



Master of Shadows: The Secret Diplomatic Career of the Painter Peter Paul Rubens

Mark Lamster

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Although his popularity is eclipsed by Rembrandt today, Peter Paul Rubens was revered by his contemporaries as the greatest painter of his era, if not of all history. His undeniable artistic genius, bolstered by a modest disposition and a reputation as a man of tact and discretion, made him a favorite among monarchs and political leaders across Europe—and gave him the perfect cover for the clandestine activities that shaped the landscape of seventeenth-century politics.

In *Master of Shadows*, Mark Lamster brilliantly recreates the culture, religious conflicts, and political intrigues of Rubens's time, following the painter from Antwerp to London, Madrid, Paris, and Rome and providing an insightful exploration of Rubens's art as well as the private passions that influenced it.

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