

## Summary

KATARÍNA KOLBIARZ CHMELINOVÁ (Comenius University in Bratislava) / *Rubens. The Power of Transformation. Review of the book: Rubens. Kraft der Verwandlung / Rubens. The Power of Transformation, Hrsg./ed. Gerlinde Gruber, Sabine Haag, Stefan Weppelmann, Jochen Sander, Hirmer Verlag. München 2017, ss. 336*

The presented text is a review of the exhibition and catalogue “Rubens. The power of transformation” by the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, one of the major events of the winter exhibition season 2017/2018 in Central Europe. The exhibition was based on a modification of the permanent museum exposition with a number of new exhibits and had the character of a thematic study presented in a broad context of the period, taking into account the numerous sources of inspiration influencing Rubens. Its concept, considering both scientific and pedagogical aspects, offered visitors, above all, the opportunity to trace the so far poorly recognized Rubens’s creative process in the form of a deep dialogue both with the art of his contemporaries as well as with the works of his eminent predecessors.

To co-create the catalogue, the curators invited renowned art historians from various countries, specializing in Flemish painting and the work of Rubens himself. The book is divided into two complementary parts. The first part consists of 12 short and thematically focused essays concerning aspects of the visualization of the world in Rubens’ works. Two articles on restoration issues complement them. Each author, reflecting the current state of research, has written a lucid text elaborating on the subject and at the same time showing the potential of the further research. The second part of the publication is the exhibition catalogue. Its structure mirrors the division of the exhibition into 8 thematic parts that demonstrated issues related to the theory and practice of the visual language of Rubens’s works and the artist’s approach to the problems of the material and format of his works.

Despite many recent exhibitions and editorial projects on Rubens, the Viennese project did not display signs of a blockbuster quickly set up to take advantage of the current trend. On the contrary, it was the result of long extensive preparations and a well thought-out concept. Its result gives a solid base for scientists, and it provides to a wider circle of readers an engaging reading that combines acquiring the knowledge with aesthetic satisfaction. The compromise adopted by the authors targeting various audience, inevitably did not allow to exhaust its subject. The book, however, indicates the directions of further research, introduces the current state of research with new information, and most importantly – using the model example of Rubens – reveals the secrets of the Baroque artist’s work, providing a better understanding of the complex creative process and the concept of originality valid in modern times.