

AUTHENTICATION STATEMENT

Clearly this is one of the several versions of Peter Paul Rubens' "Judgment of Paris". This painting depicts the finished execution and the high quality of Rubens' hand. At the completion of smaller works addressing a singular subject he most often created a very large canvas as his final definitive and expansive treatment of the subject. But here we are aware that he has kept all his versions of the "Judgment of Paris" sensually intimate easel paintings. In this painting as it is with the vast majority of Ruben's works, nothing ever stands still and all of his forms are alive with a flowing swirling movement that sweeps through his paintings like a windstorm.

The Dwyer work on copper is a richly colored oil painting where Rubens has kept to his reverence for the rich and lavish expression of figures and landscape. With his master handling of potency and light he has animated his figures with exuberance and vitality. Also reflected in his subject we find the brilliance of his story telling powers. In this Ruben's "Judgment of Paris" everything flows together: landscape, beauty, motion, emotion, fantasy and reality. This important work of art was most likely completed in his studio and I believe that there may be some visible evidence that some areas within this masterpiece may have touches by one of his master students, possibly, Jacob Jordaens or Antony van Dyck.

The high quality of the subject painting and the fact that it is painted on copper 27" x 34" as noted in the records of the book "Bonaparte's Park" by E. M. Woodward, coupled with the King Joseph estate sale provenance, confirms the authenticity of this Rubens' studio exceptional work of art.

In my informed judgment, experienced perception and opinion, the Dwyer painting of "Judgment of Paris" on copper 27" x 34" is by the hand of Peter Paul Rubens 1577-1640 and his studio.

June 2, 2012



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PETER PAUL RUBENS

Flemish 1577-1640

"The Judgment of Paris"

Oil on copper

27" high and 34" wide

In an antique highly decorative frame

PROVENANCE:

Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte of France appointed his brother Joseph as King of Naples and Spain. After Napoleon's defeat and forced exile, King Joseph abdicated his throne and fled to the United States with many of the crown jewels of Spain and large amounts of gold, silver, rare paintings and collectables. Masterpieces by Velázquez, van Dyck, Correggio, Rubens, Bruegel and Murillo were in Joseph Bonaparte's baggage train. (including the Rubens' painting "Judgment of Paris"). King Joseph Bonaparte initially settled in New York City, and then moved to Philadelphia, eventually settling on a very large estate in Bordentown, New Jersey, along the Delaware River. It was here that he constructed a vast mansion for himself which he called "Point Breeze". The land surrounding the mansion was elaborately landscaped and featured ten miles of carriage paths, rare trees and plants, gazebos, gardens, fountains and an artificial lake stocked with imported European swans.



King Joseph Bonaparte's "Point Breeze" mansion in Bordentown, New Jersey

King Joseph Bonaparte became ill and returned to Europe in 1839. When he died in 1844, Point Breeze passed to his grandson, who sold it and most of its contents at auction. Some of the furnishings and paintings are now in the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. A copy of the catalog cover for that auction sale of 1845 is attached hereto along with a

copy of page ten which reflects lot number 112, "The Judgment of Paris" by Rubens which King Joseph had brought from Europe when he came to America.

In 1879 author E. M. Woodward wrote a book titled "Bonaparte's Park" (referring to King Joseph's Point Breeze mansion) in which he describes in detail the items brought from Europe by Bonaparte.

On page 56 in that book Woodward states:

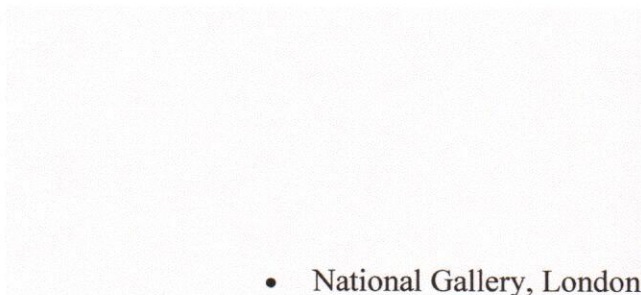
"Judgment of Paris, on copper, 2 ft. 10 in. L by 2 ft. 3 in. H"

(copy of said page 56 is attached hereto)

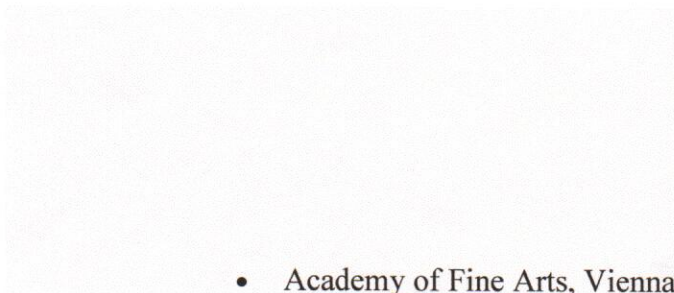
At King Joseph's estate sale in 1845 this Peter Paul Rubens painting "Judgment of Paris" was purchased along with many other rare art works and collectables by the [REDACTED]s, a wealthy family who resided in Central New York. It was passed down through the [REDACTED] family for generations and remained in that family home until 2006 - 2007 when the residence was being closed and the estate disbanded. A family friend, [REDACTED], was able to purchase the Rubens before Sotheby's was consigned many of the estate items.

Other items from this estate that were sold by Sotheby's exceeded their estimates and several made record prices. Sotheby's sale was estimated to bring seventy-five million dollars but actual sales exceeded two hundred and twenty million dollars .

After purchasing the Rubens' painting Dwyer contacted the Frick Museum and Art Reference Library, and sent an image of the painting and inquired if there was a catalog of Rubens' paintings. He was told that there was a catalog and that "Judgment of Paris" was referenced therein. He was also advised that the Rubens catalogs reflect six versions of this subject by the artist:



- National Gallery, London



- Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna



64 Philips Bldg

CATALOGUE
OF
VALUABLE
PAINTINGS & STATUARY,

THE COLLECTION OF THE LATE

JOSEPH BONAPARTE,
COUNT DE SURVILLIERS.

TO BE SOLD

AT PUBLIC SALE,

ON WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY,


September 17th and 18th, 1845,

AT THE MANSION AT

BORDENTOWN,
NEW JERSEY,

BY

THOMAS BIRCH, Jr.

 The Paintings will be open for Examination from the
15th of August until the time of Sale.

TERMS OF SALE.

1st. The Sale will commence at 11 o'clock on each day, and proceed in regular order, according to the Catalogue.

2d. The purchasers to give their names and places of abode; and (if required by the Auctioneer,) to deposit part of the purchase money; in default of which the lot so purchased to be immediately put up again and resold.

3d. All bills to be settled in full within three days from the day of Sale, (before delivery of the Paintings) otherwise they may be resold at the expense of the purchaser.

4th Orders given for lots will be faithfully attended to by the Auctioneer.

Catalogues 12 1/2 Cents

*has at Nolens
two Stou No 98 Chestnut Street*

111. VANDERLINCK.—Landscape, with Cattle.
C. 5 ft. 4 in. L. by 3 ft. 9 H.

112. RUBENS.—The Judgment of Paris.
Copper. 2 ft. 10 in. L. by 2 ft. 3 H.

113. Do. Diana and Nymphs.
Copper. 2 ft. 10 in. L. by 2 ft. 3 H.

114. 115. ANTONIA TEMPESTA.—Battle Pieces.
C. 4 ft. 10 in. L. by 4 ft. H.

116. VERNET.—View from Nature; Scene near Naples. Village and Castle in the distance, figures in the foreground.
C. 10 ft. L. by 4 ft. 3 H.

117. JACQUES SAVERY.—Royal Stag Hunt. This picture is quite a curiosity, from the large number of Figures and Animals contained in it, and the remarkable labour and care bestowed on the finish of each.
C. 5 ft. 8 in. L. by 3 ft. 9 H.

118. ITALIAN.—Entrance of the Queen of Austria into Mantua. Triumphant procession, numerous figures very carefully painted.
C. 5 ft. 6 in. L. by 3 ft. 9 H.

119. FLEMISH.—A very curious old Painting, representing a Triumphant Entry of an Eastern Emperor.
C. 5 ft. 6 in. L. by 3 ft. 9 H.

120. ITALIAN.—Landscape.
C. 3 ft. 5 in. L. by 4 ft. H.

121. SNEYDERS.—Hawk among Chickens, a rare specimen of this Master.
C. 5 ft. 7 in. L. by 3 ft. 9 H.

122. PHILIP DE CHAMPAGNE.—Massanissa and Sophonisba.
C. 5 ft. 2 in. L. by 6 ft. 2 H.

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BONAPARTE'S
PARK,

AND

THE MURATS.

BY

E. M. WOODWARD,

AUTHOR OF

BORDENTOWN AND ENVIRONS; THE OLD FAMILIES OF BURLINGTON
COUNTY, N. J.; OUR CAMPAIGNS; THE CITIZEN
SOLDIER, ETC., ETC., ETC.

TRENTON, N. J.:
MACCRELLISH & QUIGLEY, GENERAL BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS.
1879.

and Shepherds in adoration—Angels descending, as Messengers from Heaven. It would be useless to attempt a description of such a Painting; no pen could give an idea of its merits. The late owner, with a view to encourage the Fine Arts in this country, lent it, for some time, to the National Academies of New York and Philadelphia, where a great number of copies were made by young Artists, who profited by his Benevolence."

"Canvass, length 4 feet 6 inches, height 9 feet 6 inches."

Another, by Rubens and Sneyders, of which the catalogue says:

"The centre of this Picture represents the Infant Saviour and St. John, and three Angels playing with a Lamb. At each side is a Pyramid of Fruits and Vegetables, formed round the trunks of two Trees. Over the group of Children is a large wreath of Fruits and Flowers, with Birds on it. The figures, of exquisite beauty and coloring, are by Rubens, and the Fruits, Birds, &c., by Snyders.

"These two famous Masters frequently worked together. Rubens, after having finished the Figures, leaving the accessories to Snyders."

Canvass. Length 8 feet 10 inches, height 5 feet 10 inches. Catalogue of 1845, No. 101. \$2,000 were offered for the above Painting, but not accepted."

By Rubens: "*Two Lions and a Fawn. Episode of Paradise.*"

"This Painting was the No. 14 of 1845 Sale. A well-known Gentleman and Amateur, Mr. F*****, of New York, offered \$2,200 for it, but the owner would not part with it at that price."

Canvass. 7 ft. 8 in. L. by 4 ft. 7 H.

By Rubens: "*The Lion caught in a Net.*"

Canvass. 6 ft. 3 in. L. by 4 ft. 8 H.

By Rubens: "*The Judgment of Paris.*"

Copper. 2 ft. 10 in. L. by 2 ft. 3 H.

- Prado Museum, Madrid



- Two versions apparently destroyed during the 2nd World War, and
- ONE MISSING VERSION PAINTED ON COPPER 27" x 34" (King Joseph Bonaparte's painting)

The high quality of the subject painting and the fact that it is painted on copper 27" x 34" as noted in the records of the book "Bonaparte's Park" by E. M. Woodward, coupled with the King Joseph estate sale provenance, helps to confirm the authenticity of the Dwyer painting.

Since the King Joseph Bonaparte sale of 1845-1846 this Rubens painting has never been offered for sale on the open market.

THE MYTH (Subject of this masterpiece):

Zeus held a banquet celebration and Eris, goddess of discord was not invited. Angered by this snub, Eris arrived at the celebration with a golden apple which she threw into the proceedings, and upon which was the inscription "for the fairest one". Three goddesses claimed the apple: Hera, Athena and Aphrodite. They asked Zeus to judge who of them was fairest, but, reluctant to show favor himself, he declared that Paris, a Trojan mortal, would be the judge.

Like many myths, there are variations of the Judgment of Paris. Perhaps the most common element is the nudity of the goddesses. The myth of the Judgment of Paris naturally offered artists the opportunity to depict a sort of beauty contest, with three beautiful female nudes trying to appease a male judge (Paris). Some versions of the myth (at least since Euripides) focus on a choice among the bribes that each goddess offers to Paris. The bribery involved is an ingredient of later origin, as originally the myth was centered on the goddesses' beauty and sex appeal, and not any reward they may have offered Paris.