

Holbein (Great Painters Series)

Jeanette Zwingenberger



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Hans Holbein the Younger was born in Augsburg in 1497/98. He died in London in 1543, having been honoured with the title of painter to King Henry VIII. His talent was established at the early age of 18 when he illustrated Erasmus' manuscript, The Praise of Folly.

After fleeing the Reformation, Holbein spent over two years in London, where he was welcomed by Thomas More. Under More's patronage, he acquired an outstanding reputation as a portrait painter. Holbein contributed to the illustrations in the first edition of Utopia. Holbein's specialty was anamorphosis, teasing the viewer's vision with a sense of humour. Even today his subtle innuendo comes over with a big ""wink."" Holbein painted numerous portraits of humanists, bishops, merchants and bankers, as well as of Henry VIII and his wives. Outstanding examples of his portraiture are the Darmstadt Madonna, the portrait of Henry VIII, the Cartellino, the portrait of Bonifacius Amerbach and, of course, the famous Ambassadors.

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