Raphael Biography

Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino) (1483 – April 6, 1520), was a great Italian painter. Together with Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael makes up the great trinity of the High Renaissance period. He was noted for his clarity of form and ability to convey grandeur, beauty and perfection.

Short Biography Raphael

Raphael was born in the Italian city of Urbino in the Marches area of Italy. His father was a court painter and Raphael followed in his father’s footsteps – gaining a wide education in the arts, literature, and social skills. This enabled Raphael to move easily amongst the higher circles of court society and this helped his career in gaining commissions. Compared to Michelangelo, Raphael was more at ease in social circles; he didn’t have the same brusqueness that got Michelangelo into trouble. His style was also considered more refined. He didn’t have the same inventive genius of Michelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci, but he had a supreme grace of painting. He concentrated on a more classical interpretation of perfection, but was still somewhat influenced by the contemporary Florence tradition.

By 1501, Raphael was held in high esteem and he gained important commissions, such as the Mond de Crucifixion in 1503.

From about 1504, Raphael lived mainly in Florence, which was a burgeoning centre of the renaissance. He became acquainted with Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo (whom he fell out with on numerous occasions)

Crocefissione – Raphael
In 1508, he was invited to Rome by Pope Julius II. The pope asked Raphael to paint some rooms in the Vatican. This was at the same time as Michelangelo was painting the Sistine Chapel, and although the Sistine chapel overshadowed the work of Raphael, his paintings are still considered some of the finest of European art. This work included some of masterpieces such as – The School of Athens, The Parnassus and the Disputa.

**The School of Athens**
The High Renaissance tribute to the ancient Greek culture. 1511

As well as being a great painter, Raphael was also a noted teacher, who could inspire his fellow pupils to greater standards. He had one of the largest art schools in Rome, with over 50 pupils. His enthusiasm and talent helped his school become a famous place of art.

As well as a painter, Raphael was also a noted architect, drawer, and with Raimondi a printmaker of his engravings.

He died in April 6 1570, aged only 37. Yet, he left behind a considerable legacy and was celebrated even during his lifetime, thousands of people attended his funeral.