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Summary Article: **Cranach, Lucas**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(both: lō'käs krä'näkh), the Elder, 1472–1553, German painter and engraver. The son of a painter, he settled in Wittenberg c.1504 and was court painter successively under three electors of Saxony. There he maintained a flourishing workshop and was twice burgomaster. Cranach was a close friend of Martin Luther, whose doctrine he upheld in numerous paintings and woodcuts, and he has been called the painter of the Reformation. He was a rapid and prolific painter, and the work turned out by his studio is uneven in quality. Naïve and fanciful, often awkward in draftsmanship, it has, nonetheless, freshness and originality and a warm, rich palette. His portraits are particularly successful. Among his best-known works are *Rest in Egypt* (Gemäldgalerie, Staatliche Mus., Berlin-Dahlem); *Judgment of Paris* (Staatliche Kunsthalle, Karlsruhe); *Adam and Eve* (Courtauld Inst., London); and *Crucifixion* (Weimar). The latter contains figures of Luther and Cranach. His many famous portraits include those of Elector John Frederick and *Self-Portrait* (Uffizi). Cranach was also an accomplished miniaturist. He produced a few copperplates and designs for woodcuts. His son and pupil **Lucas Cranach**, the Younger, 1515–86, continued the tradition of his father, whose workshop, signature, and popularity he inherited. Their work is often indistinguishable.

See study ed. by E. Ruhmer (1963).

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