

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **RAPHAEL AND THE PORTRAIT OF JULIUS II**

**A CABINET EXHIBITION ON THE PICTORIAL TYPE, EVOLUTION AND  
ATTRIBUTION OF THE PORTRAIT IN THE STÄDEL MUSEUM**

**8 November 2013 to 2 February 2014**

**Städel Museum, Main Wing, Room 15**

**Frankfurt am Main, 7 November 2013.** From 8 November 2013 to 2 February 2014, within the framework of a cabinet exhibition, the Städel Museum is showing the portrait of Pope Julius II that recently came to the attention of the public and was purchased for the Städel collection. Also on view are the two versions of the painting by Raphael and Titian from the Uffizi and the Palazzo Pitti in Florence. By moreover encompassing technological documents such as x-ray and infrared images of the painting, the exhibition will provide detailed insights not only into the artistic genesis of the Frankfurt painting, but also into its relationship to the other versions of the Julius portrait and the related attribution issue. The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue published by the Michael Imhof Verlag and containing all of the relevant information on the pictorial type, genesis and attribution of the Frankfurt painting. It sets forth all of the observations that led Prof. Dr. Jürg Meyer zur Capellen (Universität Münster), author of the current three-volume catalogue raisonné of the paintings of Raphael, and Prof. Dr. Jochen Sander, the responsible curator at the Städel, to the attribution "Raphael and workshop".

"The portrait of the Renaissance Pope Julius II, which has come down to us in several versions, is unquestionably one of Raphael's most important and most consequential works. Since the presentation of the portrait purchased by the Städel Museum in 2010, the attribution of the Frankfurt work has been a matter of interest to the public and the scholarly community alike. With the exhibition now on view as well as the accompanying catalogue, our chief aims were to compile all of the documents, results and findings and place them at the disposal of the public, and to elucidate the conclusions derived from them", comments Städel director Max Hollein.

Between June 1511 and March 1512, Raphael (Raffaello Santi, Urbino 1483–1520 Rome) executed a portrait of Giuliano della Rovere (1443–1513), who had been Pope Julius II since 1503 – and thus created the "official" portrait of this prominent Renaissance pope. More than that, however, with this depiction he also established

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the prototype for the papal likeness per se, a model still valid today. Julius II is not shown in liturgical robes, but in the situation of a private audience, for which he has taken his seat in an armchair. In view of the extraordinary potency of Raphael's pictorial invention, it comes as no surprise that there are numerous copies of the Julius portrait dating from the sixteenth century, among them the one by Titian (ca. 1545) on view here as a loan from the Galleria Palatina in the Palazzo Pitti in Florence. Yet already during the pope's lifetime, several versions of the likeness were executed in Raphael's workshop with his own active participation, for example the version from the Uffizi in Florence (ca. 1511/12) likewise on display here. Within the framework of the presentation "Raphael and the Portrait of Julius II. A Cabinet Exhibition on the Pictorial Type, Evolution and Attribution of the Portrait in the Städel Museum", these two paintings accompany and comment on the Julius portrait which entered the Städel Museum's holdings three years ago. The latter was first presented to the public in December 2011 and has been on display in the museum's Old Masters collection since that time. The work in the National Gallery in London, which since the late 1960s has been considered Raphael's first version of the portrait, could not be placed on loan for conservatorial reasons, and is being shown in our cabinet exhibition as an original-size reproduction.

In addition to the direct comparison of the various versions, Room 15 of the Main Wing is also featuring the original results of the technological investigations of the Frankfurt panel in all detail. An underdrawing made visible by the infrared reflectography technique reveals that, above all in the area of the face and position of the chair, modifications were undertaken. Changes carried out during the painting process (so-called *pentimenti*) are observable on both arms. As the x-ray image documents, above all the pose of the right hand was changed.

"These changes, as well as the specific artistic attributes of the underdrawing and the painterly execution, which in certain respects are directly comparable to the *Sistine Madonna* and the *Madonna di Foligno*, strongly suggest that, in the process of the development of the pictorial idea by Raphael himself, the Frankfurt painting played an important role, even if his workshop was presumably involved in its painterly execution to a certain extent", explains Jochen Sander, the head of the Städel's "Old Masters" collection.

If we compare the various versions of the papal portrait, we are struck by the different placement of the figure in the overall composition. In the Titian painting, not only has the pope been shifted farther towards the left-hand edge of the painting; even more significantly, he is viewed from a somewhat lower vantage point. This circumstance serves to increase the distance to the beholder substantially, and to emphasize the lordliness of the pope's bearing. Until now, Titian scholarship has regarded this

deviation from Raphael's well-known model as an act of artistic license on the part of the Venetian. If we take the Frankfurt Julius portrait into consideration, however, – a work executed considerably earlier – a new perspective presents itself. The painting in the Städel Museum seems to represent an alternative plan for the Julius likeness – a plan already discarded at an early stage in favour of the solution that has come down to us in the London painting. The latter, a work whose fine-painterly execution is nothing short of brilliant, is the one that served as a model for the majority of the subsequent versions and copies. Yet the alternative represented by the Städel portrait was nevertheless also known and accessible, a circumstance to which not only the Titian painting bears impressive witness, but also a number of other, earlier papal portraits, including the likeness of Clement VII executed around 1526 by Sebastiano del Piombo (Museo di Capodimonte in Naples).

A catalogue edited by Jochen Sander has been published in German and English by the Michael Imhof Verlag in conjunction with the exhibition. In it the findings are presented in detail and the portrait of Julius II illuminated from different angles. It contains scholarly contributions by Bernward Schmidt (“Julius II – The Papal Monarch”), Michael Rohlmann (“The Representation of Artist and Patron in the Stanze Frescoes, the *Madonna di Foligno* and the *Sistine Madonna*”), Jörg Bölling (“Seeing the Pope: A Private Audience in the Medium of the Picture”), Jürg Meyer zur Capellen (“Deliberations on the Portrait of Pope Julius II by Raphael”), Jochen Sander (“Raphael's Portrait of Pope Julius II: On the Genesis and Attribution of the Portrait in the Städel Museum”), and Stephan Knobloch (“On the Restoration of the Portrait of Pope Julius II in the Städel Museum”).

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**Curator:** Prof Dr Jochen Sander, head of the “Old Masters” collection at the Städel Museum

**Exhibition dates:** 8 November 2013 to 2 February 2014

**Information:** [www.staedelmuseum.de](http://www.staedelmuseum.de), [info@staedelmuseum.de](mailto:info@staedelmuseum.de),  
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**Venue:** Städel Museum, Schaumainkai 63, 60596 Frankfurt am Main

**Opening hours:** Tue, Wed, Sat and Sun 10 am – 7 pm, Thu and Fri 10 am – 9 pm

**Special opening hours:** Wed and Thu, 25 and 26 December 2013 and Mon, 30 December 2013 10 am – 7 pm; Tue, 1 January 2014 and Sun, 6 January 2014 10 am – 7 pm. Closed: Tue 24 December 2013 and Tue, 31 December 2013

**Admission:** 12 euros, reduced 10 euros, family ticket 20 euros; Saturdays, Sundays and holidays 14 euros, reduced 12 euros, family ticket 24 euros, admission free for children to the age of 12



**Catalogue:** The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue edited by Jochen Sander, with contributions by Jörg Bölling, Stephan Knobloch, Jürg Meyer zur Capellen, Michael Rohlmann, Jochen Sander and Bernward Schmidt. Bilingual edition (German/English), 128 pages, Michael Imhof Verlag, ISBN 978-3-941399-32-7 (museum edition), 24,90 EUR.

**General guided tours of the exhibition:** Thursday, 5 December 2013, 6 pm and Thursday, 2 December 2014, 6 pm

**Special guided tours on request, please contact:** +49(0)69-605098-200; [info@staedelmuseum.de](mailto:info@staedelmuseum.de)