting around them. A lost canvas of 1545 is said to show hares catching and roasting hunters. In 1546, possibly under Italian influence, Cranach composed the *Fons Juventutis* ("[Fountain of Youth](#)"), executed by his son, a picture in which older women are seen entering a [Renaissance](#) fountain, and exiting it transformed into youthful beauties.

## [\[edit\]](#) See also



- [Early Renaissance painting](#)

## [\[edit\]](#) Notes



This article includes a [list of references](#), but **its sources remain unclear because it has insufficient [inline citations](#)**. Please help to [improve](#) this article by [introducing](#) more precise citations. *(June 2010)*

- <sup>↑</sup> Snyder, 383

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# Jan Brueghel the Elder

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**Jan Brueghel the Elder** (Dutch pronunciation: [ˈjan ˈbrøːyəl]; 1568 – 13 January 1625) was a [Flemish painter](#), son of [Pieter Bruegel the Elder](#) and father of [Jan Brueghel the Younger](#). Nicknamed "Velvet" Brueghel, "Flower" Brueghel, and "Paradise" Brueghel, of which the latter two were derived from his floral [still lifes](#) which were his favored subjects, while the former may refer to the velveteen sheen of his colors or to his habit of wearing velvet.



**Bouquet**, painted 1603.



**The Entry of the Animals Into Noah's Ark**, painted 1613.



*The Wedding Feast*



*Coastal Landscape with the Sacrifice of Jonas*

He was born in [Brussels](#). His father died in 1569, and then, following the death of his mother in 1578, Jan, along with his brother [Pieter Brueghel the Younger](#) and sister Marie, went to live with their grandmother [Mayken Verhulst](#) (widow of [Pieter Coecke van Aelst](#)). She was an artist in her own right, and according to [Carel van Mander](#), possibly the first teacher of the two sons. The family moved to [Antwerp](#) sometime after 1578. In about 1589 Jan traveled to Italy, probably via Cologne. There he resided first in Naples, where his patron was Francesco Carracciolo. Next he moved to Rome, working for several discerning cardinals including, most famously, Federico Borromeo. It was in the company of Borromeo that Brueghel left Rome and took up residence in Milan, where he was part of the Cardinal's household. In the summer of 1596 he returned to Antwerp, where he remained for the rest of his life apart from short journeys to Prague and to the Dutch Republic.

While in Italy he applied himself principally to landscapes and history paintings, including Biblical narratives and scenes from mythology and ancient history. Back in Antwerp he continued these types of subject matter but also acquired considerable reputation by his flower paintings and allegories. He formed a style more independent of his father's than did his brother Pieter the Younger.

Many of his paintings are collaborations in which figures by other painters were placed in landscapes painted by Jan Brueghel; in other cases, Brueghel painted the figures into another artist's landscape or architectural interior. The most famous of his collaborators was [Peter Paul Rubens](#) in several of his small pictures—such as his "Vertumnus and Pomona," the "Satyr viewing the Sleeping Nymph," and the "Terrestrial Paradise."

He had a studio in [Antwerp](#), where he died from [cholera](#) on 13 January 1625.

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## Jacob Jordaens

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## Jacob Jordaens



*Self-Portrait with Parents, Brothers, and Sisters* (c. 1615).

Oil on canvas. The Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia

<b>Born</b>	19 May 1593 <a href="#">Antwerp</a>
<b>Died</b>	18 October 1678 (aged 85) <a href="#">Antwerp</a>
<b>Nationality</b>	Flemish
<b>Field</b>	Painting
<b>Movement</b>	<a href="#">Flemish Baroque</a>

**Jacob Jordaens** (19 May 1593 – 18 October 1678) was one of three [Flemish Baroque painters](#), along with [Peter Paul Rubens](#) and [Anthony van Dyck](#), to bring prestige to the [Antwerp school](#) of painting. Unlike those contemporaries he never traveled abroad to study Italian painting, and his career is marked by an indifference to their intellectual and courtly aspirations.<sup>[1]</sup> In fact, except for a few short trips to locations in the [Low Countries](#), he remained in [Antwerp](#) his entire life.<sup>[1]</sup> As well as being a successful painter, he was a prominent designer of [tapestries](#).<sup>[2]</sup> Like Rubens, Jordaens painted [altarpieces](#), [mythological](#), and [allegorical](#) scenes, and after 1640—the year Rubens died—he was the most important painter in Antwerp for large-scale commissions and the status of his patrons increased in general.<sup>[3]</sup> However, he is best-known today for his numerous large genre scenes based on proverbs in the manner of his contemporary [Jan Brueghel the Elder](#), depicting *The King Drinks* and *As the Old Sing, So Pipe the Young*.<sup>[4]</sup> Jordaens's main artistic influences, besides Rubens and the Brueghel family, were northern Italian painters such as [Jacopo Bassano](#), [Paolo Veronese](#), and [Caravaggio](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

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## [\[edit\]](#) Biography



*Abduction of Europe*, Jacob Jordaens, 1615/16, Gemäldegalerie Berlin

Jacob Jordaens was born on 19 May 1593, the first of eleven children, to the wealthy linen merchant Jacob Jordaens Sr. and Barbara van Wolschaten in Antwerp.<sup>[5]</sup> Little is

known about Jordaens's early education. It can be assumed that he received the advantages of the education usually provided for children of his social class. This assumption is supported by his clear handwriting, his competence in French and in his knowledge of mythology. Jordaens familiarity with biblical subjects is evident in his many religious paintings, and his personal interaction with the Bible was strengthened by his later conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism.<sup>[6]</sup> Like [Rubens](#), he studied under [Adam van Noort](#), who was his only teacher. During this time Jordaens lived in Van Noort's house and became very close to the rest of the family.<sup>[7]</sup> After eight years of training with Van Noort, he enrolled in the [Guild of St. Luke](#) as a "*waterschilder*", or watercolor artist.<sup>[6]</sup> This [medium](#) was often used for preparing [tapestry cartoons](#) in the seventeenth century.<sup>[8]</sup> although examples of his earliest watercolor works are no longer extant. In the same year as his entry into the guild, 1616, he married his teacher's eldest daughter, Anna Catharina van Noort, with whom he had three children. In 1618, Jordaens bought a house in Hoogstraat (the area in Antwerp that he grew up in). He would then later buy the adjoining house to expand his household and workspace in 1639, mimicking Rubens's house built two decades earlier. He lived and worked here until his death in 1678.<sup>[9]</sup>

Jordaens never made the traditional trip to Italy to study classical and Renaissance art. Despite this, he made many efforts to study prints or works of Italian masters available in northern Europe. For example, Jordaens is known to have studied [Titian](#), [Veronese](#), [Caravaggio](#), and [Bassano](#), either through prints, copies or originals (such as Caravaggio's *Madonna of the Rosary*). His work, however, betrays local traditions, especially the genre traditions of [Pieter Bruegel the Elder](#), in honestly depicting Flemish life with authenticity and showing common people in the act of celebratory expressions of life.<sup>[10]</sup> His commissions frequently came from wealthy local Flemish patrons and clergy, although later in his career he worked for courts and governments across Europe. Besides a large output of monumental oil paintings he was a prolific tapestry designer, a career that reflects his early training as a "watercolor" painter.<sup>[5]</sup>

Jordaens' importance can also be seen by his number of pupils; the Guild of St. Luke records fifteen official pupils from 1621 to 1667, but six others were recorded as pupils in court documents and not the Guild records, so it is probable that he had more students than officially recorded. Among them were his cousin and his son Jacob. Like Rubens and other artists at that time, Jordaens' studio relied on his assistants and pupils in the production of his paintings. Not many of these pupils went on to fame themselves,<sup>[11]</sup> however a position in Jordaens's studio was highly desirable for young artists from across Europe.<sup>[12]</sup>



Jacob Jordaens's *The Return of the [Holy Family](#) from [Egypt](#)*

## [\[edit\]](#) Influence of Rubens

Jordaens was greatly influenced by Peter Paul Rubens who occasionally employed him to reproduce small sketches in a larger format. After the death of Rubens, Jordaens advanced to the position of one of the most admired painters in Antwerp.<sup>[13]</sup> Like Rubens, Jordaens relied on a warm palette, naturalism, and a mastery of [chiaroscuro](#) and [tenebrism](#). Jordaens was only moderately successful as a portrait painter but excelled in representations of the base character of humanity. His classically inspired peasant themes and large scale Dutch moralistic genre scenes influenced [Jan Steen](#). Although Jacob Jordaens did not specialize, he often repeated a theme based on a proverb that depicted a wide range of characters of a variety of ages, crowded in a festive scene around a banquet table. These humorous pieces have a sense of coarseness.<sup>[5]</sup> While Jordaens drew upon Rubens' motifs throughout his career, his work is differentiated by a tendency to greater realism, a crowding of the surface of his compositions, and a preference for the burlesque, even within the context of religious and mythological subjects.<sup>[13]</sup> *Prometheus*, c. 1640 is an example of the influence of both Rubens and Frans Snyders on Jacob Jordaens. While he drew inspiration from their collaboration *Prometheus Bound*, c. 1611–12, Jordaens' version is a more hopeful narrative.

## [\[edit\]](#) Subjects

In addition to being a well-known portrait painter, Jordaens also employed his pencil in biblical, mythological, and allegorical subjects and even etched a number of plates. Although primarily a history painter, he also painted illustrations of Flemish proverbs, such as the "Old Sing so the Young Twitter", and depictions of Flemish festivals, for example "The King Drinks."<sup>[5]</sup> Several of his works hint at a passion for animal painting. He often included a variety of animals, most likely drawn from life, including cows, horses, poultry, cats, dogs, and sheep. His life drawings of both animals and people were used and referenced throughout his life.<sup>[14]</sup> After Rubens' death in 1640 Jordaens became Antwerp's new leading artist.<sup>[15]</sup> Only after achieving this status did Jordaens receive royal commissions, predominantly from the north.<sup>[5]</sup> He also received a commission from Rubens' heirs to finish a Hercules and an Andromeda for Philip IV of Spain.

In 1635–40, when Rubens was ill from gout, Jordaens was commissioned to use Rubens' sketches, and work on the decorations for the triumphal entry of the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand, the new Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, for his arrival in Antwerp in 1635. Although the works are lost, Jordaens was commissioned in 1639–40 by Charles I to finish decorating the Queen's chambers at Greenwich, a commission which was originally given to Rubens, who was unable to execute due to his poor health.<sup>[5]</sup>

Jordaens also played his part in a collaborative effort to decorate the Torre de la Paroda, done between 1636 and 1681.<sup>[16]</sup> Two works in the series attributed to Jordaens are *Apollo and Pan* (1637), made after a sketch by Rubens, and *Vertummus and Pomona* (1638).<sup>[16]</sup> Further contributions debated include *Fall of the Titans*, *Marriage of Peleus and Thetis*, and *Cadmus Sawing the Dragons Teeth*.<sup>[16]</sup> In 1661, he was asked to paint three, fairly large lunettes for the newly constructed Amsterdam Town Hall.<sup>[5]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#) Religion

The Protestant religion was forbidden in Antwerp, which at the time was still Spanish-occupied territory. Towards the end of his lifetime Jordaens converted to Protestantism, but continued to accept commissions to decorate Catholic churches.<sup>[5]</sup> Jordaens was fined 200 pounds and 15 shillings for scandalous or heretical writings between 1651 and 1658. A monument was erected in Putte in 1877, dedicated to and containing the tombstones of Jordaens and two of his painting colleagues, Simon de Pape (I) and [Adriaan van Stalbeem](#). It stands on the location of the little Protestant church and cemetery, both of which were demolished years earlier. Jordaens died of the mysterious Antwerp disease ('zweetziekte' or 'polderkoorts' in Dutch) in October 1678, which, on the same day, also killed his unmarried daughter Elizabeth, who had lived with him. Their bodies were buried together under one tombstone in the Protestant cemetery at Putte, a village just north of the Belgium border, where his wife Catharina had been put to rest earlier.<sup>[citation needed]</sup> One year after his death, Jacob Jordaens' son donated "twenty-five Flemish pounds to the Camer van den Huysarmen in Antwerp."<sup>[5]</sup> Also included in this donation was The Washing and Anointing of the Body of Christ which was given to an orphanage of girls. Apparently this was all done in following correspondence with a will that Jacob Jordaens left behind. Unfortunately, this document has yet to be found.<sup>[5]</sup> Even without the finding of Jordaen's will, his kindness has been recognized by all who knew him. There are many other found documents that note his admiration by others.

At the end of Jordeans' career between 1652–78 his creative and artistic ability had deteriorated. He moved from vibrant colors to a gray-blue palette, accented at times with a dull brown, and applied paint so thinly that the canvas could be seen. However, there were few exceptions to this (such as the aforementioned religious paintings he produced after he had converted to Protestantism), most notable being the *History of the Psyche* that he did for his own house.<sup>[5]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#) Works

## [\[edit\]](#) The Adoration of the Shepherds



*The Adoration of the Shepherds*, version from 1618. National Museum, Stockholm.

*The Adoration of the Shepherds* (1616, 1618) depicts the Virgin Mary preparing to suckle the Christ Child while He is adored by Flemish-looking shepherds. The scene is limited to five figures who, with the exception of Christ, are shown in half length emphasizing the intimacy of the scene.

Prior to 1616, Jordaens had been interested in the bright, clear palette of [Mannerism](#). However, in this image, he experiments with using light, rather than color, as the primary means to mold figures in space. This is evidence of his interest in [Caravaggio](#). The principle light source in *The Adoration of the Shepherds* is a candle held by St. Joseph. This reflects influence of [Adam Elsheimer](#), who is known for placing a light source in the center of his compositions.<sup>[5]</sup> Perhaps another influence of Caravaggio may be cited in Jordaens's use of realism. "The Virgin and Child are rendered in rustic simplicity, and are not even slightly idealized."<sup>[5]</sup>

Jordaens painted at least six other renditions of the *Adoration of the Shepherds*. He usually grouped these half-length figures closely together and cropped the scene so that the viewer focused their attention solely on the figures. This compositional approach sought to intensify the narrative and accentuate the characters' expression.

## [\[edit\]](#) [The Satyr and the Peasant](#)



"The Satyr and the Peasant"

This particular scene, of which Jordaens painted many versions, illustrates a moralizing fable from [Aesop's Fables](#). The story begins with a man and a [satyr](#). One cold day, as they talked, the man put his fingers to his mouth and blew on them. When the satyr asked the reason for this, the man said that he did it to warm his hands. Later on, when they sat down to eat, the man raised his dish of hot food towards his mouth and blew on it. When the satyr again inquired the reason, he said that he did it to cool the food. The satyr then informs the man, "I can no longer consider you as a friend, a fellow who with the same breath blows hot and cold."<sup>[17]</sup> The moral of this story is the duality of human nature, although some believe that Jordaens chose this story not for his interest in its moral lesson, but for his interest in rendering a peasant scene.<sup>[18]</sup>

The particular moment which Jordaens depicts in his painting is when the satyr declares that he cannot trust the man. The man is eating while the satyr rises abruptly with raised hand prior to leaving the man's home.<sup>[19]</sup> Jordaens chooses to place the scene inside a farmhouse, complete with a bull, dog, cat, and rooster integrated around the furniture and figures. A variety of age groups are represented around the table; a young boy stands behind the man's chair, an old woman holds a young child, while a youthful woman peers over the Satyr's shoulder.

Characteristic of Jordaens' artistic style is the manner in which all the figures are pushed forward toward the front of the composition, crowded together in this small space. Jordaens uses tenebrism and chiaroscuro to create dramatic lighting, which illuminates certain figures in the scene, such as the baby in the old woman's lap. Jordaens creates a sense of naturalism with the depiction of the dirty feet of the seated peasant seated in the foreground, linking him with the Caravaggistic tendencies in Flemish art of the time. Jordaens created two versions of this subject around 1620–21.<sup>[19]</sup> For this version, it seems he may have used the same female sitter for *The Satyr and the Peasant* as he did for *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, and it is thought that Jordaens used this painting as instruction for his assistants and pupils, as many versions and copies of the scene have been found which bear the same style, but without the master's stamp.<sup>[20]</sup>



 Jacob Jordaens. *Self-Portrait with Wife and Daughter Elizabeth*. 1621-22.

### [\[edit\]](#) Self-portrait with Wife and Daughter Elizabeth

Here we see Jordaens with his wife Catherine van Noort and his eldest child Elizabeth. The painting has been dated around 1621–22 because Elizabeth appears to be about 4 years old and she was born in 1617.<sup>[21]</sup> Everyone in the painting is looking out at the viewer as if to invite them in to join the group. Jardin d'amour was an ancient tradition that Jordaens has represented in his family portrait. We see that he has also thrown a fair amount of symbolizim into the painting to help give it meaning. "The intertwined vines behind the couple symbolize the inseparability of husband and wife."<sup>[21]</sup> Elizabeth is holding fruit in her hand which is symbolic of love and the flowers she has in her basket reflect innocence and purity."<sup>[21]</sup> In the upper left there is a perched parrot which depicts marital fidelity. Another animal located in the lower right is a dog representing faithfulness and trust."<sup>[21]</sup>

### [\[edit\]](#) St. Peter Finding the Tribute Money

This work, most likely painted circa 1623 for the Amsterdam iron and weapons merchant Louis de Geer I, represents the story from Matthew 17: 24-27, in which Jesus tells Peter to catch a fish and inside he will find money to pay tribute in [Capernaum](#). The composition is crowded, with the center of action happening inside the boat. Peter and the other apostles are seen at the right side of the painting, peering down as Peter draws a fish from the water. These figures do not acknowledge the viewer. However, other figures look out of the painting at the viewer: the woman with her child and the man using an oar to launch the boat. Most figures, however, are consumed each in their own task, whether that be finding the fish, working to heave to and sail the boat, or sit as passengers awaiting the destination. The variety of human expression stems from Jordaens' studies of heads, many of which are recognizable from his other works.<sup>[22]</sup> The recent restoration treatment of the painting was accompanied by a large and fully illustrated book which goes very deep under the surface of the image and lays out the various approaches and results of the most recent research, giving a thorough picture of Jordaens, his works and his time.<sup>[23]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#) The Martyrdom of St. Apollonia

The church of St. Augustine, located in Antwerp, had three altars. Each altar held one large painting by either Rubens, van Dyck, or Jordaens. All three paintings were created in 1628.<sup>[24]</sup> Rubens' "Madonna and Child Adored by Saints" hung over the high or main altar in the center. The altar on the left contained van Dyck's "St. Augustine in Ecstasy", and finally Jordaens' "The Martyrdom of St. Apollonia" hung over the altar located to the right.<sup>[24]</sup> Jordaens' rendition of the martyrdom of St. Apollonia, who jumped into a fire rather than denounce her faith in the 3rd century, is crowded and dramatic. Rubens, van Dyck and Jordaens were Antwerp's greatest Baroque painters and the only time that these three painters collaborated simultaneously was during the commission of the church of St. Augustine. Together they tied the themes of each painting to one another.<sup>[24]</sup> Rubens' piece was of the Virgin surrounded by saints, van Dyck and Jordaens each painted saints which frame the Virgin. The saintly images invited the viewer to become closer to heaven and God through either martyrdom or monasticism.<sup>[24]</sup>



Jacob Jordaens. *The Infant Jupiter Fed by the Goat Amalthea*. 1630-35.

## [\[edit\]](#) The Infant Jupiter Fed by the Goat Amalthea

At the foot of a gentle slope, *The Infant Jupiter Fed by the Goat Amalthea* (1630–35) is set in a landscape. The focus of the composition is on the nymph Andrastea, whose pale nakedness is contrasted by the darker hues of the other figures. She sits on ground with her legs folded partly underneath her and a cloth draped around her hips. She has one hand on the back of the goat Amalthea and the other pulls on the goat's udder, squirting milk into a dish. The infant Jupiter sits behind her, holding an empty bottle and crying for food. In an attempt to distract Jupiter, a satyr pulls a branch. An engraving after the canvas by [Schelte a Bolswert](#) clarifies the moral significance of the subject: according to the Latin inscription on the print, the goat's milk Jupiter was fed as a child was responsible for the god's notorious infidelity.<sup>[25]</sup>



Jacob Jordaens. *The King Drinks*. c.1640.

### [\[edit\]](#) The King Drinks

Jordaens painted several versions of this subject, including one c. 1640 work in the Royal Museum of Art, Brussels. On January 6, Epiphany is celebrated in Flanders. It is a celebration of food, wine and merriment that is shared with family. One person gets to be king for the evening, which as Jordaens thoughtfully depicts as the eldest person in the room. The rest of his subjects are assigned by him.<sup>[26]</sup> Jordaens also made another version of the painting as there are many paintings on this particular topic. In one version over 17 people are shown in the painting and they are all tightly packed together. In the other version they are closer to the picture plane and more spaced. The painting shows that emotions are running high with peoples extremely boisterous expressions.<sup>[26]</sup> There seems to be a brawl that is about to erupt and the expression of the man that is vomiting seems all too pitiful. Jordaens uses this painting to express his distaste for drunkenness with the motto inscribed at the top that translates "Nothing seems more like a madman than a drunkard."<sup>[27]</sup>

### [\[edit\]](#) As the Old Sang, So the Young Pipe



Jacob Jordaens, *As the Old Sang, So the young Pipe*.

*As the Old Sang, So the Young Pipe* (c.1638-40) is considered a companion to *The King Drinks* (Louvre, Paris). Both paintings are of a moralizing nature, have near identical measurements, and related styles.<sup>[28]</sup> *As the Old Sang, So the Young Pipe* shows three generations of wealthy Antwerp burghers sitting around a table making music. Being a popular theme among Jordaens and his clients, several versions of this painting were created. In the version shown Jordaens' father-in-law Adam van Noort is depicted as the old man. In this popular painting genre, elderly and middle-aged figures are always portrayed singing and creating music, as children "pipe" along.<sup>[28]</sup> The title is based on a popular proverb from the book "Spiegel van den Ouden ende

Nieuwen Tijd", an [Emblem book](#) by [Jacob Cats](#) published in 1632. The Dutch proverb is *Zo de ouden zongen, zo piepen de jongen*, referring to the habit of birds to echo the *pipe*, or peeping chirp of their parents. Cats, a Calvinist, translated the proverb into a moralizing message; parents must be mindful of their actions and words, because children will copy their elders.<sup>[28]</sup> The Dutch word for peep is just as in English, very close to the word pipe, and in this version, the bagpipe and flute pipe are used, but in some versions, the children are portrayed smoking a pipe, which even in those days was considered unhealthy for children. In his paintings, Jordaens conveys this moralizing message as well as the idea that younger generations succeed their elders. The owl, considered the bird of the night, perched on the older woman's wicker chair, serves as a "memento mori", a reminder of mortality.<sup>[28]</sup>



 Jacob Jordaens, *Prometheus* (1640). Cologne.

## [\[edit\]](#) Prometheus

The painting "Prometheus" (1640) by Jacob Jordaens is a depiction of the mythological tale of the titan Prometheus who had his liver pecked out by an eagle each day only to regenerate and begin the cycle anew the next day.<sup>[29]</sup> Prometheus was punished for his audacity by Zeus for having given fire to man, not just in its physical form, but also in the fire of reason, which can be related to man's creativity in arts and sciences.<sup>[30]</sup> Jordaens's depiction is very much likened to Rubens' *Prometheus*. Jordaens's eagle positioning, backwards heroically nude bloodshot eyed Prometheus, and the use of punishment and pain of man with spastic twisting and contorted movements are common themes in Rubens' version.<sup>[31]</sup>

The difference lies in the depiction of [Hermes](#), which can be argued represents a note of optimism of being saved as in other versions of the mythol, Hermes helps obtain Prometheus's release.<sup>[32]</sup> Still, in the *Prometheus Bound* attributed to Aeschylus, Hermes treats Prometheus badly, which would argue against an optimistic interpretation. The depiction of the sacks of bones (used in another part of [the myth to deceive Zeus](#)) and a clay statue (that represents his creation of man) are also not part of Rubens' painting.<sup>[32]</sup> Another notable difference is the look of pure agony in Jordaens' Prometheus figure while Rubens' relies on the suggestion of the contorted figure to convey the same feeling. Jordaens' Prometheus is a facial study, a prevalent subject found in Jordaens' paintings and from other artists during the same time.

## [\[edit\]](#) Night Vision

Jordaens' *Night Vision* depicts a dark and gloomy scene of a young man tormented in his sleep by an apparition of a female nude. On the left hand side of the composition, an elderly woman and a younger woman crack open the door, peering in, and illuminating the room with soft candlelight. They appear to be astonished at the sight of the apparition. Jordaens emphasizes the temporality of this scene by allowing certain elements to stand out sharply against the overall dark ground of the painting. For instance, the sleeping boy has just clumsily knocked over a copper pot and a candlestick which now lie in the foreground of the painting. Special attention is also paid to fabrics in this work. Jordaens creates the sensation of wind with both the flowing white cloth held by the apparition and the billowing red garment worn by the old woman. Erwin Bielefeld asserts that this painting most likely depicts a story written by [Phlegon of Tralles](#) for the Roman Emperor [Hadrian](#), of which Jordaens may have had access to a translation or could have adapted from a more contemporary version such as [Goethe](#)'s ballad "Die Braut von Korinth."<sup>[33]</sup> The ancient story tells the tale of a young man, Marchete, who stays as a guest of a wealthy couple. During the night, Marchete's slumber is disturbed when he dreams of Philinion, the couple's deceased daughter. Grasping the cloth her corpse was wrapped in, Philinion in the guise of a vampire asks to bed with Marchete. Awoken by sounds coming from the room, Philinion's mother, Charito, comes to investigate with the aid of a maidservant. Upon entering the room, they are horrified by the sight of the deceased daughter.<sup>[34]</sup> Jordaens's *Night Vision* appears to be a very faithful representation of Phlegon's story and depicts the decisive moment or climax of the ancient tale. Influences evident in this image are common among the work of Jordaens. Most notably, Jordaens borrows the use of candlelight as a main light source from Elsheimer and the use of tenebrism to create drama from Caravaggio.<sup>[35]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#) The Story of Cupid and Psyche

Sometime during the years 1639–40, Jacob Jordaens received the commission to create a series of works for Charles I of England through Balthazar Gerbier, the King's agent in Brussels, and Cesare Alessandro Scaglia, a diplomat residing in Antwerp. The project entailed twenty-two paintings illustrating *The Story of Cupid and Psyche* (1640–41).<sup>[36]</sup> While the works were to be displayed in the Queen's House at Greenwich upon completion, the patron and final location were unknown to the artist.<sup>[37]</sup> As Jordaens submits his initial design to his intermediaries between himself and the English court, Gerbier continually attempts to convince the King that Rubens would be much more suited to a project requiring such substantial amounts of foreshortening.<sup>[38]</sup> His efforts are in vain, however, as Rubens dies on 30 May 1640. With Rubens's death, Jordaens bore sole responsibility for the entire commission.<sup>[39]</sup> Efforts to continue with the project continued slowly, and a year later, in May 1641, all plans for *The Story of Cupid and Psyche* series were disrupted, with the death of diplomat Scaglia. The project never fulfilled, only eight completed paintings made their way to the English Court, and a resulting dispute with Scaglia's heirs over payment for seven of these works continued into the next generation.<sup>[36]</sup>

Another version of the Story of Cupid and Psyche adorned the ceilings of Jordaens' house in Antwerp. At least nine decorated the ceiling of a salon in the South wing of the house, with Psyche Received by the Gods forming the centerpiece. Included in the

series were Psyche's Father Questions the Oracle in the Temple of Apollo, The Love of Cupid and Psyche, The Curiosity of Psyche, Cupid's Flight, Psyche Received by the Gods and two putti pieces. The ceiling pieces are all foreshortenings, seen from below, and the perspective system was borrowed verbatim from Rubens's ceiling pieces in the Jesuit church in Antwerp. The paintings are viewed through an octagonal 'aperture' frame.<sup>[40]</sup> According to the inventory left by Jordaen's grandchildren, these paintings were part of the sale of the house in 1708.

### **[edit] The Holy Family with Various Persons and Animals in a Boat**

The style of Jacob Jordaens' mid-century painting can be clearly seen in "The Holy Family with Various Persons and Animals in a Boat" (1652). Nearing the age of sixty, Jordaens' paintings became more the work of his assistants following the direction of Jordaens, and the production of his work began to decline. He included great numbers of figures in his works, which became a heavy task for a 60-year-old. The palette used is monotonous, with variety from grayish-blue to brown. At times taking away from the rest of the painting and composition, the gestures of the figures are often self-contained while the bodies themselves are angular in form.<sup>[41]</sup>

### **[edit] The Triumph of Frederik Hendrik**

Jordaens' painting, *The Triumph of Frederik Hendrik*, painted in 1651, portrays over fifty figures surrounding Stadholder Frederik Hendrik and his relatives. The piece was painted in honor of Stadholder Frederik Hendrik, Prince of Orange, and commissioned by his consort, Amalia van Solms. She was looking to commemorate the Stadholder after his death in 1647. The collection of work that was being assembled, as was common practice of the time, was meant to glorify the prince and his valiant deeds.<sup>[42]</sup> Instead of describing events, using straight forward images and icons, the collection was painted in allegories used to enthrone the Stadholder as heroic and virtuous.<sup>[43]</sup> It was displayed in Huis ten Bosch (House in the Woods), which began as a suburban retreat for Amalia van Solms. The painting hangs in the Oranjezaal, the last remaining intact interior in Huis ten Bosch, covering much of the lower tier of the room as it is quite large and completely dominant in the room. Jordaens was chosen as he was highly respected as part of the Flemish trio that included Peter Paul Rubens and Anthony Van Dyck.<sup>[42]</sup>

Frederik Hendrik rides on a triumphal chariot, carried as a god, as bringer of peace and as one who has manifested prosperity shown in olive branches and cornucopias. On both sides of the painting are portraits of men carrying products from the West and East Indies. This makes the prince appear as if he is solely responsible for military victories as well as the immense wealth of the Republic.<sup>[43]</sup> The work was made with intensive complexity. Even today scholars discuss the many references Jordaens included in the painting. Many find it difficult to decode all of them. Overall it seems easy to gather the main message Jordaens included in the painting, however, it is filled with so many more symbolic people and figures that further explanation from the artist was needed by his contemporaries to understand all of the painting.<sup>[44]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#) The Eye of the Master Makes the Horse Fat

Jacob Jordaens had often used proverbs in his paintings, using the characters in the portrait to play out the meaning of the proverb (usually a warning of sorts). This technique made it easy to compare Jordaens with Pieter Bruegel, who often used proverbs. He saw it as a good way to expose the foolish and erring nature of man. Usually looking for a proverb with a positive, optimistic message, Jordaens would use his characters to explain the proverb's caution, explicitly or by implying the message. In "The Eye of the Master Makes the Horse Fat", a horse is centered in the midst of flourishing prosperity begat by good management. Jordaens includes the god, Mercury, who takes a place in equine astrology with a salutary planetary influence on horses.<sup>[45]</sup>

## [\[edit\]](#) Tapestry designs



Jacob Jordaens. Kitchen Scene, preparatory study for the tapestry "Interior of a Kitchen"

Jacob Jordaens' most significant body of work were the numerous designs he did for tapestries. As the most lucrative of the arts, tapestries were considered precious throughout the Renaissance and Baroque periods. These large wall hangings began to appear on the walls of wealthy European nobility in the fourteenth century.<sup>[46]</sup> Patrons employed the likes of Jacob Jordaens, Peter Paul Rubens and [Pietro Cortona](#) to be portrayed in a manner that would identify themselves with famous historical or mythological figures as a form self promotion.<sup>[47]</sup> Jordaens found that he was particularly successful in the tapestry ventures. He was especially motivated in this field and his perfected techniques and style earned him numerous commissions for series of tapestries. He was seen as one of the leading tapestry designers of the era.<sup>[48]</sup>

Jordaens' process of tapestry creation included a preliminary drawing or sketch of the design. The design then is transferred to larger, more detailed [modelli](#) for the full-scale cartoons, which the weavers work from in creating tapestry. Jordaens began planning a tapestry by executing a preparatory drawing colored with water soluble pigments. Although Jordaens did some sketches in oil, most were executed on paper or, later in his career, directly on canvas.<sup>[49]</sup> Jordaens' tapestries were made for the aristocracy who placed such high value on them they would carry them with them while they traveled or went on military campaigns as a symbol of their status.<sup>[50]</sup> Jordaens' scope of artistic representation was diverse, ranging from mythology, country life, to the history of Charlemagne.<sup>[51]</sup> It has been noted that Jordaens' tapestry design incorporated densely organized crowds of figures, packed into a flat

two-dimensional picture plane emphasizing surface patterns which resulted in a "woven picture". Just as he liked to crowd his genre paintings he carried forward to his tapestries.<sup>[52]</sup>

The drawing done for the tapestry *Interior of a Kitchen* is an example of a part of the process used by Jacob Jordaens. He has used brown ink and applied color over black chalk on paper to layout the still life on a table and how the figures were to be arranged. The final tapestry underwent changes, but the initial design which borrowed elements of still life paintings by the seventeenth century Antwerp artist Frans Snyders, was fairly closely adhered to.<sup>[53]</sup>

## **[\[edit\]](#) Drawings**

Maintaining trends in Flemish painting, Jordaens was a proponent of extending Rubens' and Van Dyck's "painterly" style of art to his exceptionally prolific body of preparatory drawings. Today, approximately 450 drawings are attributed to Jordaens, however, there is continuing scholarly debate in terms of accurate attribution of Flemish drawings to Jordaens or Rubens, due to their similar oeuvre. Jordaens and his contemporaries were proponents of the Flemish trend towards making, expanding, and modifying preparatory drafts for larger paintings or to add to their visual vocabulary the classical artistic ideals. As a painter-draftsman, Jordaens often employed gouache and washes to his preparatory drawings, and was known to be extremely economical in his use of paper, as he never hesitated to add strips, cut away unwanted sections, or paste over existing work in order to achieve his desired effect.<sup>[5]</sup>

## **[\[edit\]](#) Allegory of April**

The subject of this drawing (date unknown) has long been debated. The portrayal of a nude female figure atop a bull may quite possibly be an allusion to the story of the rape of Europa, with Europa as the female nude and Jupiter in the guise of the bull. The other argument surrounding the drawing's subject matter is that it may be an allegory of the month of April. If this is indeed the intended theme of the drawing, the bull would represent the zodiacal sign of Taurus, while the nude female, holding a bouquet of flowers, would be a depiction of Flora, the goddess of spring. The figures accompanying Flora would most likely be Ceres, goddess of agriculture, and Silenus, instructor and advisor to Bacchus.<sup>[54]</sup>

## **[\[edit\]](#) See also**

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