

Raphael

Raphael – Raffaello
Sanzio or Santi (1483-1520) -
Paris Art Studies

1483 - Born Raffaello Santi son of Giovanni Santi and Maggia di Battista Ciarla in Urbino in the Marches. His father was a mediocre painter and versifier in the court of Federigo and Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, dukes of Urbino. Raphael was brought up in the rarefied atmosphere of a sophisticated and cultured court among the paintings of Boticelli, Piero della Francesca, Laurana, Ucello, Justus van Ghent and more.

1491 – Death of his mother.

1494 – Death of his father. Entrusted to his uncle Bartolomeo , a priest.

1500 – Signs his first contract for an altarpiece to be painted with former assistant of his father’s. In 1501 becomes “master”.

1502 – Cesare Borgia conquers Urbino for Pope Alexander VI. Raphael works as assistant to Pintoricchio painting frescos of Siena cathedral library.

1503 – Raphael works in Perugia in the workshop of Perugino. Absorbs with amazing facility masters, style and formulas and picks up the studio system that will so help him in his immense production. Works on many of Perugino’s commissions. Picks up his clear, simple colours and integration of space and form.

1504 – Probable first visit to Florence where Perugino maintained a workshop too. Raphael will eventually absorb the style of Fra Bartolomeo whom he probably befriends and certainly Leonardo present in Florence 1500-06.

1507 – In Urbino seeking to buy a house. Meets close to this time at court Baldassare Castiglione future author of *Il Cortigiano* (published 1528) at ducal and Pietro Bibbiena and Pietro Bembo writers and humanists, both later Cardinals.

1508 – Maria della Rovere nephew of Guidobaldo succeeds him as duke. Raphael is working in Florence. Possibly invited to Rome by Donato Bramante architect of St Peter’s. Commissioned to paint a suite of rooms (stanze) in Vatican palace for Pope Julius II uncle of the new duke of Urbino.

1511 – Completes Stanza della
Signatura. Begins Stanza di Elidoro. Appointed Scriptor brevium, a papal sinecure

so as to remain in Rome with handsome income.

1512 – Michelangelo completes ceiling of Sistine chapel. Later he will accuse Raphael of plagiarism as the younger artist absorbs many of his stylistic inventions. Raphael now achieves in his painting the quality of "sprezzatura", a term invented by his friend Castiglione, who defined it as "a certain nonchalance which conceals all artistry and makes whatever one says or does seem uncontrived and effortless ...".

1513 – Death of Julius II. Raphael's portrait of him is shown on altar of Santa Maria del Popolo. Giovanni Medici elected as Pope Leo X.

1514 – Raphael begins Stanza dell'Incendio. Appointed official architect of St Peter's after Bramante's death the previous year. Vasari says that Raphael eventually had a workshop of fifty pupils and assistants. This was arguably the largest workshop team assembled under any single painter, and much higher than the norm. They included established masters from other parts of Italy, probably working with their own teams as sub-contractors, as well as pupils and journeymen. His most famous assistants were Giulio Romano (1499-1546) a young pupil from Rome and Gian Francesco Penni (1488/96-1528). Vasari emphasises that Raphael ran a very harmonious and efficient workshop, and had extraordinary skill in smoothing over troubles and arguments with both patrons and his assistants - a contrast with the stormy pattern of Michelangelo's relationships with both. Raphael also entered into a collaboration with Marcantonio Raimondi to produce engravings his designs, which created many of the most famous Italian prints of the century, and was important in the rise of the reproductive print. A total of about 50 prints were made; some were copies of Raphael's paintings, but other designs were created by Raphael purely to be turned into prints.

1515 – Designs for seven tapestries for Sistine chapel – scenes from the acts of the apostles. Appointed by Pope overseer of all archaeological excavations. Buys house in Borgo, Vatican quarter for artisans and artists.

1516 – Engages Antonio da Sangallo to work with him on St Peter's.

1517 – Commissioned to paint Transfiguration for Cardinal Giulio de Medici. In October Martin Luther fastens his "95 theses upon indulgences" to the church door in Wittenburg protesting against the vast amounts of money raised by Pope Leo X for the building of St Peter's by selling indulgences.

1518 – Completes paintings for Pope's private loggia. Paints portrait of Pope with his two nephews.

1519 – Raphael and his workshop decorate loggia for villa of banker Antonio Chigi (villa Farnesina.) His tapestries unveiled in Sistine Chapel.

1520 – Death of fiancée Maria Bibienna niece of his old friend from Urbino now Cardinal secretary to Pope. Raphael had been betrothed to her since 1514 but showed little hurry to marry her. He is said to have had many affairs, but a permanent fixture in his life in Rome was "La Fornarina", Margherita Luti, the daughter of a baker (fornaro) named Francesco Luti from Siena. Raphael died on his 37th birthday, April 7. According to Vasari this occurred after a night of

excessive sex with Luti, after which he fell into a fever. Not telling his doctors that this was its cause he was given the wrong cure, which killed him. Mass was held in the Vatican, and his painting the Transfiguration placed above his bier.