KLAAS MULLER

STUDIO OF PETER PAUL RU

Minerva and Mercury lead George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, through the Temple of Virtue

This dynamic composition, executed in the studio of Peter Paul Rubens, illustrates the allegorical triumph of virtue and wisdom over worldly temptation.

Minerva, goddess of wisdom, and Mercury, messenger of the gods, guide George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, toward the Temple of Virtue, symbolizing moral enlightenment and noble aspiration.

The vigorous movement, muscular anatomy, and rich coloration reflect Rubens's influence and the grand Baroque idiom cultivated in his Antwerp workshop. The painting's circular rhythm and interplay of figures evoke the theatrical energy characteristic of Rubens's allegorical inventions.

Oil on panel, 62 x 48 cm (24 $^{3}/_{8}$ x 18 $^{7}/_{8}$ inches)

