



"This conservation project is vital in order to preserve and improve the condition of the oil sketch and it will greatly enhance the appreciation of this remarkable work for generations to come."

Larry Keith, Head of Conservation and Keeper



HELP US TO REDISCOVER A RUBENS MASTERPIECE



RUBENS CONSERVATION APPEAL

The Birth of Venus, about 1632–3
Peter Paul Rubens

Rubens was among the greatest artists of the 17th century. We need your help to restore one of his most beautiful oil sketches.

THE PROJECT

The Flemish master Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) was among the greatest artists of the 17th century: inventive, ambitious, and prolific, his work has come to epitomise the Baroque style.

The National Gallery houses over 20 paintings by Rubens, ranging from intimate portraits to sweeping landscapes and complex allegories. In addition to paintings, Rubens also produced designs for sculpture, architecture, tapestry, and decorative arts, often formulating his ideas by means of quickly painted oil sketches.

These oil sketches provide a unique insight into Rubens's practice. Unlike some of his large-scale paintings, which were often executed with assistance from members of his workshop, the oil sketches were painted entirely by Rubens. These works can therefore provide a deeper understanding of how his compositions developed.

"This intriguing oil sketch, painted in monochromatic tones on a wood panel, is a design for a silver basin depicting the birth of Venus. Although the painting is in superb condition, over time the varnish has discoloured, so that it is now difficult to discern the delicate beauty of Rubens's brushwork."

Betsy Wieseman, Curator of Dutch and Flemish Paintings

Preliminary cleaning tests undertaken by National Gallery conservator Paul Ackroyd have revealed the shimmering white and grey tones of the original sketch, which would have vividly evoked the lustre of polished silver. By removing the top layer of discoloured varnish, Rubens's modelling and detailing will be revealed. With your support, not only will we be able to complete the work necessary to restore this sketch, we will also be able to undertake scientific and curatorial analysis, which will enhance our understanding of Rubens's work.



Why we need your help

As a charity, we depend upon the generosity of individuals to undertake conservation projects of this kind. We need your support to help us raise the £34,500 necessary to fund the conservation of this important work. Your contribution, however large or small, will be vital to restoring one of Rubens's most beautiful oil sketches.

Once the conservation work has been completed, *The Birth of Venus* will return to public display in Room 29.

Please help us bring this project to life by making a donation today.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE CONSERVATION OF THIS IMPORTANT WORK

Your donation

I would like to support the Rubens conservation appeal with a gift of:

£10 £25 £50 £100 £250 £500 £1000 £ _____

Your details

Title _____ First Name _____

Surname _____ Membership number _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

- Please tick if you would like more information about National Gallery Membership.
 Please tick if you are interested in other ways to support the Gallery.

Make your donation go further with Gift Aid at no extra cost to you.

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made to the National Gallery:

today in the past 4 years in the future

Please tick all the boxes you wish to apply.

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please complete this form and return it with your donation to: Freepost RTLK-HERE-JSKB, Miss Aimée Hooper, The National Gallery, The Development Office, London WC2N 5DN

If we exceed our fundraising appeal then we will use any additional funds to support other important conservation projects at the National Gallery.

- We would like to keep you informed about news and developments at the National Gallery. If you do not want to receive further information please tick this box.