

The Annotated Mona Lisa

A CRASH COURSE IN ART HISTORY
FROM PREHISTORIC TO POST-MODERN

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and John Boswell

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In memory of my Mother and Father, Rebecca and John Colclough

To the families in New Orleans and Memphis, thanks for your encouragement.
And to Sid, Alison, and Eliza, special gratitude for your enthusiasm when it began
to seem the adage "Vita brevis est, ars longa" was all too true.

—C. S.

Abbreviations used in text:

MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art
MoMA	Museum of Modern Art
Whitney	Whitney Museum of American Art
NG	National Gallery

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INTRODUCTION: HOW TO LOOK AT A PAINTING

Like music, art is a universal language. Yet, even though looking at most works of art is a pleasurable enough experience, to appreciate fully what's going on requires certain skills and knowledge. In *The Annotated Mona Lisa* 25,000 years of art history have been condensed into 208 pages in order to quickly provide some of the necessary skills and knowledge.

The Annotated Mona Lisa also presents this essential information as simply as possible, with a minimum of technical jargon but with a wealth of anecdote and biographical asides to lend a human dimension to the world of art. Timelines, summaries, and comparison charts appear throughout the book to help the reader absorb and retain important points.

Yet, while many of the critical tools for forming independent aesthetic judgments are provided here, ultimately, the reward comes in using these tools to draw your own conclusions about why a particular painting touches or moves you, or even why it doesn't. The more time spent in museums and galleries,

the more rewarding the act of encountering art becomes.

There is a world of difference between viewing a work of art and really seeing it — the difference between sight and insight. When I began to research this book, I already knew a great deal about art, had taught it in American culture courses, loved it, and spent much time in museums and galleries. But after two years of total immersion in art history, I found my experience of looking at paintings and sculpture totally transformed. My increased knowledge led to enriched, stimulating, give-and-take engagement with art. It was like switching from passively watching a film in a foreign language to actively debating in one's mother tongue. I hope my experience

will be a microcosm for readers, who will also appreciate art in direct proportion to the amount of knowledge they bring to it.

Choosing one example from the book, "The Raft of the Medusa" by Theodore Gericault (see p. 76), here's how one might go about analyzing a painting using several traditional criteria:

Gericault, "The Raft of the Medusa," 1818-19, Louvre, Paris.



COLOR, COMPOSITION, MOOD, AND LIGHTING

"The Raft of the Medusa" portrays victims of a shipwreck, adrift on the sea without food or water, at the moment they signal to a distant ship. The painter chose to represent a dramatic moment — the instant when survivors regain hope of rescue — but he conveyed their desperate situation through an array of painterly devices. Gericault used the full range of painter's tools — color, composition, mood, and lighting — to convey his theme of man's struggle against nature.

1. COMPOSITION. Gericault divided the scene into two overlapping triangles. The triangle at left, defined by the mast and two ropes, includes the dead and dying. The triangle at right, whose peak is the standing man waving a shirt, is composed of dynamic figures, with arms outstretched to indicate their surging hopes. The placement of this triangle at far right, the direction of glances, gestures, and arrangement of drapery all contribute to the effect of forward thrust and direct the viewer's eye to the focal point of the figures frantically waving.

2. MOVEMENT. Gericault created the impression of motion through contrasting the postures of his figures. The picture as a whole seems to surge upward from the prone figures at lower left to the upper right, with its concentration of sitting and reaching figures. The waving man at the peak of the right triangle is the climax of this mood of rising hope and advancing motion.

3. UNITY AND BALANCE. To prevent the two triangles — one of despair, the other of hope — from splitting the picture into unrelated halves, Gericault overlaps the triangles, with transitional figures appearing in both. An arm cuts across the rope (the strongest line of the left triangle) to point to the peak of the main triangle and unify the two halves. The two off-center triangles also lean in opposite directions, each balancing the other.

4. COLOR AND LIGHT/DARK CONTRAST. Gericault painted the storm clouds and cresting waves dark to create a menacing mood. The horizon — where the rescue ship is located — is bright, like a beacon of salvation. The extreme light/dark contrasts throughout the painting imply the alternating emotions of hope and hopelessness.

5. MOOD. Jumbled lines of the writhing bodies suggest a mood of turbulence, in keeping with Gericault's theme of titanic struggle against the elements.

When looking at any works of art, the viewer should consider elements like these, which artists use to create their intended effects. The more profound the thought, feeling, skill, and invention an artist puts into his or her work, the more it unfolds to an alert spectator. Appreciating art is a gradual, never-ending endeavor, which is why art from all eras still engages and enriches us.

—Carol Strickland

The Birth of Art: Prehistoric Through Medieval



Art was born around 25,000 years ago, when the subhuman Neanderthal evolved into our human ancestor, Cro-Magnon man. With greater intelligence came imagination and the ability to create images in both painting and sculpture. Architecture came into being with the construction of ritual monuments.

For thousands of years, as civilizations waxed and waned, these three art forms — painting, sculpture, and architecture — embodied the ambitions, dreams, and values of their cultures. Although early artists are anonymous, most of what we know about their societies comes from the art they left behind. Ruins of Mesopotamian ziggurats and bas-relief sculpture, as well as Egyptian pyramids, testify to complex civilizations. Greek art reached a pinnacle of beauty as respect for the

individual flourished in Athens, and Roman relics attest to the might of the greatest empire in the ancient world.

Artists became increasingly accomplished in representing the human figure in realistic space until the Middle Ages, when art changed radically. With the triumph of Christianity, interest in the body and the world plummeted. Stylized painting and sculpture existed only to teach religion and adorn cathedrals — the true masterpieces of the Middle Ages.

From 25,000 **B.C.** to **A.D.** 1400, the history of art is not a story of progress from primitive to sophisticated or simple to complex — only a story of the varied forms the imagination has taken in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

PREHISTORIC ART: THE BEGINNING

Although human beings have been walking upright for millions of years, it was not until 25,000 years ago that our forebears invented art. Sometime during the last glacial epoch, when hunter-gatherers were still living in caves, the Neanderthal tool-making mentality gave way to the Cro-Magnon urge to make images.

The first art objects were created not to adorn the body or decorate the cavern but out of an attempt to control or appease natural forces. These symbols of animals and people had supernatural significance and magic powers.

SCULPTURE. The oldest surviving art objects are sculptures made from bone, ivory, stone, or antlers. These were either engraved (by incising an outlined figure with a sharp tool), carved in deep relief, or fully rounded three-dimensional sculptures.

VENUS OF WILLENDORF
c. 25,000-20,000 B.C., Museum of Natural History, Vienna. *This tiny female statuette is one of the earliest known human figures. With its enormous breasts, protruding belly, and stylized round head, the sculpture is more a cluster of spheres than an individualized woman. It was probably a fertility fetish, symbolizing abundance.*



CAVE PAINTING. The first "paintings" were probably made in caves approximately 15,000 years ago. These pictures of bison, deer, horses, cattle, mammoths, and boars are located in the most remote recesses of the caves, far from the inhabited, sunlit entrances. Archeologists speculate artists created the animal images to guarantee a successful hunt. Many are portrayed pierced with arrows, and gouges in the rock indicate cave-dwellers may have flung spears at the painted game.

HORSE

Cave Painting at Lascaux, France, c. 15,000-13,000 B.C. *To create these images, cave artists used charcoal to outline irregularities in the walls of caves that suggested forms from nature. Bulges in the rock implied hulk, and tonal shading with earth-tone pigments lent contour and perspective. The "paints" used were chunks of red and yellow ochre ground into powder and applied with brushes or blown onto the surface through hollow bones. Drawings were often superimposed randomly, perhaps because new images were necessary before each hunt. The images — almost entirely animal figures — were represented in two-dimensional profile and seem to float in space, with no hint of background surroundings.*



A PREHISTORIC TREASURE TROVE: DISCOVERY OF CAVE ART

In 1879, Marcelino de Saufuola took his small daughter with him to explore the Altamira Caves in northern Spain. Since the ceiling was only a few inches above his head, he did not notice what was immediately above him. From the youngster's lower perspective, however, she sported marvelous beasts that appeared to cavort on the cave roof. Although de Saufuola was sure the paintings were prehistoric, skeptical archeologists pronounced them forgeries. It was only after the French discovered similar paintings, partially obscured by millennia-old mineral deposits, that the Altamira drawings were pronounced authentic. Today they are recognized as one of the most spectacular finds in art history.

The other major site of cave paintings in Lascaux, France, was also discovered by accident. In 1940, two French boys were out for a walk when their dog suddenly disappeared. They found him in a hole leading to a cave covered with thousands of engravings and paintings. Sealed in the dry underground chambers, the paintings had survived virtually intact for more than 17,000 years. Once hordes of visitors tramped through the cave, however, moisture and carbon dioxide accumulated underground, and fungi crept up the cave walls, concealing the images. Since 1963, the caves at Lascaux have been closed to the public.

FIRST ARCHITECTURE. Once the glaciers receded, the climate grew more temperate, and the Paleolithic (or old stone) period was replaced by the Neolithic (new stone) age. Early human beings emerged from caves to become herdsman and farmers, and, with a now secure food supply, they began crafting the first monumental "sculpture." As early as 5000 B.C., colossal architecture of massive, upright stones appeared. These took three basic forms: the dolmen, consisting of large, vertical stones with a covering slab like a giant table; the menhir, or single stone set on its end (the largest is 164 feet long, weighing 350 tons); and a cromlech, or circular arrangement of stones, such as Stonehenge.

STONEHENGE: ENGLAND'S FIRST ROCK GROUP. In the Middle Ages, this mysterious group of stones was believed to be either the creation of an ancient race of giants or conjured by Merlin the Magician, who allegedly transplanted it from Ireland. Actually, it seems to be an accurate astronomical calendar. The outer ring consists of trilithons, or Tl-shaped rocks like gigantic doorways. Next comes a ring of smaller upright stones like cemetery gravemarkers, then a horseshoe of carefully finished trilithons, 13'6" high. Isolated from these concentric circles is a heel-stone, marking where the sun rises in the East at the summer solstice.

At Carnac, in the French province of Brittany, rows of thousands of megaliths (large, unhewn boulders up to 12' high) stretch for several miles, a dozen or so abreast in parallel lines. Local legend has it that these rows represent columns of Roman soldiers, changed to stone by the resident saint. More likely, they were associated with worship of the sun or moon.



Stonehenge, c. 2000 B.C., 97' diameter, Wiltshire, England.

THE EASTER ISLAND MONOLITHS: HOW THEY DID IT

Anyone who has ever observed the construction of a modern building, aided by bulldozers, huge cranes, and hydraulic lifts, can't help but wonder how prehistoric men managed to erect their monoliths. In the case of Stonehenge, apparently hundreds of men dragged stones weighing up to 50 tons for 24 miles.

The most detailed knowledge we have of megalith construction comes from Easter Island, where descendants of the prehistoric people who created the 30-foot-tall statues demonstrated their ancestors' techniques. First, using crude stone picks, they quarried a giant statue from the crater of an extinct volcano. Next they lowered it to the base of the volcano, where they set it upright in a hole to finish carving and polishing. One hundred eighty natives then moved the 25-ton statue, encircled with a padding of reeds, cross-country by hauling it with ropes on a wooden sledge. Now all they had to do was get it upright and raise it onto its six-foot-high base. How'd they do it? Using two poles or levers they raised the massive carving a few inches off the ground, then inserted rocks underneath the raised side. They repeated this process over and over again, using more and more rocks until void! it stood upright. It took approximately one year to carve a statue and two weeks to erect it. At one time, more than 600 of the gigantic figures stood sentry on this tiny Pacific island.

MESOPOTAMIA: THE ARCHITECTS

"The navel of the world" is what King Nebuchadnezzar called his capital city of Babylon. This premier city was the cradle of ancient art and architecture, as well as the site of both the Hanging Gardens and Tower of Babel.

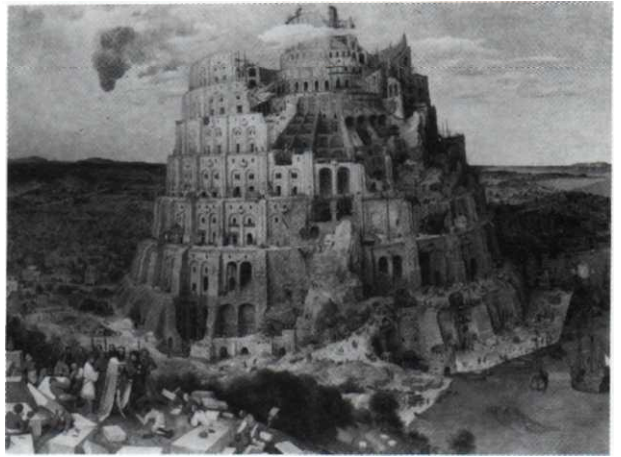
Biblical writers saw the magnificent, 270-foot-high Tower of Babel as an emblem of man's arrogance in trying to reach heaven. The Greek historian Herodotus described it as a stack of eight stepped towers, with gates of solid brass and 120 lions in brightly colored, glazed tiles leading to it. A spiral stairway wound around the exterior, mounting to the summit where an inner sanctuary contained an elaborately adorned couch and gold table. The Babylonians claimed this was the chamber where their god slept.

The Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, was similarly grandiose. It consisted of a series of four brick terraces, rising above the Euphrates River, with lush flowering shrubs and trees spilling over the city. Some believe Mesopotamia was the site of an even more famous historical garden — the garden of Eden.

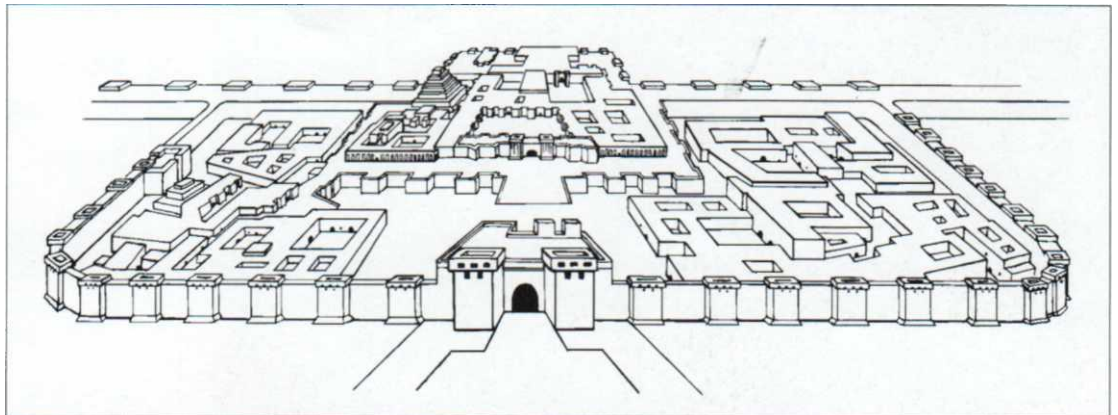
As far back as 3500 **B.C.**, the Sumerians, the original inhabitants of this area, mastered irrigation and flood control to create a fertile oasis amid the sandy plains of what is now Iraq. In their settlements of the Tigris and Euphrates valley, they also invented the city-state, formal religion, writing, mathematics, law, and, to a large extent, architecture.

THE FIRST URBAN PLANNERS. Using sun-dried brick as a basic building block, the Mesopotamians devised complex cities centered around the temple. These vast architectural complexes included not only an inner shrine but workshops, storehouses, and residential quarters. For the first time, life was regularized, with division of labor and communal efforts, such as defense and public works projects.

The Palace of Sargon II above Nineveh covered 25 acres and included more than 200 rooms and courtyards, including a brilliantly painted throne room, harem, service quarters, and guard room. It stood on a 50-foot-high, man-made mound above the one-square-mile city. Towering above the elevated palace was a ziggurat (a stepped pyramid-shaped tower). This vast brick temple consisted of seven 18-foot-high stories, each painted a different color. The ziggurat's immense height reflected the belief that the gods dwelled on high. It was destroyed around 600 **B.C.**



Bruegel the Elder, "Tower of Babel," 1563, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

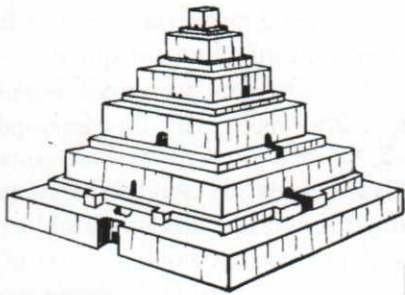


Artist's rendering: "Citadel of King Sargon II," c. 742-706 **B.C.**, Iraq.

THE PERENNIAL PYRAMID

The pyramid shape recurs throughout history and in diverse cultures, many of which have thought the shape itself had magic powers. Man-made landmarks like Mesopotamian ziggurats or flat-sided Egyptian pyramids dominated their landscapes, creating a visual effect as stunning as the amount of effort required to build them. The Mayan stepped pyramids of

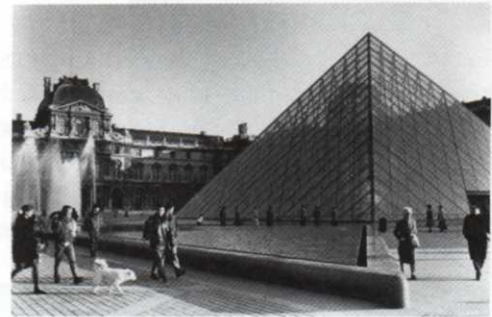
Mexico's Yucatán peninsula and I. M. Pei's glass entrance to the Louvre in Paris are but two examples of the pyramid shape of different times in different cultures. Is it merely coincidence that the pyramids of Mesopotamia, the cradle of architecture, have served as a symbolic shape for twentieth century architects?



The Ziggurat



Pyramids of Giza



I. M. Pei's Glass Pyramid, the Louvre

BAS-RELIEF SCULPTURE. Besides architecture, the predominant art form of Mesopotamia was bas-relief sculpture. Combined with wedge-shaped cuneiform writing, scene after scene of these wall carvings scrupulously detail military exploits.

Another favorite theme seen in bas-reliefs was the king's personal courage during hunting expeditions. At a typical hunting party, servants would goad lions to fury, then release them from cages so the king could slaughter them. "The Dying Lioness" portrays a wounded beast, paralyzed by arrows. The figure's flattened ears and straining muscles convey her death throes with convincing realism.



"The Dying Lioness," Nineveh, c. 650 B.C., British Museum, London.

EGYPT: THE ART OF IMMORTALITY

Considering Egyptian society's obsession with immortality, it's not surprising that Egyptian art remained unchanged for 3,000 years. Their overriding concern was assuring a comfortable after-life for their rulers, who were considered gods. Colossal architecture and Egyptian art existed to surround the pharaoh's spirit with eternal glory.

In the pursuit of permanence, the Egyptians established the essentials of a major civilization: literature, medical science, and higher mathematics. Not only did they develop an impressive — albeit static — culture, but, while elsewhere lesser civilizations rose and fell with the regularity of the Nile's annual floods, Egypt sustained the world's first large-scale, unified state for three millennia.



"Fowling Scene" from the tomb of Nebamun, Thebes, c. 1450 B.C., British Museum, London. *Egyptian art, built on rigid formulas, was static.*

WHAT IS EGYPTOLOGY?

A special branch of the science of archeology, Egyptology reconstructs Egyptian civilization from the huge storehouse of surviving antiquities.

Egyptology began in 1799 when Napoleon invaded Egypt. In addition to 38,000 troops, he took along 175 scholars, linguists, antiquarians, and artists. These early archeologists brought back to France a huge trove of relics, including the Rosetta Stone, a slab of black basalt with the same inscription in three languages, including Greek and hieroglyphics.

For fifteen centuries, scholars had studied hieroglyphics incomprehendingly; but in twenty-two years, the brilliant French linguist Jean-Francois Champollion cracked the code. His discovery spurred intense interest in ancient Egypt. Early Egyptologists often plundered tombs and temples and carried off artifacts for European collections, and perishable papyrus, fabric, and wooden articles that had survived thousands of years unscathed were destroyed overnight. Fortunately, painstaking excavation and scientific examination eventually replaced such heavy-handed tactics.

These tombs, each a time capsule of information on the daily life of its occupant, have yielded detailed knowledge of this vanished civilization.

Much of what we know about ancient Egypt comes from the surviving tombs. Since Egyptians believed the pharaoh's ka, or spirit, was immortal, they stocked the tomb with every earthly delight for it to enjoy in perpetuity. Wall paintings and hieroglyphics were a form of instant replay, inventorying the deceased's life and daily activities in minute detail. Portrait statues provided an alternative dwelling place for the ka, in case the mummified corpse deteriorated and could no longer house it.

Sculpture and paintings followed a rigid formula for representing the human figure. In acres of stone carvings and drawings, the human form is depicted with a front view of the eye and shoulders and profile view of head, arms, and legs. In wall paintings, the surface is divided into horizontal bands separated by lines. The spare, broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped figure wears a headdress and kilt, and stands rigidly, with arms at his side, one leg advanced. The size of a figure indicated rank, with pharaohs presented as giants towering over pygmy-size servants.

Since statues were intended to last eternally, they were made of hard substances like granite and diorite. Whether standing or seated, they included few projecting, breakable parts. The pose was always frontal and bisymmetrical, with arms close to the torso. Human anatomy was usually, at best, an approximation.



"Prince Rahotep and Wife Nofret," 2610 B.C., Egyptian Museum, Cairo. These limestone sculptures are typical of the motionless, impassive poses of Egyptian portrait statues.



Queen Nefertiti, c.1360 B.C., Egyptian Museum, Berlin.

LOOKING LESS LIKE AN EGYPTIAN

Nefertiti's husband, Pharaoh Akhenaton, was a radical reformer and an artist, who encouraged a temporary loosening of artistic conventions, seen in this more naturalistic representation of his wife.

MUMMY ART

The Egyptians believed the ka, or life force, was immortal. To provide a durable receptacle for the deceased's spirit, they perfected the science of embalming. Preserving the body began with extracting the deceased's brains through the nostrils with a metal hook. Viscera, like the liver, lungs, stomach, and intestines, were removed and preserved in separate urns. What was left was then soaked in brine for more than a month, after which the pickled cadaver was literally hung out to dry. The shriveled body was then stuffed, women's breasts padded, the corpse swaddled in layers of bandages, and finally interred in nested coffins and a stone sarcophagus. In fact, Egypt's dry climate and absence of bacteria in sand and air probably aided preservation as much as this elaborate chemical treatment.

In 1881, 40 dead kings' bodies were discovered, including that of Ramses II, whose dried skin, teeth, and hair were still intact. The 3,000-year-old monarch, in whose court Moses grew up, was called "The Great" and with good reason; he sired more than 100 children during his opulent 67-year reign. Yet, when a customs inspector surveyed Ramses' mortal remains during the transfer of the mummy to Cairo, he labeled it "dried fish."



Head of Ramses II, Mummy
The Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

GENERAL CONTRACTING FOR THE GREAT PYRAMID

One of 80 remaining pyramids, the Great Pyramid of Cheops at Giza is the largest stone structure in the world. Ancient Egyptians leveled its 13-acre site — the base a perfect square — so successfully that the southeast corner is only one-half inch higher than the northwest. Since the interior is an almost solid mass of limestone slabs, great engineering skill was required to protect the small burial chambers from the massive weight of stone above. The Grand Gallery's ceiling was tiered and braced, while the king's chamber had six granite-slab roofs above separate compartments to relieve stress and displace the weight of overhead blocks. Built in 2600 B.C. to last forever, so far it has. If you were to construct the Great Pyramid, this is what you'd need:

SUPPLIES:

2,300,000 limestone blocks, each weighing an average of 2 1/2 tons

Rudimentary copper and stone-cutting tools

Barges to float blocks from quarry on east side of Nile to west bank

Log rollers, temporary brick ramps, wooden sledges to haul stone to construction site

Pearly white limestone facing to surface finished 480-foot-tall pyramid

LABOR:

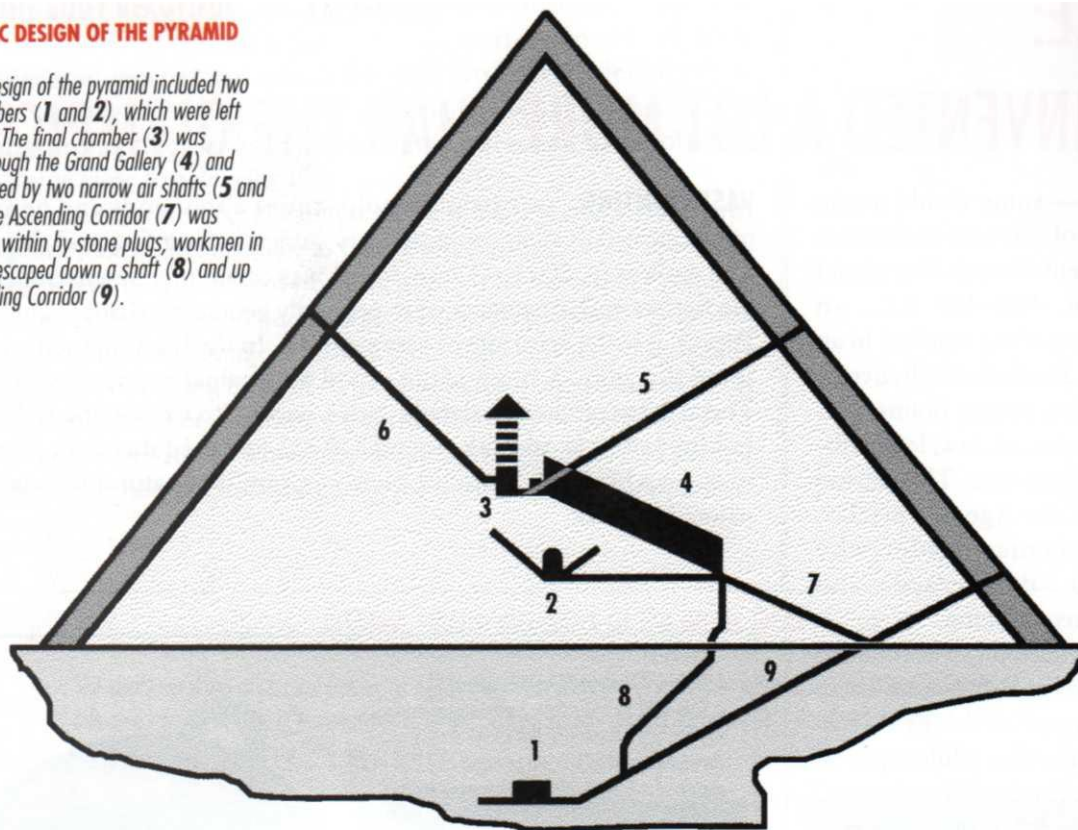
4,000 construction workers to move blocks weighing up to 15 tons, without benefit of draft animals, the wheel, or block-and-tackle

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME:

23 years (average life span at the time was 35)

SCHEMATIC DESIGN OF THE PYRAMID

The inner design of the pyramid included two burial chambers (1 and 2), which were left incomplete. The final chamber (3) was reached through the Grand Gallery (4) and was ventilated by two narrow air shafts (5 and 6). After the Ascending Corridor (7) was sealed from within by stone plugs, workmen in the Gallery escaped down a shaft (8) and up the Descending Corridor (9).



THE DISCOVERY OF KING TUT'S TOMB

In life, King Tutankhamen, who died at the age of 19, was unimportant. Yet in death and 3,000 years later, he became the most celebrated pharaoh of all. His tomb is the only one to be discovered in its near-original condition.

The British archeologist Howard Carter was alone in his belief the tomb could be found. For six years he dug in the Valley of Kings, twice coming within two yards of the tomb's entrance. In 1922 he literally struck pay dirt. When he lit a match to peek into the darkness, he saw "everywhere the glint of gold."

Our knowledge of the magnificence of a pharaoh's funerary regalia comes from his tomb. The contents ranged from baskets of fruit and garlands of flowers still tinged with color, a folding camp bed and a toy-box, to four chariots completely covered with gold. Indeed, gold was the prevailing decorating motif: golden couches, gilded throne, gold walls, a 6'2" coffin of solid gold, as well as the now famous solid gold death mask covering the royal mummy's face in the innermost of three nested coffins.

More than 20 people connected with unsealing the tomb died under mysterious circumstances, giving rise to lurid "curse of the pharaoh" stories. Such superstition didn't, however, prevent the King Tut tour of the world's museums from attracting more visitors than any other single art show in history.



Mask of King Tutankhamen, 1352 B.C.,
The Egyptian Museum, Cairo. Even within the final coffin, the
face of the mummy was concealed by a beaten-gold mask.

GREECE:

THEY INVENTED A LOT MORE THAN THE OLYMPICS

The history — some would argue the zenith — of Western civilization began in ancient Greece. For a brief Golden Age, 480-430 **B.C.**, an explosion of creativity resulted in an unparalleled level of excellence in art, architecture, poetry, drama, philosophy, government, law, logic, history, and mathematics. This period is also called the Age of Pericles, after the Athenian leader who championed democracy and encouraged free thinking.

Greek philosophy was summed up in the words of Protagoras: "Man is the measure of all things." This, combined with other philosophers' emphasis on rational inquiry and challenging the status quo, created a society of intellectual and artistic risk-takers.

Just as man's dignity and worth were central Greek concepts, the human figure was the principal motif of Greek art. Where Greek philosophy stressed harmony, order, and clarity of thought, Greek art and architecture reflected a similar respect for balance.

PAINTING. The Greeks were skilled painters. According to literary sources, Greek artists achieved a breakthrough in realistic *trompe l'oeil* effects. Their paintings were so lifelike that birds pecked murals of painted fruit. Unfortunately, none of these works survive, but we can judge the realistic detail of Greek painting by the figures that adorn their everyday pottery.

VASE PAINTING. Vase painting told stories about gods and heroes of Greek myths as well as such contemporary subjects as warfare and drinking parties. The earliest (c. 800 **B.C.**) vase design was called the Geometric Style, because the figures and ornaments were primarily geometric shapes. The later Archaic Period was the great age of vase painting. In the black-figured style at the outset of this period, black forms stood out against a reddish clay background. The artist scratched in details with a needle, to expose the red beneath. The red-figured style, starting around 530 **B.C.**, reversed this color scheme. The figures, on a black background, were composed of natural red clay with details painted in black.

Exekias, "Dionysus in a Sailboat,"

c. 550–521 **B.C.**, Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Munich. *From the Archaic Period, this scene may be the earliest instance in which an object (the sail) was presented realistically rather than in some stylized manner.*



"Youth Singing and Playing the Kithara,"

c. 490 **B.C.**, MMA, NY. *This amphora (a two-handled vessel) is an example of the red-figured style (red figure/black background), as opposed to the earlier black-figured style (black figure/red background).*

SCULPTURE: THE BODY BEAUTIFUL. The Greeks invented the nude in art. The ideal proportions of their statues represented the perfection of both body (through athletic endeavor) and mind (through intellectual debate). The Greeks sought a synthesis of the two poles of human behavior — passion and reason — and, through their artistic portrayal of the human form (often in motion), they came close to achieving it.

Greek statues were not the bleached white marble we associate with Classical sculpture today. The marble was embellished with colored encaustic, a mixture of powdered pigment and hot wax applied to hair, lips, eyes, and nails of the figure. Although male nudity was always acceptable in sculpture, the representation of female images evolved from fully clothed to sensually nude. In earlier statues, clinging folds of drapery united the figure in a swirling rhythm of movement. Another innovation was the discovery of the principle of weight shift, or *contrapposto*, in which the weight of the body rested on one leg with the body realigned accordingly, giving the illusion of a figure in arrested motion.

ETERNAL YOUTH: INFLUENCE OF THE GREEK IDEAL

The ideal proportions of Classical statues, as well as the Greek philosophy of humanism reflected in Nike ("Winged Victory"), influenced the heroic style of Michelangelo's "David." In turn, Rodin's study of Michelangelo's Renaissance sculpture made his work less academic, inspiring "The Age of Bronze."



"Nike of Samothrace," c. 190 B.C., Louvre, Paris.



Michelangelo, "David," 1501–4, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.



Rodin, "The Age of Bronze," 1876, Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

ARCHITECTURE FIT FOR THE GODS.

Greek culture influenced the art and architecture of every subsequent period of Western civilization, but most especially the Renaissance (when many Classical works were rediscovered) and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Greek Revival crazes. During the latter period, the vogue for Greek style was so widespread that every museum, art academy, and college proudly displayed reproductions of Greek sculpture. Public buildings, such as courthouses and banks, became pseudo-Greek temples.

Architects intended the brilliant white marble Parthenon to be the ultimate expression of Athens' grandeur. Even in ruins, it crowns the Acropolis. The Parthenon's perfection was due to barely perceptible departures from straight lines. Columns curve slightly inward and the entablature and stepped platform are barely arched. These "refinements," as they were called, bent straight lines to give the illu-

sion of upward thrust and solid support for the central mass. Built without mortar, the Parthenon remained relatively intact until 1687, when a direct rocket hit destroyed its core.

In 1801 Lord Elgin carted off much of the sculpture to the British Museum, where the poet John Keats gazed at the marbles for hours, "like a sick eagle looking at the sky."

ARCHITECTURE FOR THE AGES

Considered one of the most beautiful and influential buildings of all time, the Parthenon indirectly inspired the temple format of Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Capital and Michael Graves's Post-Modern revival of Classical elements like columns and arcades.



Iktinos and Kallikrates, the Parthenon,
448–432 B.C., Acropolis, Athens.



Jefferson, Capitol of Virginia, 1785–92, Richmond, VA.

**WHO WAS WHO
IN ANCIENT GREECE**

Ancient Greece is best known for its philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle), playwrights (Aeschylus, Aristophanes, Euripides, Sophocles), and mathematicians (Euclid, Pythagoras). Some of the leading artists were:

PHIDIAS (500–432 B.C.), most famous Athenian sculptor, overseer of Parthenon statuary, first used drapery to reveal body

POLYKLEITOS (active 450–420 B.C.), rival of Phidias, wrote book on proportion; most celebrated work colossal gold and ivory statue of Hera at Argos

PRAXITELES (active mid-4th century B.C.), Athenian sculptor famous for first entirely nude Aphrodite statue; introduced more sensual, natural concept of physical beauty

Graves, Clos Pegase Winery, 1987, Napa Valley, CA.

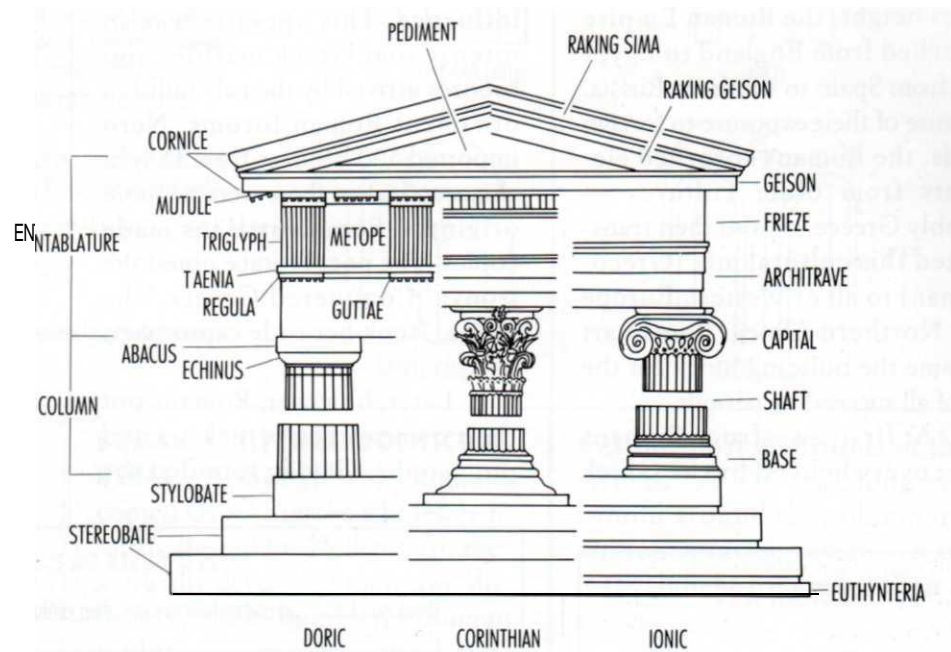


GREEK ARCHITECTURE: A PRIMER

Monuments were treated by the Greeks as large sculpture and were built with the same rules of symmetry and ideal proportions. Public rites took place in front of the temple, where elaborate sculpture told the story of the temple's deity. The most common locations for sculpture were the triangular pediments and horizontal frieze. During the Classic period, features on faces were impassive, giving rise to the term Severe Style. Regardless of the violent events depicted, faces showed little expression as in the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, where a woman seemed lost in thought as she, almost incidentally, removed a drunken centaur's hand from her breast.

Sculpted figures on a building's pediment often protruded sharply from their background stone, which was painted red or blue. Even though the backs of figures could not be seen, because of the Greek obsession with completeness and harmony they were nearly finished.

The phrase "Doric order" referred to all the standard components of a Doric temple, typically found on mainland Greece. The "Ionic order" was more widespread in the Greek settlements of Asia Minor and the Aegean. The "Corinthian order," its columns topped by stylized leaves of the acanthus plant, developed much later. It was not widely used on exteriors until Roman times. The curve along the tapering lines of a column was called entasis. In keeping with the Greeks' fixation on harmony, this slight curve conveyed a fluid, rather than rigid, effect. Occasionally, female figures called caryatids replaced fluted columns.



GREEK ART

GOLDEN AGE: 480-430 B.C.

PHILOSOPHY: Moderation in all

MOST FAMOUS WORK: "Winged Victory"

MOST FAMOUS BUILDING: Parthenon

CHARACTERISTIC FORM: Male nude

SIGNATURE CITY: Athens

CONTRIBUTIONS: Democracy,
individualism, reason

GREEK ART STYLES

GEOMETRIC ART (9th—8th century B.C.), pottery ornamented with geometric banding and friezes of simplified animals, humans

ARCHAIC ART (600-480 B.C.), period includes kouros and stone figures and vase painting

KOUROS (nude male youth)/KORE (clothed maiden), earliest (625-480 B.C.) free-standing statues of human figures; frontal stance, left foot forward, clenched fists, and grimace known as "Archaic smile"

SEVERE STYLE, early phase of Classical sculpture characterized by reserved, remote expressions

CLASSICAL ART (480-323 B.C.), peak of Greek art and architecture, idealized figures exemplify order and harmony

HELLENISTIC ART (323-31 B.C.), Greek-derived style, found in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Egypt; more melodramatic (as in "Laocoon," 50 B.C.) than Classical style

ROME: THE ORGANIZERS

At its height, the Roman Empire stretched from England to Egypt and from Spain to southern Russia. Because of their exposure to foreign lands, the Romans absorbed elements from older cultures — notably Greece — and then transmitted this cultural mix (Greco-Roman) to all of Western Europe and Northern Africa. Roman art became the building block for the art of all succeeding periods.

At first, awestruck Romans were overwhelmed by the Greek

influence. This appetite was so intense that Greek marbles and bronzes arrived by the galleonful to ornament Roman forums. Nero imported 500 bronzes from Delphi alone, and when there were no more originals, Roman artisans made copies. The poet Horace noted the irony: "Conquered Greece," he wrote, "took her rude captor captive."

Later, however, Romans put their own spin on Greek art and philosophy. Having founded the

greatest empire the world had ever known, they added managerial talents: organization and efficiency. Roman art is less idealized and intellectual than Classical Greek, more secular and functional. And, where the Greeks shined at innovation, the Romans' forte was administration. Wherever their generals marched, they brought the civilizing influence of law and the practical benefits of roads, bridges, sewers, and aqueducts.

ROMAN ART

PHILOSOPHY: Efficiency, organization, practicality

ART FORMS: Mosaics, realistic wall paintings, idealized civic sculpture

MOST FAMOUS BUILDING: Pantheon

SIGNATURE CITY: Rome

ROLE MODEL: Greece

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS: Law, engineering, cement

IS IT GREEK OR IS IT ROMAN?

Greek and Roman art and architecture are often confused. Here's a chart of the major differences.



The Pantheon, A.D. 118–125, Rome. *The domed rotunda of the Pantheon illustrates the Roman architects' ability to enclose space.*

Parthenon, 448–432 B.C., Athens. *The Parthenon's triangular pediment and columned portico show classic Greek temple format.*



GREEK

ROMAN

PREFERRED STRUCTURE:	Temples to glorify gods	Civic buildings (baths, forum) to honor Empire
WALLS:	Made of cut stone blocks	Concrete with ornamental facing
TRADEMARK FORMS:	Rectangles, straight lines	Circles, curved lines
SUPPORT SYSTEM:	Post and lintel	Rounded arch, vaults
COLUMN STYLE:	Doric, Ionic	Corinthian
SCULPTURE:	Idealized gods and goddesses	Realistic human beings, idealized officials
PAINTING:	Stylized figures floating in space	Realistic images with perspective
SUBJECT OF ART:	Mythology	Civic leaders, military triumphs

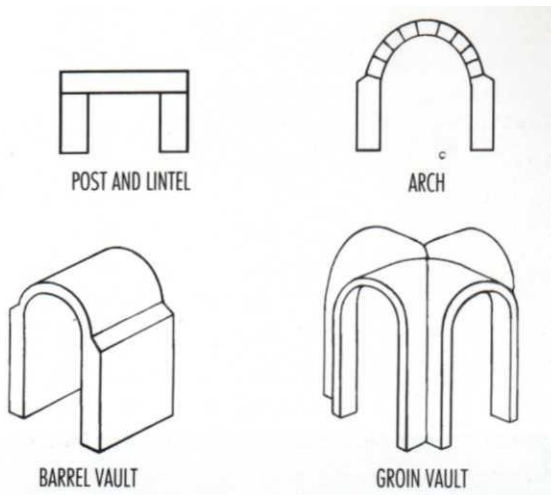
THE LEGACY OF ROME

Roman architects used Greek forms but developed new construction techniques like the arch to span greater distances than the Greek post and lintel system (two vertical posts with a horizontal beam). Concrete allowed more flexible designs, as in the barrel-vaulted roof, and the dome-covered, huge circular areas. Here are some Roman contributions to architecture:

BASILICA, an oblong building with semicircular apses on either end and high clerestory windows, used as meeting place in Roman times and widely imitated in medieval Christian churches.

BARREL VAULT, deep arch forming a half-cylindrical roof

GROIN VAULT, two intersecting barrel vaults at the same height that form a right angle



ROMAN ARCHITECTURE: VAULTING AMBITION. Besides Roman law, perhaps Rome's most valuable contributions were in the areas of architecture and engineering. Roman builders not only developed the arch, vault, and dome but pioneered the creative use of concrete. These innovations proved revolutionary, allowing Romans for the first time to cover immense interior spaces without inner supports.

Rome became incredibly rich from conquered booty. Nero's palace, the Golden House, with its mile-long portico, was the most opulent residence in antiquity. In the banquet room, perfume sprinkled down on guests from the ceiling. Inside, a domed roof revolved so that visitors could follow the constellations through its central opening.

The Romans loved baths, and the more extravagant, the better. At the enormous Baths of Caracalla (A.D. 215), a capacity crowd of 1,600 bathed in pools of varying water temperatures. An elaborate pipe system stoked by slaves heated steam baths and exercise rooms as well. "We have become so luxurious," observed the writer Seneca, "that we will have nothing but precious stones to walk upon."

ROMAN SCULPTURE: POLITICS AS USUAL. Although the Romans copied Greek statues wholesale to satisfy the fad for Hellenic art, they gradually developed their own distinctive style. In general, Roman sculpture was more literal. The Romans had always kept wax death masks of ancestors in their homes. These realistic images were completely factual molds of the deceased's features, and this tradition influenced Roman sculptors.

An exception to this tradition was the assembly-line, godlike busts of emperors, politicians, and military leaders in civic buildings throughout Europe, establishing a political presence thousands of miles from Rome. Interestingly, during Rome's decline, when assassination became the preferred means for transfer of power, portrait busts reverted to brutal honesty. An unflattering statue of Caracalla reveals a cruel dictator, and Philip the Arab's portrait shows a suspicious tyrant.

The other principal form of Roman sculpture was narrative relief. Panels of sculpted figures depicting military exploits decorated triumphal arches, under which victorious armies paraded, leading long lines of chained prisoners. The Column of Trajan (A.D. 106-113)

was the most ambitious of these efforts. A 650-foot-long relief wound around the column in an unbroken spiral, commemorating mass slaughter in more than 150 scenes.



Marcus Aurelius, A.D. 165, Capitoline Hill, Rome. *The Emperor Marcus Aurelius was a Stoic philosopher who detested war. The sculptor represented this gentle, reflective ruler as a superhuman ideal.*

THE COLLOSSEUM

With a million people in Rome, many of them poor, emperors distracted the masses from their grievances with large-scale public entertainment. At the Colosseum, which seated 50,000 spectators, for the opening act in A.D. 80, the entire arena was flooded to stage a naval battle reenacted by a cast of 3,000.

Combat between gladiators was popular. Some were armed with shield, sword, and helmet, while others carried only net and trident. Boxers wore leather gloves, their fists clenched around lumps of iron. To guarantee an energetic performance, the combat was to the death.

Slaves carrying whips with lead weights on the lashes drove fleeing men or beasts back into the fray. Up to forty gladiators (if the crowd was in a thumbs-down mood) died per day. In the course of a single day's events, thousands of corpses were dragged off with a metal hook.

Half-time shows featured the execution of criminals, followed by man-wild beast contests. Early "elevators" raised hundreds of starving lions from underground cages to attack unarmed Christians or slaves.

Man-versus-bear struggles were also

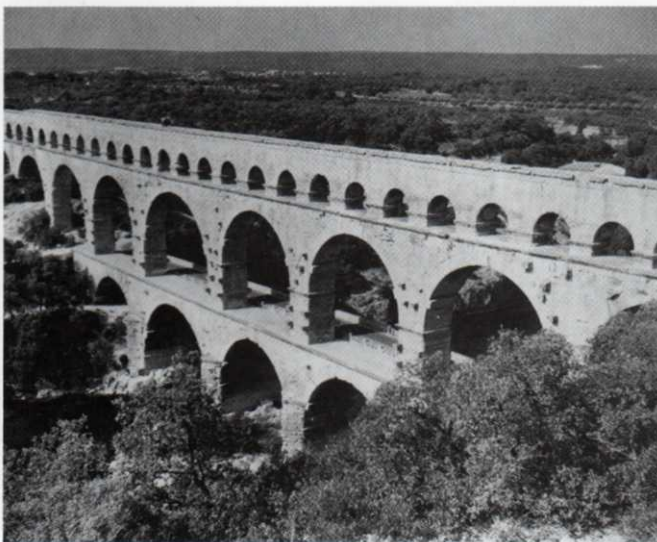
much admired, as were animal hunts starring elephants or rhinoceroses. To celebrate one victory, the Emperor Trajan sacrificed 11,000 lions, leopards, ostriches, and antelopes. To disguise the odor of stables, slaves sprayed clouds of perfume at distinguished spectators and sprinkled red powder on the arena's sand floor to make bloodstains less conspicuous.

Still one of the world's largest buildings in terms of sheer mass, the Colosseum was so efficiently laid out that it inspired present-day stadium design. Each spectator had a seat number corresponding to a certain gate, which allowed smooth crowd flow via miles of corridors and ramps. Three types of columns framed the 161-foot-high structure, using the Doric order at the base, Ionic in the middle, and Corinthian above — the typical design sequence for a multistoried Roman building. The balance of vertical columns and horizontal bands of arches unified the exterior, relating the enormous facade to a more human scale. Sadly, Rome's rich Barberini family later stripped off the stadium's marble facing for their building projects.



Colosseum, A.D. 70-82, Rome.

Pont du Gard, Kimes, 1st century B.C., France. Beginning in the 4th century B.C., Romans constructed huge aqueducts to carry water for distances up to 50 miles. These structures were built on continuous gradual declines to transport water by force of gravity. On the Pont du Gard aqueduct, which carried 100 gallons of water a day for each inhabitant of the city, each large arch spanned 82 feet.



POMPEII: A CITY TURNED TO CARBON

It was 1 P.M. on a summer day when, according to eyewitness Pliny the Younger, Mt. Vesuvius erupted, spewing molten lava and raining ash on the nearby towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum. A black mushroom cloud rose 12 miles over the peak until, by the end of the next day, the villages were covered with 18 feet of ash and pumice. They remained covered — forgotten — for 1,700 years, preserving an incredible hoard of nearly intact artifacts, mosaics, and wall paintings.

Pompeii was a luxurious resort community with a population of 25,000. The scientific excavation that began in the mid-1800s disclosed not only ordinary objects like carbonized loaves of bread, fish, eggs, and nuts (a priest's abandoned lunch) but whole villas in which every wall was painted with realistic still lifes and landscapes. Since the interiors of villas had no windows, only a central atrium opening, ancient Romans painted make-believe windows with elaborate views of fantasy vistas. This style of wall painting

ranged from simple imitations of colored marble to trompe l'oeil scenes of complex cityscapes as seen through imaginary windows framed by imaginary painted columns. Artists mastered tricks of perspective and effects of light and shadow that were unknown in world art. Walls glowed with vivid red, tan, and green panels.

Mosaics made of bits of colored stone, glass, or shell (called tesserae) covered floors, walls, and ceilings. Many were as intricate as paintings. In one, fifty tiny cubes composed a one-and-a-half-inch eye. Entrances often included a mosaic of a dog with the words "Cave Canem" (Beware of the Dog).



Frieze, Villa of the Mysteries, c. 50 B.C., Pompeii. A frieze of nearly Hefstze figures presumably depicted secret Dionysiaa rites, such as drinking blood of sacrificed beasts.

PRE-COLUMBIAN ART OF THE AMERICAS: NEW WORLD ART WHEN IT WAS STILL AN OLD WORLD

"Pre-Columbian" refers to the period before Columbus landed in the New World, or before European customs began to influence Native American artisans of North, Central, and South America. Arrowheads from 10,000 B.C. and pottery from 2000 B.C. have been found, evidence of how ancient New World culture actually was. Art was vitally important to tribal society. Objects used in religious rituals, such as carved masks and pipebowls, were thought to be charged with magic. In a life of uncertainty, craftsmen hoped these objects would appease nature and help the tribe survive.

NATIVE AMERICAN ART: A SAMPLING

Pre-Columbian art ranges from the mountains of Peru to the plains of the Midwest to the coast of Alaska. The following were some of the best-known tribal artisans:

NAVAHO: Southwest tribe known for geometric-design rugs colored with herbal and mineral dyes, especially coriander red. Shamans created sand paintings to heal disease, promote fertility, or assure a successful hunt. Still practicing today, Navaho sand painters use natural pigments, like powdered rock in various colors, corn pollen, and charcoal, to produce temporary works on a flat bed of sand.

HOP: Carved and painted kochina dolls out of cottonwood roots to represent gods and teach religion. Also decorated ceremonial underground kivas in Arizona with elaborate mural paintings of agriculture deities.

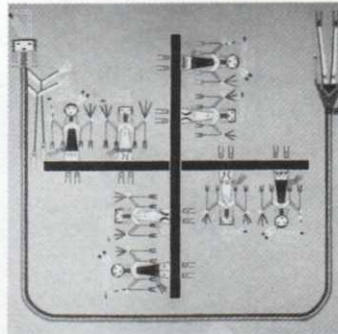
KWAKWAKWUTL: Northwest coast tribe that produced totem poles, masks, and decorated houses and canoes. Facial features of masks exaggerated in forceful wood carvings. Mortuary poles and totem poles indicated social status.

ESKIMO: Alaskan tribe that carved masks with moving parts used by shamans; often combined odd materials in surprising ways.

MAYAN: In Guatemala and Mexico, Mayans created enormous temples in stepped-pyramid form. Huge limestone temples were richly carved with relief sculpture and hieroglyphics. Tikal (population 70,000) was largest Mayan site, with highest pyramid reaching 230 feet. Although the Mayans had sophisticated calendar and knowledge of astronomy, civilization withered about A.D. 900.

AZTEC: Capital was Mexico City, the urban center of this large empire. Produced massive statues of gods who demanded regular human sacrifices. Skilled in gold work.

INCAN: Peruvian tribe known for precisely constructed masonry temples and metallurgy; civilization at height when Spaniards arrived.



Ceremonial sand painting, 1968, Navaho, National Museum of the American Indian, NY.



Hopi kochina doll, 1972, National Museum of the American Indian, NY.

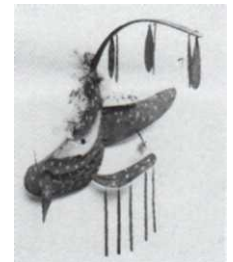
Eskimo shaman mask, before 1900, National Museum of the American Indian, NY.



Totem pole, Nootko, 1928, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.



Temple mural, Mayan, A.D. 790-800, Peabody Museum, Harvard.



Gold Figurine of King Tizoc, Aztec, c. 1481-86, Mexican, National Museum of the American Indian, NY.



Gold funerary mask, Incan, 12th-14th century, MMA, NY.

MOUND-BUILDERS

Native Americans have always been environmentalists. Their philosophy was based on unity between nature — a maternal force to be loved and respected—and humanity. In the Great Serpent Mound of Ohio, Native Americans constructed on elaborate natural shrine as a setting for their religion. About a quarter-mile long, the burial mound was in the shape of a snake holding an egg in its jaws.

From 2000 s.c., tribes constructed these mounds, each some 100 feet high, from Florida to Wisconsin. More than 10,000 existed in the Ohio Valley alone. Some imitated the



"The Great Serpent Mound," 1000 B.C. - A.D. 400, length 1,400', Adams County, Ohio.

Besides their role in important events like initiations, funerals, and festivals, beautiful objects were also prized because Native Americans valued gift-giving. High-quality gifts bestowed prestige on the giver, and artisans excelled in silverwork, basketry, ceramics, weaving, and beadwork. Native Americans were also skilled at wall painting. Their work tended toward the abstract, with stylized pictographs floating almost randomly, as in

shape of a tribe's totem animal, such as an enormous bird with spreading wings. Others were simply shaped like domes, but in each case, the builders hauled millions of tons of earth by hand in baskets, then tamped it down. The volume of the largest mound, near St. Louis, was greater than that of the Great Pyramid. In some cases, inner burial chambers contained archeological treasures, like the body of an aristocrat clothed entirely in pearls.

Mound-builders partly inspired Earthworks, a movement that emerged in the late 1960s to make the land itself a work of art. Robert Smithson's "Spiral Jetty" (now underwater in Great Salt Lake, Utah) is one of the better-known examples of this movement.



Smithson, "Spiral Jetty," 1970, rock, salt crystals, and earth, coil length 1500', Great Salt Lake, Utah.

cave paintings, without foreground or background.

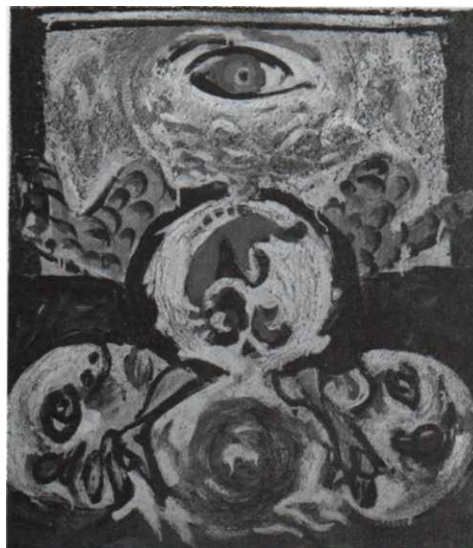
Much Native American art was inspired by visions. The shaman (priest-healer) would reproduce objects the gods communicated to him during a trance. Among the results of drawing on such subconscious impulses were extremely distorted Eskimo masks, among the most original art ever seen.

20TH-CENTURY "TRIBAL" ART

Among the many modern painters influenced by Native American art were Diego Rivera and Jackson Pollock, whose 20th-century works grew out of centuries-old practices.



Rivera, "The Liberation of the Peon," 1931, Philadelphia Museum of Art. The part-Spanish, part-Indian Diego Rivera based his style on Mayan murals, even experimenting with cactus juice as a medium.



Pollock, "Bird," 1941, MoMA, NY. After seeing Navaho shamans making sand paintings, Pollock began to use tinted sand and to paint with his canvas on the floor, saying, "On the floor I... feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides, and literally be in the painting [like] the Indian sand painters of the West."

AFRICAN ART: THE FIRST CUBISTS

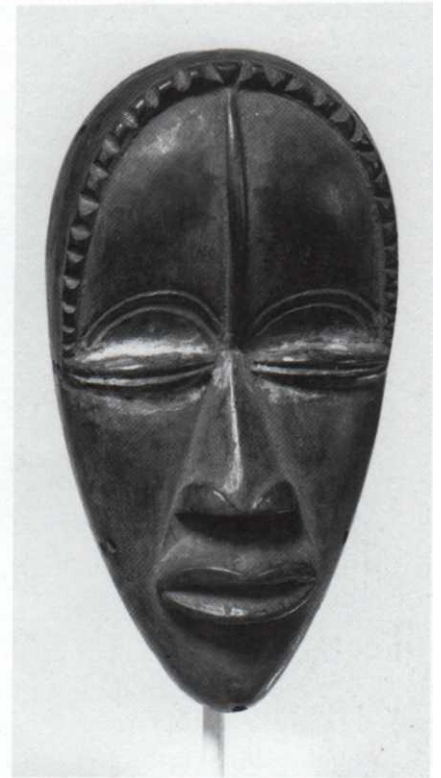
The main artistic products of tropical Africa were wood carvings, both masks and sculpture in-the-round. In form these objects were angular, off-balance, and distorted. For members of African society, they were sacred objects harboring the life force of an ancestor or nature spirit and had power to cure illnesses or harm enemies. On special occasions the figures and masks were removed from their shrines, washed, anointed with palm oil, and decorated with beads and cloth. In between rituals, the figures were considered so infused with supernatural power they were hidden, and women and children were forbidden to look at them. Although the moist jungle climate rotted many of these wooden objects, those that remain express the emotional intensity their society invested in them.

MASKS. Wooden masks were used in ritual performances with complex musical rhythms, dances, and costumes. For their full impact, they should be thought of in motion, surrounded by colorful garments and the rapid swaying and rustling of raffia skirts and arm fringes.

Masks were intentionally unrealistic: when confronting a supernatural power, the idea was for the performer to conceal his true identity, behind this artificial face. For dramatic effect, carvers simplified human features in a series of sharply cut advancing and receding planes.

This freedom from European tradition is what appealed to Pablo Picasso — who became aware of African art around 1905 — and inspired the Cubist movement. Picasso described his reaction to African fetish masks this way: "It came to me that this was very important. . . . These masks were not just pieces of sculpture like the rest. . . . They were magic."

Their influence is evident in Picasso's landmark painting, "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)" (Avignon was the name of a street in Barcelona's red-light district, and the women were intended to depict prostitutes.) The painting was a transition point between Picasso's African-influenced period and pure Cubism. Inspired by the distortions of African carving and in order to show multiple aspects of an object at the same time, Picasso painted the figures in jagged planes.



"Kagle" (mask), c. 1775-1825, Dan, Rietberg Museum, Zurich. African masks were typically lozenge-shaped, with wedge noses and almondlike eyes.



Picasso, "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)," 1907, MoMA, NY. After seeing African masks, Picasso raced back to his studio to repaint the faces in this picture.

AFRICAN SCULPTURE. African carvers consistently rejected real-life appearance in favor of vertical forms, tubular shapes, and stretched-out body parts derived from the cylindrical form of trees. Since sculptures were believed to house powerful spirits, these wooden figures could wreak havoc or bestow blessings among the living.

THE FAR-FLUNG INFLUENCE OF TRIBAL ART

Beginning with Gauguin's pace-setting appreciation of South Sea islanders, primitive art influenced professional Western artists from the late nineteenth century through the present. The following artists and movements were the most affected by the art of pre-industrial societies:

GAUGUIN: Gauguin went to Tahiti in 1891, seeking an exotic culture unspoiled by civilization. The brilliant colors and simplified anatomy of his island paintings reflect decorative Oceanic art.

FAUVES: Around 1904-8, the Fauves discovered African and South Pacific sculpture. Matisse, Derain, and Vlaminck were key painters who enthusiastically collected African masks.

CUBISTS: Picasso and Braque pioneered this movement based on African tribal sculpture and masks, which fractured reality into overlapping planes. Cubism stimulated developments throughout Europe, leading to the abstraction of Malevich and Mondrian.

SURREALISTS: In the 1920s, antirational artists like Ernst, Miro, Magritte, Giacometti, and Dali collected Pacific carvings, African masks, and fanciful Eskimo masks.

MEXICAN MURALISTS: Jose Clemente Orozco, David Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera dominated Mexican art in the 1930s by paying homage to the Mayan and Aztec empires.

MODERNISTS: Sophisticated artists like Modigliani found a freshness and vitality in tribal art missing in conventional art. His paintings of long-necked women resemble African carved figures.

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISTS: The impermanence of Navaho sand paintings, destroyed at the end of a rite, influenced Abstract Expressionists to focus on the process of artistic creation rather than the end product.

CONTEMPORARY: Artists as diverse as Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Keith Haring, and David Salle have incorporated images of African masks into their work.



"Couple," n.d., wood, Dogon, Mali, The Barnes Foundation, PA.



Giacometti, "Walking Woman," 1932-33, collection of Rhode-St.-Genese. Another Modernist whose work resembles tribal African art is Giacometti, known for his elongated sculptures.

THE MIDDLE AGES: THE REIGN OF RELIGION

The Middle Ages included the millennium from the fifth to the fifteenth century, roughly from the fall of Rome until the Renaissance. During its initial period, called the Dark Ages, after the death of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian in 565 until the reign of Charlemagne in 800, barbarians destroyed what had taken 3,000 years to build. Yet the Dark Ages were only part of the Middle Ages story. There were many bright spots in art and architecture, from the splendor of the Byzantine court in Constantinople to the majesty of Gothic cathedrals.

Three major shifts occurred that had far-reaching effects on Western civilization:

1. Cultural leadership moved north from the Mediterranean to France, Germany, and the British Isles.
2. Christianity triumphed over paganism and barbarism.
3. Emphasis shifted from the here-and-now to the hereafter, and with it from the body as beautiful to the body as corrupt.

Since the Christian focus was on salvation for a glorious afterlife, interest in realistically representing objects of the world disappeared. Nudes were forbidden, and even images of clothed bodies showed ignorance of anatomy. The Greco-Roman ideals of harmonious proportions and balance between the body and mind ceased to exist. Instead, medieval artisans were interested exclusively in the soul, especially in instructing new believers in church dogma. Art became the servant of the church. Theologians believed church members would come to appreciate divine beauty through material beauty, and lavish mosaics, paintings, and sculpture were the result.

In architecture, this orientation toward the spiritual took the form of lighter, more airy buildings. The mass and bulk of Roman architecture gave way to buildings reflecting the ideal Christian: plain on the outside but glowing with spiritually symbolic mosaics, frescoes, or stained glass inside.

Medieval art was composed of three different styles: Byzantine, Romanesque, and Gothic.

GOLDEN AGE OF BYZANTINE ART

Byzantine refers to eastern Mediterranean art from A.D. 330, when Constantine transferred the seat of the Roman Empire to Byzantium (later called Constantinople) until the city's fall to the Turks in 1453. In the interim, while Rome was overrun by barbarians and declining to a heap of rubble, Byzantium became the center of a brilliant civilization combining early Christian art with the Greek Oriental taste for rich decoration and color. In fact, the complex formality of Byzantine art and architecture doubtless shaped the modern sense of the word "Byzantine."

ART OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Throughout the Middle Ages, in a succession of three styles, art was concerned with religion. The main forms of art and architecture associated with each style were:

	BYZANTINE	ROMANESQUE	GOthic
ART	Mosaics, icons	Frescoes, stylized sculpture	Stained glass, more natural sculpture
ARCHITECTURE	Central-dome church	Barrel-vaulted church	Pointed-arch cathedral
EXAMPLE	Hagia Sophia	St. Sernin	Chartres
DATE	532–37	Begun 1080	1194–1260
PLACE	Constantinople, Turkey	Toulouse, France	Chartres, France

ICONS

As gloomy as these images of tortured martyrs were, no discussion of Byzantine art is complete without a look at icons. Icons were small wood-panel paintings, believed to possess supernatural powers. The images of saints or holy persons were typically rigid, frontal poses, often with halos and staring, wide eyes. Icons supposedly had magical properties. According to legend, one wept, another emitted the odor of incense. Ardent believers carried them into battle or wore away their faces by kissing them. So powerful did the cult of icons become that they were banned from 726-843 as a violation of the commandment against idolatry.



Berlinghiero, "Madonna and Child," early 12th century, MMA, NY.

MOSAICS. Some of the world's greatest art, in the form of mosaics, was created during the fifth and sixth centuries in Turkish Byzantium and its Italian capital, Ravenna. Mosaics were intended to publicize the now-official Christian creed, so their subject was generally religion with Christ shown as teacher and all-powerful ruler. Sumptuous grandeur, with halos spotlighting sacred figures and shimmering gold backgrounds, characterized these works.

Human figures were flat, stiff, and symmetrically placed, seeming to float as if hung from pegs. Artisans had no interest in suggesting perspective or volume. Tall, slim human figures with almond-shaped faces, huge eyes, and solemn expressions gazed straight ahead, without the least hint of movement.



"Justinian and Attendants," c. 547, San Vitale, Ravenna.



"The Battle of Issus," Pompeii, c. 80 B.C., Museo Nazionale, Naples.

Although drawing on the Roman tradition of setting colored cubes, or tesserae, in plaster to form a picture, Byzantine mosaics (above, right) were distinct from Roman (left). Here are the principal variations:

ROMAN MOSAICS

VS.

BYZANTINE MOSAICS

Used **opaque marble cubes**

Pieces had smooth, flat finish

Colors limited due to use of natural stones

Typically **found** on floor of private homes

Subjects were secular, like battles, games

Used **minute** pieces for realistic detail

Background represented landscape

Used **reflective glass cubes**

Surfaces left uneven so work sparkled

Glowing glass in wide range of colors

Found on walls and ceilings — especially church dome and apse

Subjects were religious, like Christ as shepherd

Large cubes in stylized designs

Background was abstract: sky-blue, then gold



Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus, "Hagia Sophia," Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey), 532-37. *Cathedrals from Venice to Russia were based on this domed structure, a masterpiece of Byzantine architecture.*

HAGIA SOPHIA. When Emperor Justinian decided to build a church in Constantinople, the greatest city in the world for 400 years, he wanted to make it as grand as his empire. He assigned the task to two mathematicians, Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus. They obliged his ambition with a completely innovative structure, recognized as a climax in Byzantine architectural style.

The Hagia Sophia (pronounced HAH zhee ah soh FEE ah; the name means "holy wisdom") merged the vast scale of Roman buildings like the Baths of Caracalla with an Eastern mystical atmosphere. Nearly three football fields long, it combined the Roman rectangular basilica layout with a huge central dome. Architects achieved this breakthrough thanks to the Byzantine contribution to engineering — pendentives. For the first time, four arches forming a square (as opposed to round weight-bearing walls, as in the Pantheon) supported a dome. This structural revolution accounted for the lofty, unobstructed interior with its soaring dome.

Forty arched windows encircle the base of the dome, creating the illusion that it rests on a halo of light. This overhead radiance seems to dissolve the walls in divine light, transforming the material into an otherworldly vision. So successful was his creation, that Justinian boasted, "Solomon, I have vanquished thee!"

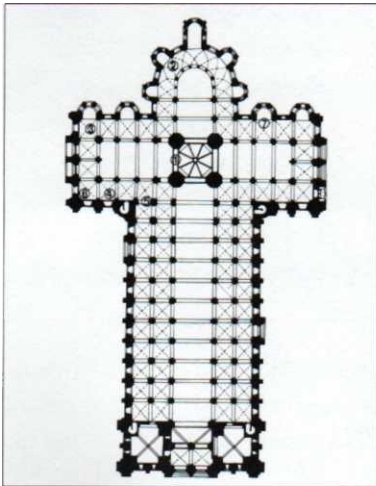
ROMANESQUE ART: STORIES IN STONE

With the Roman Catholic faith firmly established, a wave of church construction throughout feudal Europe occurred from 1050 to 1200. Builders borrowed elements from Roman architecture, such as rounded arches and columns, giving rise to the term Romanesque for the art and architecture of the period. Yet because Roman buildings were timber-roofed and prone to fires, medieval artisans began to roof churches with stone vaulting. In this system, barrel or groin vaults resting on piers could span large openings with few internal supports or obstructions.

Pilgrimages were in vogue at the time, and church architecture took into account the hordes of tourists visiting shrines of sacred bones, garments, or splinters from the True Cross brought back by the Crusaders. The layout was cruciform, symbolizing the body of Christ on the cross with a long nave transversed by a shorter transept.

Arcades allowed pilgrims to walk around peripheral aisles without disrupting ceremonies for local worshipers in the central nave. At the *chevet* ("pillow" in French), called such because it was conceived as the resting place for Christ's head as he hung on the cross, behind the altar, were semicircular chapels with saints' relics.

The exterior of Romanesque churches was rather plain except for sculptural relief around the main portal. Since most church-goers were illiterate, sculpture taught religious doctrine by telling stories in stone. Sculpture was concentrated in the tympanum, the semicircular space beneath the arch and above the lintel of the central door. Scenes of Christ's ascension to the heavenly throne were popular, as well as grisly Last Judgment dioramas, where demons gobbled hapless souls, while devils strangled or spitted naked bodies of the damned.



Plan of St. Sernin, Toulouse, France. This typical segmented, Romanesque structure includes multiple semicircular chapels and vaulted square bays.



The nave of St. Sernin showing barrel vaults, c. 1080–1120.



Last Judgment from west tympanum, Autun Cathedral, c.1130–35. In Romanesque sculpture, realism yielded to moralism. Bodies, distorted to fit the masonry niche, were elongated with expressions of intense emotion.

!

GIOTTO: PIONEER PAINTER

Because Italy maintained contact with Byzantine civilization, the art of painting was never abandoned. But at the end of the 13th century, a flowering of technically skilled painting occurred, with masters like Duccio and Simone Martini of Siena and Cimabue and Giotto of Florence breaking with the frozen Byzantine style for softer, more lifelike forms. The frescoes (paintings on damp plaster walls) of Giotto di Bondone (pronounced JOT toe; c. 1266-1337) were the first since the Roman period to render human forms suggesting weight and roundness. They marked the advent of what would afterward become painting's central role in Western art.



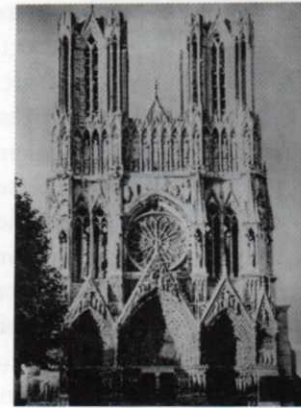
Giotto, "Noli me tangere," 1305, fresco, Arena Chapel, Padua. Giotto painted human figures with a sense of anatomical structure beneath the drapery.

HOW TO TELL THEM APART



St. Trophime,
late 12th
century, Arles,
France.

Romanesque churches had round arches and stylized sculpture. Gothic cathedrals had pointed arches and more natural sculpture. Keeping Romanesque and Gothic straight means recognizing the distinctive features of each, like the following:



Reims Cathedral,
west façade,
c.1220–36, France.

	ROMANESQUE	VS.	GOthic
EMPHASIS	horizontal		vertical
ELEVATION	modest height		soaring
LAYOUT	multiple units		unified, unbroken space
MAIN TRAIT	rounded arch		pointed arch
SUPPORT SYSTEM	piers, walls		exterior buttresses
ENGINEERING	barrel & groin vaults		ribbed groin vaults
AMBIANCE	dark, solemn		airy, bright
EXTERIOR	simple, severe		richly decorated with sculpture

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS. With hordes of pillagers looting and razing cities of the former Roman Empire, monasteries were all that stood between Western Europe and total chaos. Here monks and nuns copied manuscripts, keeping alive both the art of illustration in particular and Western civilization in general.

By this time, the papyrus scroll used from Egypt to Rome was replaced by the vellum (calfskin) or parchment (lambskin) codex, made of separate pages bound at one side. Manuscripts were considered sacred objects containing the word of God. They were decorated lavishly, so their outward beauty would reflect their sublime contents. Covers were made of gold studded with precious and semiprecious gems. Until printing was developed in the fifteenth century, these manuscripts were the only form of books in existence, preserving not only religious teachings but also Classical literature.



Some of the richest, purely ornamental drawings ever produced are contained in the illuminated gospel called the Book of Kells (760-820), collection of Trinity College, Dublin, produced by Irish monks. The text was highly embellished with colorful abstract patterns. Enormous letters, sometimes composed of interlacing whorls and fantastic animal imagery, cover entire pages.

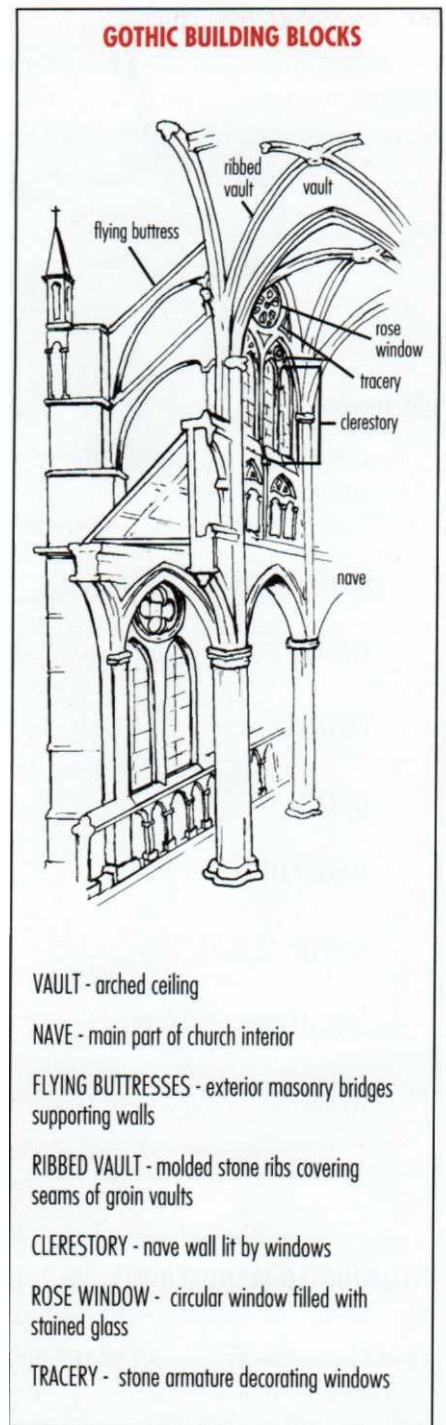
GOTHIC ART: HEIGHT AND LIGHT

The pinnacle of Middle Ages artistic achievement, rivaling the wonders of ancient Greece and Rome, was the Gothic cathedral. In fact, these "stone Bibles" even surpassed Classical architecture in terms of technological daring. From 1200 to 1500, medieval builders erected these intricate structures, with soaring interiors unprecedented in world architecture.

What made the Gothic cathedral possible were two engineering breakthroughs: ribbed vaulting and external supports called flying buttresses. Applying such point supports where necessary allowed builders to forgo solid walls pierced by narrow windows for skeletal walls with huge stained glass windows flooding the interior with light. Gothic cathedrals acknowledged no Dark Ages. Their evolution was a continuous expansion of light, until finally walls were so perforated as to be almost mullions framing immense fields of colored, story-telling glass.

In addition to the latticelike quality of Gothic cathedral walls (with an effect like "petrified lace," as the writer William Faulkner said), verticality characterized Gothic architecture. Builders used the pointed arch, which increased both the reality and illusion of greater height. Architects vied for the highest naves (at Amiens, the nave reached an extreme height of 144 feet). When, as often happened, ambition outstripped technical skill and the naves collapsed, church members tirelessly rebuilt them.

Gothic cathedrals were such a symbol of civic pride that an invader's worst insult was to pull down the tower of a conquered town's cathedral. Communal devotion to the buildings was so intense that all segments of the population participated in construction. Lords and ladies, in worshipful silence, worked alongside butchers and masons, dragging carts loaded with stone from quarries. Buildings were so elaborate that construction literally took ages — six centuries for Cologne Cathedral — which explains why some seem a hodge-podge of successive styles.



Sainte-Chapelle, 13th century, Paris. *More than three-fourths of the exterior structure is composed of stained glass, filling the interior with rose-violet light.*



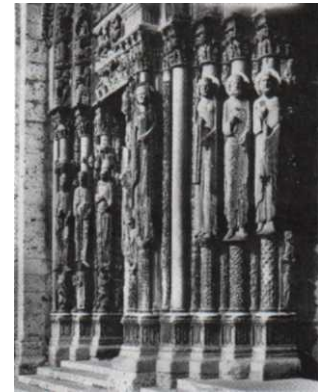
Choir of Beauvais Cathedral, begun 1272. *Beauvais Cathedral's linear design and pointed arches are characteristic of Gothic architecture.*

THE ART OF ARCHITECTURE. Medieval theologians believed a church's beauty would inspire parishioners to meditation and belief. As a result, churches were much more than just assembly halls. They were texts, with volumes of ornaments preaching the path to salvation. The chief forms of inspirational decoration in Gothic cathedrals were sculpture, stained glass, and tapestries.

SCULPTURE: LONG AND LEAN. Cathedral exteriors displayed carved Biblical tales. The Early Gothic sculptures of Chartres (pronounced shartr) and the High Gothic stone figures of Reims (pronounced ranz) Cathedral show the evolution of medieval art.

The Chartres figures of Old Testament kings and queens (1140-50) are pillar people, elongated to fit the narrow columns that house them. Drapery lines are as thin and straight as the bodies, with few traces of naturalism. By the time the jamb figures of Reims were carved, around 1225-90, sculptors for the first time since antiquity approached sculpture in-the-round. These figures are almost detached from their architectural background, standing out from the column on pedestals. After the writings of Aristotle were discovered, the body was no longer despised but viewed as the envelope of the soul, so artists once again depicted flesh naturally.

In "The Visitation," both the Virgin Mary and her kinswoman, Elizabeth, lean primarily on one leg, their upper bodies turned toward each other. The older Elizabeth has a wrinkled face, full of character, and drapery is handled with more imagination than before.



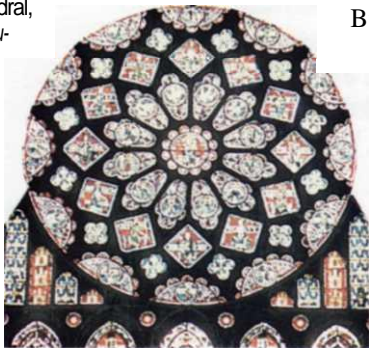
Jamb statues, Royal Portals, Chartres Cathedral, 1145-70.



"The Visitation," jamb statues of west facade, Reims Cathedral, c. 1225-90, France. Sculpture developed from stiff, disproportionately long figures (above) to a more rounded, natural style.

Rose window, Chartres Cathedral,

13th century. Thousands of pieces of glass, tinted with chemicals like cobalt and manganese, were bound together with strips of lead, which also outlined component figures.



STAINED GLASS. Chartres Cathedral was the visible soul of the Middle Ages. Built to house the veil of the Virgin given to the city by Charlemagne's grandson, Charles the Bald, in 876, it is a multi-media masterpiece. Its stained glass windows, the most intact collection of medieval glass in the world, measure 26,900 feet in total area. Illustrating the Bible, the lives of saints, even traditional crafts of France, the windows are like a gigantic, glowing, illuminated manuscript.

TAPESTRY. Weavers in the Middle Ages created highly refined tapestries, minutely detailed with scenes of contemporary life. Large wool-and-silk hangings, used to cut drafts, decorated stone walls in chateaus and churches. Huge-scale paintings were placed behind the warp (or lengthwise threads) of a loom in order to imitate the design in cloth.

A series of seven tapestries represents the unicorn legend. According to popular belief, the only way to catch this mythical beast was to use a virgin sitting in the forest as bait. The trusting unicorn would go to sleep with his head in her lap and awaken caged. The captured unicorn is chained to a pomegranate tree, a symbol of both fertility and, because it contained many seeds within one fruit, the church. During the Renaissance, the unicorn was linked with courtly love, but in the tapestry's ambiguous depiction both lying down and rearing up, he symbolizes the resurrected Christ.

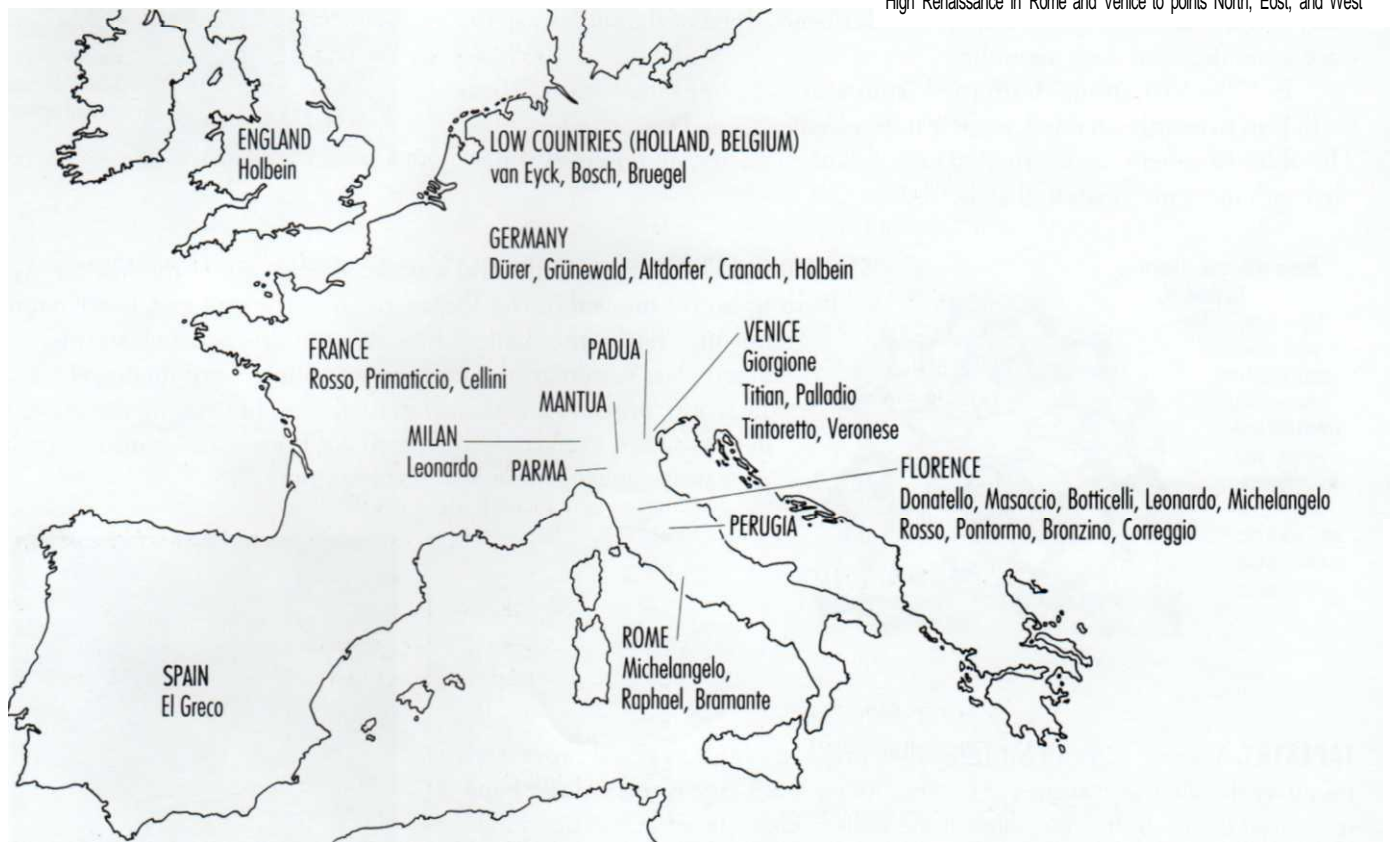


"The Unicorn in Captivity," c. 1500, The Cloisters, MMA, NY.

The Rebirth of Art: Renaissance and Baroque

ALL ROADS LEAD FROM FLORENCE

The Renaissance from the Early Renaissance in Florence and High Renaissance in Rome and Venice to points North, East, and West



The Middle Ages are so called because they fall between twin peaks of artistic glory: the Classical period and the Renaissance. While art hardly died in the Middle Ages, what was reborn in the Renaissance — and extended in the Baroque period — was lifelike art. A shift in interest from the supernatural to the natural caused this change. The rediscovery of the Greco-Roman tradition helped artists reproduce visual images accurately. Aided by the expansion of scientific knowledge, such as an

understanding of anatomy and perspective, painters of the fifteenth through sixteenth centuries went beyond Greece and Rome in technical proficiency.

In the Baroque period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, reverence for Classicism persisted, but everything revved up into overdrive. Ruled by absolute monarchs, the newly centralized states produced theatrical art and architecture of unprecedented grandeur, designed to overwhelm the senses and emotions.

WORLD HISTORY

ART HISTORY

	1400- 1500	Early Renaissance
	1420s	Perspective discovered
Gutenberg invents printing with movable type	1446-50	
Medici's deposed in Florence, art center shifts to Rome	1492	
	1500-20	High Renaissance
Renaissance spreads to Northern Europe	1500- 1600	
	1503-6	Leonardo paints "Mona Lisa"
	1508- 12	Michelangelo frescoes Sistine Chapel ceiling
	1509- 11	Raphael creates Vatican frescoes
	1510	Giorgione paints first reclining nude
Balboa sights Pacific Ocean	1513	
Luther posts 95 Theses, Reformation begins	1517	
Magellan circumnavigates globe	1520	
	1520-1600	Mannerism
Rome sacked by Germans and Spanish	1527	
	1530s	Holbein paints British royalty
Henry VIII of England founds Anglican Church	1534	
	1534-41	Michelangelo works on "Last Judgment"
Copernicus announces planets revolve around sun	1543	
Elizabeth 1 reigns in England	1558- 1603	
	1577	El Greco goes to Spain
England defeats Spanish Armado	1588	
Edict of Nantes establishes religious tolerance	1598	
	1601	Caravaggio paints "Conversion of St. Paul," Baroque begins
Galileo invents telescope	1609	
King James Bible published	1611	
Harvey discovers circulation of blood	1619	
Pilgrims land at Plymouth	1620	
	1630s	Van Dyck paints aristocracy
	1642	Rembrandt creates "Nightwatch"
	1645	Bemini designs Comoro Chapel
	1648	Poussin establishes Classical taste, Royal French Academy of Painting and Sculpture founded
Charles 1 of England beheaded	1649	
	1656	Velazquez paints "Las Meninas"
	1668	Louis XIV orders Versailles enlarged
	1675	Wren designs St. Paul's Cathedral
Newton devises theory of gravity	1687	
Fahrenheit invents mercury thermometer	1714	
	1715	Louis XIV dies, French Rococo begins
Bach completes first Brandenburg Concerto	1720	
	1738	Pompeii and Herculaneum discovered
Catherine the Great rules Russia	1762	
James Watt invents steam engine	1765	
	1768	Reynolds heads Royal Academy
Priestley discovers oxygen	1774	
American colonies declare independence	1776	
	1784-85	David launches Neoclassicism
Mozart becomes court musician to Emperor Joseph II	1787	
French Revolution breaks out	1789	

THE RENAISSANCE: THE BEGINNING OF MODERN PAINTING

In the early 1400s, the world woke up. From its beginnings in Florence, Italy, this renaissance, or rebirth, of culture spread to Rome and Venice, then, in 1500, to the rest of Europe (known as the Northern Renaissance): the Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, and England.

Common elements were the rediscovery of the art and literature of Greece and Rome, the scientific study of the body and the natural world, and the intent to reproduce the forms of nature realistically.

Aided by new technical knowledge like the study of anatomy, artists achieved new heights in portraiture, landscape, and mythological and religious paintings. As skills increased, the prestige of the artist soared, reaching its peak during the High Renaissance (1500-1520) with megastars like Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

During the Renaissance, such things as the exploration of new continents and scientific research boosted man's belief in himself, while, at the same time, the Protestant Reformation decreased the sway of the church. As a result, the study of God the Supreme Being was replaced by the study of the human being. From the minutely detailed, realistic portraits of Jan van Eyck, to the emotional intensity of Diirer's woodcuts and engravings, to the contorted bodies and surreal lighting of El Greco, art was the means to explore all facets of life on earth.

THE TOP FOUR BREAKTHROUGHS

During the Renaissance, technical innovations and creative discoveries made possible new styles of representing reality. The major breakthroughs were the change from tempera paint on wood panels and fresco on plaster walls to oil on stretched canvas and the use of perspective, giving weight and depth to form; the use of light and shadow, as opposed to simply drawing lines; and pyramidal composition in paintings.

1. OIL ON STRETCHED CANVAS. Oil on canvas became the medium of choice during the Renaissance. With this method, a mineral like lapis lazuli was ground fine, then mixed with turpentine and oil to be applied as oil paint. A greater range



of rich colors with smooth gradations of tone permitted painters to represent textures and simulate three-dimensional form.

2. PERSPECTIVE. One of the most significant discoveries in the history of art was the method for creating the illusion of depth on a flat surface called "perspective," which became a foundation of European painting for the next 500 years. Linear perspective created the optical effect of objects receding in the distance through lines that appear to converge at a single point in the picture known as the vanishing point. (In Masaccio's "The Tribute Money," lines converge behind the head of Christ.) Painters also reduced the size of objects and muted colors or blurred detail as objects got farther away.



Hans Holbein the Younger, "The French Ambassadors," 1533, NG, London. This portrait of two "universal men" expressed the versatility of the age. Objects like globes, compasses, sundials, lute, and hymnbook show wide-ranging interests from mathematics to music. Holbein fully exploited all the technical discoveries of the Renaissance: the lessons of composition, anatomy, realistic depiction of the human form through light and dark, lustrous color, and flawless perspective.

Masaccio, "The Tribute Money," c. 1427, Santo Maria del Carmine, Florence. Masaccio revolutionized painting through his use of perspective, a consistent source of light, and three-dimensional portrayal of the human figure.

3. THE USE OF LIGHT AND SHADOW. Chiaroscuro (pronounced key arrow SKEWR o), which means "light/dark" in Italian, referred to the new technique for modeling forms in painting by which lighter parts seemed to emerge from darker areas, producing the illusion of rounded, sculptural relief on a flat surface.

4. PYRAMID CONFIGURATION. Rigid profile portraits and grouping of figures on a horizontal grid in the picture's foreground gave way to a more three-dimensional "pyramid configuration." This symmetrical composition builds to a climax at the center, as in Leonardo's "Mona Lisa," where the focal point is the figure's head.

THE EARLY RENAISSANCE: THE FIRST THREE HALL-OF-FAMERS

The Renaissance was born in Florence. The triumvirate of quattrocento ('15th-century) geniuses who invented this new style included the painter Masaccio and sculptor Donatello, who reintroduced naturalism to art, and the painter Botticelli, whose elegant linear figures reached a height of refinement.

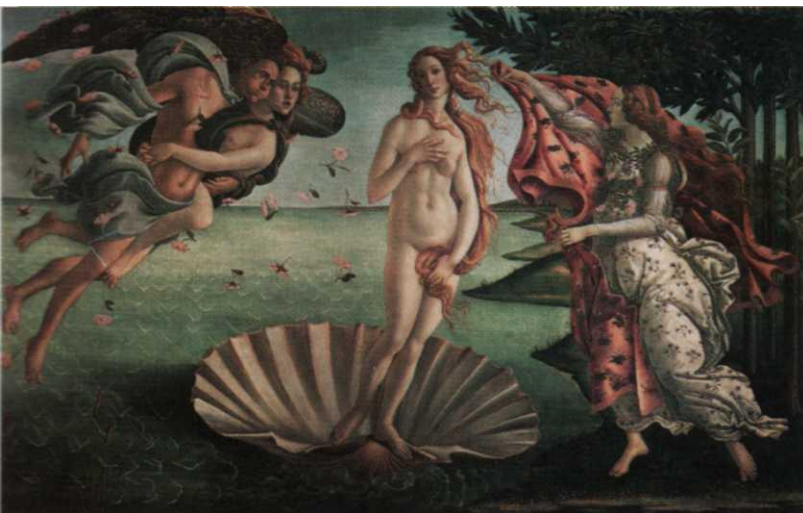
MASACCIO. The founder of Early Renaissance painting, which became the cornerstone of European painting for more than six centuries, was Masaccio (pronounced ma SAHT chee oh; 1401-28). Nicknamed "Sloppy Tom" because he neglected his appearance in his pursuit of art, Masaccio was the first since Giotto to paint the human figure not as a linear column, in the Gothic style, but as a real human being. As a Renaissance painter, Vasari said, "Masaccio made his figures stand upon their feet." Other Masaccio innovations were a mastery of perspective and his use of a single, constant source of light casting accurate shadows.

DONATELLO. What Masaccio did for painting, Donatello (1386-1466) did for sculpture. His work recaptured the central discovery of Classical sculpture: contrapposto, or weight concentrated on one leg with the rest of the body relaxed, often turned. Donatello carved figures and draped them realistically with a sense of their underlying skeletal structure.

His "David" was the first life-size, freestanding nude sculpture since the Classical period. The brutal naturalism of "Mary Magdalen" was even more probing, harshly accurate, and "real" than ancient Roman portraits. He carved the aged Magdalen as a gaunt, shriveled hag, with stringy hair and hollowed eyes. Donatello's sculpture was so lifelike, the artist was said to have shouted at it, "Speak, speak, or the plague take you!"



Donatello, "David," c. 1430-32, Museo Nazionale, Florence. Donatello pioneered the Renaissance style of sculpture with rounded body masses.



BOTTICELLI. While Donatello and Masaccio laid the groundwork for three-dimensional realism, Botticelli (pronounced bought tee CHEL lee; 1444-1510) was moving in the opposite direction. His decorative linear style and tiptoeing, golden-haired maidens were more a throwback to Byzantine art. Yet his nudes epitomized the Renaissance. "Birth of Venus" marks the rebirth of Classical mythology.

Botticelli, "Birth of Venus," 1482, Uffizi, Florence. Botticelli drew undulating lines and figures with long necks, sloping shoulders, and pale, soft bodies.

THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

HEROES OF THE HIGH RENAISSANCE. In the sixteenth century, artistic leadership spread from Florence to Rome and Venice, where giants like Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael created sculpture and paintings with total technical mastery. Their work fused Renaissance discoveries like composition, ideal proportions, and perspective — a culmination referred to as the High Renaissance (1500-1520).

LEONARDO DA VINCI. The term "Renaissance man" has come to mean an omnitalented individual who radiates wisdom. Its prototype was Leonardo (1452-1519), who came nearer to achieving this ideal than anyone before or since.

Leonardo was universally admired for his handsome appearance, intellect, and charm. His "personal beauty could not be exaggerated," a contemporary said of this tall man with long blond hair, "whose every movement was grace itself, and whose abilities were so extraordinary that he could readily solve every difficulty." As if this were not enough, Leonardo could sing "divinely" and "his charming conversation won all hearts."

An avid mountain climber who delighted in scaling great heights, Leonardo was also fascinated with flight. Whenever he saw caged birds, he paid the owner to set them free. He frequently sketched fluttering wings in his notebooks, where he constantly designed flying contraptions that he eventually built and strapped on himself in hopes of soaring. He once wrote, "I wish to work miracles," an ambition evident in his inventions: a machine to move mountains, a parachute, a helicopter, an armored tank, and a diving bell.

Leonardo did more to create the concept of the artist-genius than anyone else. When he began his campaign, the artist was considered a menial craftsman. By constantly stressing the intellectual aspects of art and creativity, Leonardo transformed the artist's public status into, as he put it, a "Lord and God."

His brilliance had one flaw. The contemporary painter Vasari called Leonardo "capricious and fickle." His curiosity was so omnivorous that distractions constantly lured him from one incomplete project to another. When commissioned to paint an altarpiece, he first had to study tidal movements in the Adriatic, then invent systems to prevent landslides. A priest said Leonardo was so obsessed with his mathematical experiments "that he cannot stand his brushes."

Less than twenty paintings by Leonardo survive. He died at age 67 in France, where he had been summoned by Francis I for the sole duty of conversing with the king. On his deathbed, said Vasari, Leonardo admitted "he had offended God and mankind by not working at his art as he should have."



Leonardo, "Mona Lisa," or "La Gioconda," 1503-6, Louvre, Paris. *The world's most famous portrait embodied all the Renaissance discoveries of perspective, anatomy, and composition.*

MONA LISA

It hung in Napoleon's bedroom until moving to the Louvre in 1804. It caused traffic jams in New York when 1.6 million people jostled to see it in seven weeks. In Tokyo viewers were allowed ten seconds. The object of all this attention was the world's most famous portrait, "Mona Lisa."

Historically, she was nobody special, probably the young wife of a Florentine merchant named Giocondo (the prefix "Mona" was an abbreviation of Madonna, or Mrs.). The portrait set the standard for High Renaissance paintings in many important ways. The use of perspective, with all lines converging on a single vanishing point behind Mona Lisa's head, and triangular composition established the importance of geometry in painting. It diverged from the stiff, profile portraits that had been the norm by displaying the subject in a relaxed, natural, three-quarter pose. For his exact knowledge of anatomy so evident in the Mona Lisa's hands, Leonardo had lived in a hospital, studying skeletons and dissecting more than thirty cadavers.

One of the first easel paintings intended to be framed and hung on a wall, the "Mona Lisa" fully realized the potential of the new oil medium. Instead of proceeding from outlined figures, as painters did before, Leonardo used chiaroscuro to model features through light and shadow. Starting with dark undertones, he built the illusion of three-dimensional features through layers and layers of thin, semi-transparent glazes (Even the Mona Lisa's pupils were composed of successive gauzy washes of pigment). This "sfumato" technique rendered the whole, as Leonardo said, "without lines or borders, in the manner of smoke." His colors ranged from light to dark in a continuous gradation of subtle tones, without crisp separating edges. The forms seemed to emerge from, and melt into, shadows.

And then there's that famous smile. To avoid the solemnity of most formal portraits, Leonardo engaged musicians and jesters to amuse his subject. Although he frequently left his works incomplete because of frustration when his hand could not match his imagination, this work was instantly hailed as a masterpiece, influencing generations of artists. In 1911 an Italian worker, outraged that the supreme achievement of Italian art resided in France, stole the painting from the Louvre to return it to its native soil. "Mona Lisa" was recovered from the patriotic thief's dingy room two years later in Florence.

By 1952 more than 61 versions of the Mona Lisa had been created. From Marcel Duchamp's goateed portrait in 1919 to Andy Warhol's silkscreen series and Jasper Johns's image in 1983, the Mona Lisa is not only the most admired, but also the most reproduced, image in all art.

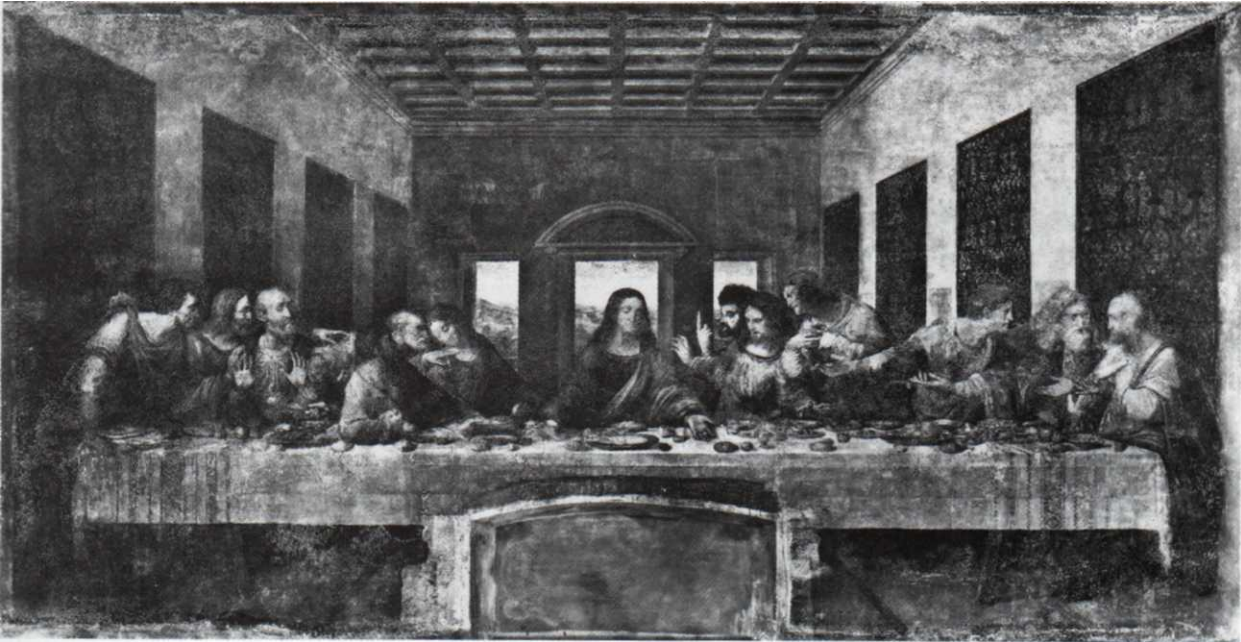
THE LAST SUPPER

If "Mona Lisa" is Leonardo's most famous portrait, his fresco painting, "The Last Supper," has for five centuries been the world's most revered religious painting. Leonardo declared the artist has two aims: to paint the "man and the intention of his soul." Here he revolutionized art by capturing both, particularly what was going through each figure's mind.

Leonardo immortalized the dramatic moment after Christ announced one of his disciples would betray him, with each reacting emotionally and asking, "Lord, is it I?" Through a range of gesture and expression, Leonardo revealed for the first time in art the fundamental character and psychological state of each apostle. His use of perspective, with all diagonal lines converging on Christ's head, fixed Christ as the apex of the pyramidal composition.

Unfortunately, Leonardo was not temperamentally suited to the demands of traditional fresco painting, which required quick, unerring brushwork instead of accumulated blurred shadings. In "The Last Supper," he experimented with an oil/tempera emulsion of his own invention that failed to bond to the plaster. Even during his lifetime, the mural began to disintegrate. It didn't help that the building was used as a stable and then partly destroyed in World War II. Behind a barricade of sandbags, mildew reduced the fresco to a sad ruin. Today it is being restored square inch by square inch.

Leonardo, "The Last Supper," c. 1495, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan.
Leonardo revealed the disciples' character through facial expressions and gestures.



Leonardo, "In the Womb," c. 1510, Royal Collection, Windsor Castle

The Notebooks

Evidence of Leonardo's fertile imagination lies in the thousands of pages of sketches and ideas in his notebooks. His interests and expertise encompassed anatomy, engineering, astronomy, mathematics, natural history, music, sculpture, architecture, and painting, making him one of the most versatile geniuses ever. Although the notes were unknown to later scientists, Leonardo anticipated many of the major discoveries and inventions of succeeding centuries. He built canals, installed central heating, drained marshes, studied air currents, and invented a printing press, telescope, and portable bombs. From his study of blood vessels, he developed the theory of circulation 100 years before Harvey. He was the first to design a flying machine and first to illustrate the interior workings of the human body. His sketches of the growth of the fetus in the womb were so accurate they could teach embryology to medical students today.

MICHELANGELO: THE DIVINE M. As an infant, Michelangelo (1475-1564) was cared for by a wet nurse whose husband was a stonemason. The boy grew up absorbed with carving, drawing, and art, even though his family beat him severely to force him into a "respectable" profession. But the Medici prince Lorenzo the Magnificent recognized the boy's talent and, at the age of 15, took Michelangelo to his Florentine court, where the budding artist lived like a son.

Michelangelo did more than anyone to elevate the status of the artist. Believing that creativity was divinely inspired, he broke all rules. Admirers addressed him as the "divine Michelangelo," but the price for his gift was solitude. Michelangelo once asked his rival, the gregarious Raphael, who was always surrounded by courtiers, "Where are you going in such company, as happy as a Monsignor?" Raphael shot back, "Where are you going, all alone like a hangman?"

WHO PAID THE BILLS?

Before there were art galleries and museums, artists depended on the patronage system not only to support themselves but to provide expensive materials for their work. Under the inspired taste of Lorenzo the Magnificent, this resulted in an entire city — Florence — becoming a work of art, as wealthy rulers commissioned lavish buildings and art. Yet, significantly, the word for "patron" is the same in both French and Italian as the word for "boss." With irascible artists like Michelangelo, the tension between being a creator and being told what to create erupted in ugliness. The best example of the strengths and weaknesses of the system was Michelangelo's testy

relation to his Medici patrons.

Michelangelo owed his training to Lorenzo de' Medici, but Lorenzo's insensitive son ordered the maestro to sculpt a statue out of snow in the palazzo courtyard. Years later, Medici popes Leo X and Clement VII (the sculptor worked for seven of the thirteen popes who reigned during his lifetime) hired Michelangelo to drop other work and sculpt tomb statues for their relatives. When the stone faces of the deceased bore no resemblance to actual appearance, Michelangelo would brook no interference with his ideal concept, saying that, in 100 years, no one would care what his actual subjects looked like. Unfortunately, the works remain unfinished, for his fickle patrons constantly changed their minds, abruptly

cancelling, without explanation and often without pay, projects Michelangelo worked on for years.

Michelangelo's worst taskmaster was Pope Julius II, the "warrior-pope" who was bent on restoring the temporal power of the papacy. Julius had grandiose designs for his own tomb, which he envisioned as the centerpiece of a rebuilt St. Peter's Cathedral. He first commissioned Michelangelo to create forty life-size marble statues to decorate a mammoth two-story structure. The project tormented Michelangelo for forty years as Julius and his relatives gradually whittled down the design and interrupted his progress with distracting assignments. When referring to the commission, Michelangelo darkly called it the "Tragedy of the Tomb."

Michelangelo, "Pieta,"
1498/99-1500, St. Peter's, Rome.
Michelangelo's first masterpiece group
Christ and the Virgin in a pyramidal
composition.



THE SCULPTOR. Of all artists, Michelangelo felt the sculptor was most godlike. God created life from clay, and the sculptor unlocked beauty from stone. He described his technique as "liberating the figure from the marble that imprisons it." While other sculptors added pieces of marble to disguise their mistakes, Michelangelo always carved his sculptures from one block. "You could roll them down a mountain and no piece would come off," said a fellow sculptor.

The first work to earn him renown, carved when Michelangelo was 23, was the "Pieta," which means "pity." The pyramidal arrangement derived from Leonardo, with the classic composure of the Virgin's face reflecting the calm, idealized expressions of Greek sculpture. The accurate anatomy of Christ's body is due to Michelangelo's dissection of corpses. When first unveiled, a viewer attributed the work to a more experienced sculptor, unable to believe a young unknown could accomplish such a triumph. When Michelangelo heard, he carved his name on a ribbon across the Virgin's breast, the only work he ever signed.

THE PAINTER: THE SISTINE CHAPEL. A few vines on a blue background — that's all Pope Julius II asked for, to spruce up the barnlike ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. What the artist gave him was more than 340 human figures (10' to 18' tall) representing the origin and fall of man — the most ambitious artistic undertaking of the whole Renaissance. The fact that Michelangelo accomplished such a feat in less than four years, virtually without assistance, was a testimonial to his single-mindedness.

Physical conditions alone presented a formidable challenge. Nearly one-half the length of a football field, the ceiling presented 10,000 square feet to be designed, sketched, plastered, and painted. The roof leaked, which made the plaster too damp. The curved shape of the barrel vault divided by cross vaults made Michelangelo's job doubly hard. In addition, he had to work on a seven-story-high scaffold in a cramped and uncomfortable position.

Despite his disdain for painting, which he considered an inferior art Michelangelo's fresco was a culmination of figure painting, with the figures drawn not from the real world but from a world of his own creation. The nudes, which had never been painted on such a colossal scale, are simply presented, without background or ornament. As in his sculpture, the torsos are more expressive than the faces. His twisted nude forms have a relieflike quality, as if they were carved in colored stone.

Encompassing an entire wall of the Sistine Chapel is the "Last Judgment" fresco Michelangelo finished twenty-nine years after the ceiling. Its mood is strikingly gloomy. Michelangelo depicted Christ not as a merciful Redeemer but as an avenging Judge with such terrifying effect that Pope Paul III fell to his knees when he saw the fresco. "Lord, hold not my sins against me!" the pope cried. Here, too, Michelangelo showed his supreme ability to present human forms in motion, as nearly 400 contorted figures struggled, fought, and tumbled into hell.



Michelangelo, Campidoglio, 1538-64, Rome. *Michelangelo broke Renaissance rules by designing this piazza with interlocking ovals and variations from right angles.*

Michelangelo, "The Creation of Adam," detail, 1508-12, Sistine Chapel, Vatican, Rome. *A leus-like God transmits the spark of life to Adam. Michelangelo used the male nude to express every human aspiration and emotion.*



Michelangelo, "The Last Judgment," detail, 1541, Sistine Chapel, Rome. *St. Bartholomew, a martyr who was flayed alive, holds up his skin with a grotesque self-portrait of Michelangelo.*

THE ARCHITECT. In his later years, Michelangelo devoted himself to architecture, supervising the reconstruction of Rome's St. Peter's Cathedral. Given his lifelong infatuation with the body, it's no wonder Michelangelo believed "the limbs of architecture are derived from the limbs of man." Just as arms and legs flank the trunk of the human form, architectural units, he believed, should be symmetrical, surrounding a central, vertical axis.

The best example of his innovative style was the Capitoline Hill in Rome, the first great Renaissance civic center. The hill had been the symbolic heart of ancient Rome, and the pope wanted to restore it to its ancient grandeur. Two existing buildings already abutted each other at an awkward 80° angle. Michelangelo made an asset of this liability by adding another building at the same angle to flank the central Palace of Senators. He then redesigned the facade of the lateral buildings so they would be identical and left the fourth side open, with a panoramic view toward the Vatican.

Unifying the whole was a statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius (see p. 17) on a patterned oval pavement. Renaissance architects considered the oval "unstable" and avoided it, but for Michelangelo, measure and proportion were not determined by mathematical formulae but "kept in the eyes."

RAPHAEL Of the three major figures of the High Renaissance school (Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael), Raphael (pronounced rah fa yell; 1483-1520) would be voted Most Popular. While the other two were revered and their work admired, Raphael was adored. A contemporary of the three men, Vasari, who wrote the first art history, said Raphael was "so gentle and so charitable that even animals loved him."

Raphael's father, a mediocre painter, taught his precocious son the rudiments of painting. By the age of 17, Raphael was rated an independent master. Called to Rome by the pope at age 26 to decorate the Vatican rooms, Raphael completed the frescoes, aided by an army of fifty students, the same year Michelangelo finished the Sistine ceiling. "All he knows," said Michelangelo, "he learned from me."

The rich, handsome, wildly successful Raphael went from triumph to triumph, a star of the brilliant papal court. He was a devoted lady's man, "very amorous," said Vasari, with "secret pleasures beyond all measure." When he caught a fever after a midnight assignation and died on his thirty-seventh birthday, the entire court "plunged into grief."

Raphael's art most completely expressed all the qualities of the High Renaissance. From Leonardo he borrowed pyramidal composition and learned to model faces with light and shadow (*chiaroscuro*). From Michelangelo, Raphael adapted full-bodied, dynamic figures and the *contrapposto* pose.

TITIAN: THE FATHER OF MODERN PAINTING. Like his fellow Venetian painters, Titian (pronounced TISH un; 1490P-1576), who dominated the art world in the city for sixty years, used strong colors as his main expressive device. First he covered the surface of the canvas with red for warmth, then he painted both background and figures in vivid hues and toned them down with thirty or forty layers of glazes. Through this painstaking method, he was able to portray any texture completely convincingly, whether polished metal, shiny silk, red-gold hair, or warm flesh. One of the first to abandon wood panels, Titian established oil on canvas as the typical medium.

After his wife died in 1530, Titian's paintings became more muted, almost monochromatic. Extremely prolific until his late 80s, as his sight failed Titian loosened his brushstrokes. At the end they were broad, thickly loaded with paint, and slashing. A pupil reported that Titian "painted more with his fingers than with his brushes."



Raphael, "School of Athens," 1510-11, Vatican, Rome. Raphael's masterpiece embodies the High Renaissance in its balance, sculptural quality, architectural perspective, and fusion of pagan and Christian elements.

Titian, "Bacchanal of the Adrians," 1518, Prado, Madrid. This pagan wine party contains the major ingredients of Titian's early style: dazzling contrasting colors, ample female forms, and asymmetric compositions.



THE VENETIAN SCHOOL

While artists working in Florence and Rome concentrated on sculptural forms and epic themes, Venetian painters were fascinated with color, texture, and mood. Giovanni Bellini (1430-1516) was the first Italian master of the new oil painting technique. Titian's men-

tor, Bellini was also the first to integrate figure and landscape. Giorgione (1476-1510) aroused emotion through light and color. In his "Tempest," a menacing storm cloud created a sense of gloom and mystery. After Titian — the most famous of Venetian artists —

Tintoretto and Veronese continued the large-scale, majestic style of deep coloring and theatricality. In the eighteenth century, the Rococo painter Tiepolo carried on the Venetian tradition, as did Guardi and Canaletto in their atmospheric cityscapes.

ARCHITECTURE IN THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE. Informed by the same principles of harmonious geometry that underlay painting and sculpture, architecture recovered the magnificence of ancient Rome. The most noted Renaissance architects were Alberti, Brunelleschi, Bramante, and Palladio.

A writer, painter, sculptor, and architect, Alberti (pronounced al BEAR tee; 1404-72) was the Renaissance's major theorist who wrote treatises on painting, sculpture, and architecture. He downplayed art's religious purpose and urged artists to study "sciences" like history, poetry, and mathematics as building blocks. Alberti wrote the first systematic guide to perspective and provided sculptors with rules for ideal human proportions.

Another multifaceted Renaissance man, Brunelleschi (pronounced brew nell LESS kee; 1377-1446) was skilled as a goldsmith, sculptor, mathematician, clock builder, and architect. But he is best known as the father of modern engineering. Not only did he discover mathematical perspective, he also championed the central-plan church design that replaced the medieval basilica. He alone was capable of constructing a dome for the Florence Cathedral, called



Brunelleschi, Pazzi Chapel, 1440-61, Florence.

THE FOUR R'S OF RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE

The four R's of Renaissance architecture are Rome, Rules, Reason, and 'Rithmetic.

ROME In keeping with their passion for the classics, Renaissance architects systematically measured Roman ruins to copy their style and proportion. They revived elements like the rounded arch, concrete construction, domed rotunda, portico, barrel vault, and column.

RULES Since architects considered themselves scholars rather than mere builders, they based their work on theories, as expressed in various treatises. Alberti formulated aesthetic rules that were widely followed.

REASON Theories emphasized architecture's rational basis, grounded in science, math, and engineering. Cool reason replaced the mystical approach of the Middle Ages.

'RITHMETIC Architects depended on arithmetic to produce beauty and harmony. A system of ideal proportions related parts of a building to each other in numerical ratios, such as the 2:1 ratio of a nave twice as high as the width of a church. Layouts relied on geometric shapes, especially the circle and square.

the Eighth Wonder of the World. His inspiration was to build two shells, each supporting the other, crowned by a lantern stabilizing the whole. In designing the Pazzi Chapel, Brunelleschi used Classical motifs as surface decoration. His design illustrates the revival of Roman forms and Renaissance emphasis on symmetry and regularity.

In 1502, Bramante (pronounced brah MAHN tee; 1444-1514) built the Tempietto ("Little Temple") in Rome on the site where St. Peter was crucified. Although tiny, it was the perfect prototype of the domed central plan church. It expressed the Renaissance ideals of order, simplicity, and harmonious proportions.

Known for his villas and palaces, Palladio (pronounced pah LAY dee oh; 1508-80) was enormously influential in later centuries through his treatise, *Four Books on Architecture*. Neoclassical revivalists like Thomas Jefferson and Christopher Wren, architect of St. Paul's in London, used Palladio's rule book as a guide. The Villa Rotonda incorporated Greek and Roman details like porticos with Ionic columns, a flattened dome like the Pantheon, and rooms arranged symmetrically around a central rotunda.



Bramante, Tempietto, 1444-1514, Rome.



Palladio, Villa Rotonda, begun 1550, Vicenza.

THE NORTHERN RENAISSANCE

In the Netherlands as well as in Florence, new developments in art began about 1420. But what was called the Northern Renaissance was not a rebirth in the Italian sense. Artists in the Netherlands — modern Belgium (then called Flanders) and Holland — lacked Roman ruins to rediscover. Still, their break with the Gothic style produced a brilliant flowering of the arts.

While the Italians looked to Classical antiquity for inspiration, northern Europeans looked to nature. Without Classical sculpture to teach them ideal proportions, they painted reality exactly as it appeared, in a detailed, realistic style. Portraits were such faithful likenesses that Charles VI of France sent a painter to three different royal courts to paint prospective brides, basing his decision solely on the portraits.

This precision was made possible by the new oil medium, which Northern Renaissance painters first perfected. Since oil took longer to dry than tempera, they could blend colors. Subtle variations in light and shade heightened the illusion of three-dimensional form. They also used "atmospheric perspective" — the increasingly hazy appearance of objects farthest from the viewer — to suggest depth.

THE RENAISSANCE IN THE LOW COUNTRIES

In Holland and Flanders, cities like Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Louvain, and Haarlem rivaled Florence, Rome, and Venice as centers of artistic excellence. The trademark of these northern European artists was their incredible ability to portray nature realistically, down to the most minute detail.



JAN VAN EYCK. Credited with inventing oil painting, the Flemish artist Hubert van Eyck was so idolized for his discovery that his right arm was preserved as a holy relic. His brother, Jan van Eyck (c.1390-1441), about whom more is known, used the new medium to achieve a peak of realism.

Trained as a miniaturist and illuminator of manuscripts, Jan van Eyck painted convincingly the most microscopic details in brilliant, glowing color. One of the first masters of the new art of portrait painting, van Eyck included extreme details like the beginning of stubble on his subject's chin. His "Man in a Red Turban," which may be a self-portrait (1433), was the earliest known painting in which the sitter looked at the spectator. In one of the most celebrated paintings of the Northern Renaissance, "The Arnolfini Wedding," van Eyck captures surface appearance and textures precisely and renders effects of both direct and diffused light.

Van Eyck, "Arnolfini Wedding," 1434, NG, London. A master of realism, van Eyck recreated the marriage scene, in miniature in the mirror. Virtually every object symbolizes the painting's theme — the sanctity of marriage — with the dog representing fidelity and the cast-off shoes holy ground.

As the Renaissance spread north from Italy, it took different forms.

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ART

VS.

NORTHERN RENAISSANCE ART

SPECIALTY:	Ideal beauty	Intense realism
STYLE:	Simplified forms, measured proportions	Lifelike features, unflattering honesty
SUBJECTS:	Religious and mythological scenes	Religious and domestic scenes
FIGURES:	Heroic male nudes	Prosperous citizens, peasants
PORTRAITS:	Formal, reserved	Reveal individual personality
TECHNIQUE:	Fresco, tempera, and oil paintings	Oil paintings on wood panels
EMPHASIS:	Underlying anatomical structure	Visible appearance
BASIS OF ART:	Theory	Observation
COMPOSITION:	Static, balanced	Complex, irregular

BOSCH: GARDEN OF THE GROTESQUE. It's not hard to understand why twentieth-century Surrealists claimed Dutch painter Hieronymous Bosch (c. 1450-1516) as their patron saint. The modern artists exploited irrational dream imagery but hardly matched Bosch's bizarre imagination.

Bosch's moralistic paintings suggested inventive torments meted out as punishment for sinners. Grotesque fantasy images — such as hybrid monsters, half-human, half-animal — inhabited his weird, unsettling landscapes. Although modern critics have been unable to decipher his underlying meanings, it seems clear Bosch believed that corrupt mankind, seduced by evil, should suffer calamitous consequences.

Bosch, detail, "The Garden of Earthly Delights," c. 1500, Prado, Madrid. Bosch probably intended this as an allegory, warning against the dangers of eroticism. Such disturbing imagery made Bosch a forerunner of Surrealism.



Bruegel, "Hunters in the Snow," 1565, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Bruegel portrayed peasants both honestly and satirically.

BRUEGEL: PAINTER OF PEASANTS. Flemish painter Pieter Bruegel the Elder (pronounced BROY gull; c.1525-69) was influenced by Bosch's pessimism and satiric approach. Bruegel took peasant life as his subject. In his scenes of humble folk working, feasting, or dancing, the satiric edge always appeared. "The Peasant Wedding," for example, features guests eating and drinking with gluttonous absorption. Besides elevating genre painting (scenes of everyday life) to the stature of high art, Bruegel also illustrated proverbs, such as "The Blind Leading the Blind," with horrific, bestial facial expressions typical of Bosch's Biblical scenes.

Bruegel's most famous painting, "Hunters in the Snow," came from a series depicting man's activities during the months of the year. His preoccupation with peasant life is shown in the exhausted hunters plodding homeward, silhouetted against the snow. Bruegel used atmospheric perspective — from sharp foreground to hazy background — to give the painting depth.

THE GERMAN RENAISSANCE

After lagging behind the innovative Netherlanders, German artists began to lead the Northern School. In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, Germans suddenly assimilated the pictorial advances of their Southern peers Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael. Simultaneous with Italy's peak of artistic creativity was Germany's own High Renaissance, marked by Grünewald's searing religious paintings, Diirer's technically perfect prints, and Holbein's unsurpassed portraits.

HOLBEIN: PRINCELY PORTRAITS. Hans Holbein the Younger (1497_1543) is known as one of the greatest portraitists ever. Like Diirer, he blended the strengths of North and South, linking the German skill with lines and precise realism to the balanced composition, chiaroscuro, sculptural form, and perspective of Italy.

Although born in Germany, Holbein first worked in Basel. When the Reformation decreed church decoration to be "popery" and his commissions disappeared, Holbein sought his fortune in England. His patron, the humanist scholar Erasmus, recommended him to the English cleric Sir Thomas More with the words, "Here [in Switzerland] the arts are out in the cold." Holbein's striking talent won him the position of court painter to Henry VIII, for whom he did portraits of the king and four of his wives.

"The French Ambassadors" (see p. 32) illustrates Holbein's virtuoso technique, with its linear patterning in the Oriental rug and damask curtain, accurate textures of fur and drapery, faultless perspective of the marble floor, sumptuous enameled color, and minute surface realism. The object in the foreground (a distorted skull) and numerous scholarly implements show the Northern penchant for symbolic knickknacks. Holbein depicted faces with the same accuracy as Diirer but with a neutral expression characteristic of Italy rather than the intensity of Diirer's portraits. Holbein's exquisite draftsmanship set the standard for portraits, the most important form of painting in England for the next three centuries.

Diirer, "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," c. 1497-98, woodcut, MMA, NY. Diirer used fine, engravinglike lines for shading. In this doomsday vision, the ffaal Four Horsemen — war, pestilence, famine, and death — trample humanity.



DURER: GRAPHIC ART. The first Northern artist to be also a Renaissance man, Albrecht Diirer (pronounced DEWR er; 1471-1528) combined the Northern gift for realism with the breakthroughs of the Italian Renaissance. Called the "Leonardo of the North" for the diversity of his interests, Diirer was fascinated with nature and did accurate botanical studies of plants. Believing art should be based on careful scientific observation, he wrote, "Art stands firmly fixed in nature, and he who can find it there, he has it." This curiosity led, unfortunately, to his demise, as he insisted on tramping through a swamp to see the body of a whale and caught a fatal fever.

Diirer took as his mission the enlightenment of his Northern colleagues about the discoveries of the South. He published treatises on perspective and ideal proportion. He also assumed the mantle of the artist as cultivated gentleman-scholar, raising the artist's stature from mere craftsman to near prince. He was the first to be fascinated with his own image, leaving a series of self-portraits (the earliest done when he was 13). In his "Self-Portrait" of 1500, he painted himself in a Christ-like pose, indicating the exalted status of the artist, not to mention his high opinion of himself.

What assured Diirer's reputation as the greatest artist of the Northern Renaissance was his graphic work. Before Diirer, woodcuts were primitive studies of black and white contrasts. He adapted the form-creating hatching of engraving to the woodcut, achieving a sliding scale of light and shade. Like an engraver, he used dense lines to render differences in texture and tone as subtle as any oil painting. Diirer was the first to use printmaking as a major medium for art.

MAKING PRINTS: THE INVENTION OF GRAPHIC ARTS

One of the most popular (and still affordable) forms of art collecting in recent years has been limited-edition prints, each signed by the artist who oversees the reproduction process. The art of printmaking first flowered during the Northern Renaissance.

WOODCUT

The oldest technique for making prints (long known in China) was the woodcut, which originated in Germany about 1400. In this method, a design was drawn on a smooth block of wood, then the parts to remain white (called "negative space") were cut away, leaving the design standing up in relief. This was then inked and pressed against paper to produce thousands of copies sold for a few pennies each. For the first time, art was accessible to the masses and artists could learn from reproductions of each others' work. Once printing with movable type was developed around the mid-fifteenth century, books illustrated with woodcuts became popular.

Woodcuts reached a peak with Durer but were gradually replaced by the more flexible and refined method of engraving. In Japan, the colored woodcut was always very popular. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Europe, the woodcut enjoyed a revival, with Munch, Gauguin, and the German Expressionists adopting the medium for its jagged intensity.

ENGRAVING

Begun about 1430, engraving was a technique opposite to the woodcut's raised relief. The method was one of several in printmaking known as *intaglio* (ink transferred from below the surface), where prints are made from lines or crevices in a plate. In engraving, grooves were cut into a metal (usually copper) plate with a steel tool called a burin. Ink was rubbed into the grooves, the surface of the plate wiped clean, and the plate put through a press to transfer the incised design to paper. Forms could be modeled with fine-hatched lines to suggest shading. This technique flowered in the early sixteenth century with Diirer, whose use of the burin was so sophisticated, he could approximate on a copper plate the effects of light and mass achieved by the Dutch in oil and Italians in fresco.

Graphic arts techniques that became popular in later centuries include DRY-POINT, ETCHING, LITHOGRAPHY, and SILKSCREENING (see p. 109).

Diirer, "Saint Jerome," 1514, engraving, MMA, NY. Through straight and curved hatching and crosshatching, Diirer depicted light streaming through bottlfgloss windows, casting accurate shadows.



OTHERS IN THE GERMAN RENAISSANCE

Besides Durer and Holbein, notable artists were Matthias GrOnewald (c. 1480-1528) and Albrecht Altdorfer (1480-1538). Grunewald's masterpiece, "The Eisenheim Altarpiece," shows the horror of the Crucifixion and glory of the Resurrection in a tableau of overwhelming power. Altdorfer, representative of the Danube Style, known for its moody landscapes, is credited with the first pure landscape painting in Western art.

MANNERISM AND THE LATE RENAISSANCE

Between the High Renaissance and the Baroque, from the death of Raphael in 1520 until 1600, art was at an impasse. Michelangelo and Raphael had been called "divino." Kings begged them for the slightest sketch. All problems of representing reality had been solved and art had reached a peak of perfection and harmony. So what now?

The answer: replace harmony with dissonance, reason with emotion, and reality with imagination. In an effort to be original, Late Renaissance, or Mannerist, artists abandoned realism based on observation of nature. Straining after novelty, they exaggerated the ideal beauty represented by Michelangelo and Raphael, seeking instability instead of equilibrium.

The times favored such disorder. Rome had been sacked by the Germans and Spaniards and the church had lost its authority during the Reformation. In the High Renaissance, when times were more stable, picture compositions were symmetrical and weighted toward the center. In the Late Renaissance, compositions were oblique, with a void in the center and figures crowded around — often cut off by — the edge of the frame. It was as if world chaos and loss of a unifying faith ("The center cannot hold," as W. B. Yeats later said) made paintings off-balance and diffuse.

The name "Mannerism" came from the Italian term "di maniera," meaning a work of art done according to an acquired style rather than depicting nature. Mannerist paintings are readily identifiable because their style is so predictable. Figures writhe and twist in unnecessary contrapposto. Bodies are distorted — generally elongated but sometimes grossly muscular. Colors are lurid, heightening the impression of tension, movement, and unreal lighting.

Notable Mannerists were Pontormo and Rosso (see sidebar); Bronzino, whose precious, elegant portraits featured long necks and sloping shoulders; Parmigiano, whose "Madonna with the Long Neck" displayed similar physical distortions; and Benvenuto Cellini, a sculptor and goldsmith known for his arrogant autobiography.

LIFE ON THE EDGE

Mannerists deliberately cultivated eccentricity in their work. Some were equally odd in their private lives. Rosso, who lived with a baboon, was said to have dug up corpses, fascinated with the process of decomposition. His canvases often had a sinister quality, as when he painted St. Anne like a haggard witch. On seeing one of his macabre works, a priest ran from the room shrieking the painter was possessed by the devil.

Pontormo was certifiably mad. A hypochondriac obsessed by fear of death, he lived alone in an especially tall house he had built to isolate himself. His garret room was accessible only by a ladder that he pulled up after himself. His paintings showed this bizarre sensibility. The perspective was irrational and his colors — lavender, coral, puce, poisonous green — unsettling. His figures often looked about wildly, as if sharing their creator's paranoid anxiety.



Tintoretto, "The Last Supper," 1594, San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice. Tintoretto's (1518–94) crowded, dramatic canvases displayed obvious Mannerist traits like a plunging diagonal perspective, making the picture seem off-balance. He used light for emotional effect, from the darkest black to the incandescent light emanating from Christ's head and sketchy, chalk-white angels.

THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE

The most remarkable figure of the Renaissance working in Spain was the painter El Greco (1541-1614). Born in Crete (then a possession of Venice), he received his first training in the flat, highly patterned Byzantine style. After coming to Venice, he appropriated Titian's vivid color and Tintoretto's dramatic lighting and was also influenced by Michelangelo, Raphael, and the Mannerists in Rome. His real name was Domenikos Theotocopoulos, but he was nicknamed "The Greek" and went to Toledo to work when about age 35.

At the time, Spain was in the grip of a religious frenzy, with the Counter Reformation and Inquisition holding sway. Many of El Greco's surreal, emotionally intense paintings reflected this climate of extreme zealotry.

A supremely self-confident artist, El Greco once said Michelangelo couldn't paint and offered to revamp "The Last Judgment." He also said he detested walking in sunlight because "the daylight blinds the light within." The most striking characteristic of his paintings comes from this inner light. An eerie, unearthly illumination flickers over the canvases, making his style the most original of the Renaissance.

Critics have disputed whether El Greco should be considered a Mannerist; some claim he was too idiosyncratic to be classified. His art manifested certain undeniable Mannerist attributes, such as an unnatural light of uncertain origin and harsh colors like strong pink, acid green, and brilliant yellow and blue. His figures were distorted and elongated — their scale variable — and the compositions full of swirling movement. Like the Mannerists, El Greco — in his religious



El Greco, "Resurrection," c. 1597-1604, Prado, Madrid. Many characteristics of El Greco's late, mystical style are evident here: immensely long bodies, harsh light as if from a threatening storm, strong colors, twisted figures, sense of movement, and intense emotionalism.

paintings although not his portraits — cared little for accurately representing the visual world. He preferred to create an emotion-laden vision of celestial ecstasy.

BEAUTY SECRETS OF THE SPANISH LADIES

Ridiculously elongated hands and slender figures were a hallmark of Mannerism. The fingers in on El Greco painting are characteristically long, thin, and expressive. Spanish ladies of the time so admired refined hands that they tied their hands to the top of the bedstead at night to make them pale and bloodless.

BAROQUE: THE ORNATE AGE

Baroque art (1600-1750) succeeded in marrying the advanced techniques and grand scale of the Renaissance to the emotion, intensity, and drama of Mannerism, thus making the Baroque era the most sumptuous and ornate in the history of art. While the term "baroque" is often used negatively to mean overwrought and ostentatious, the seventeenth century not only produced such exceptional artistic geniuses as Rembrandt and Velazquez but expanded the role of art into everyday life.

Artists now termed as Baroque came to Rome from all of Europe to study the masterpieces of Classical antiquity and the High Renaissance then returned to their homes to give what they learned their own particular cultural spin. Just as seventeenth-century colonists followed the sixteenth-century explorers, so too did these artists build upon past discoveries. While styles ranged from Italian realism to French flamboyance, the most common element throughout was a sensitivity to and

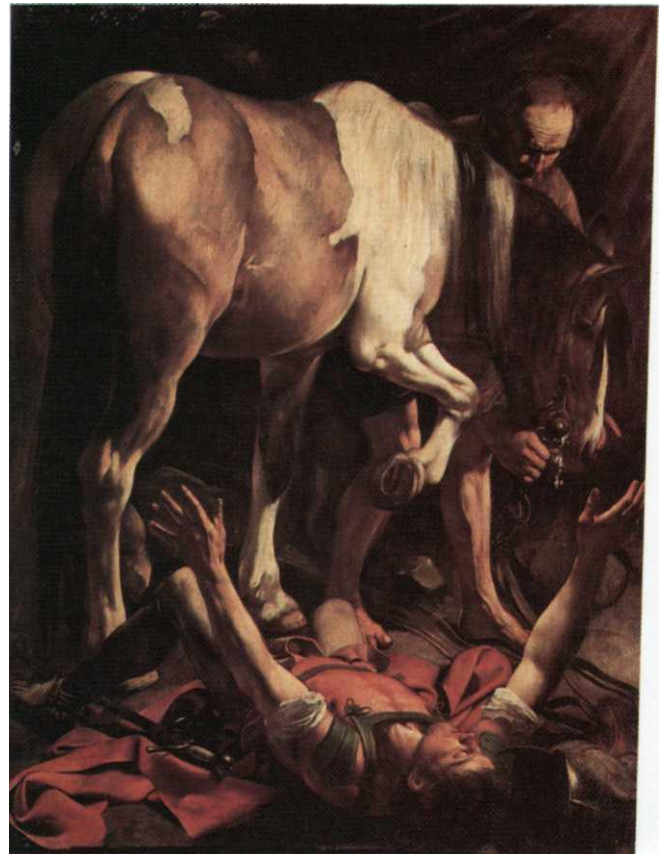
absolute mastery of light to achieve maximum emotional impact.

The Baroque era began in Rome around 1600 with Catholic popes financing magnificent cathedrals and grand works to display their faith's triumph after the Counter Reformation and to attract new worshipers by overwhelming them with theatrical, "must-see" architecture. It spread from there to France, where absolute monarchs ruled by divine right and spent sums comparable to the pharaohs to glorify themselves. Palaces became enchanted environments designed to impress visitors with the power and grandeur of the king. Wealth flowing in from the colonies funded the elaborate furnishings, gardens, and art of showplaces like Louis XIV's Versailles. Though just as

opulent as religious art, French paintings had nonreligious themes derived from Greek and Roman models, such as Poussin's calm landscapes populated by pagan deities.

In Catholic countries like Flanders, religious art flourished, while in the Protestant lands of northern Europe, such as England and Holland, religious imagery was forbidden. As a result, paintings tended to be still lifes, portraits, landscapes, and scenes from daily life. Patrons of art were not only prosperous merchants eager to show off their affluence but middle-class burghers buying pictures for their homes as well. From Rembrandt's "Nightwatch," characteristic of Northern Baroque art to Rubens's sensuous, highly colored panoramas typical of Catholic Baroque, art of the period had a theatrical, stage-lit exuberance and drama.

Caravaggio, "The Conversion of St. Paul," c. 1601, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome. Although criticized for portraying holy figures as common people, Caravaggio's radical style of sharp light and dark contrasts changed European art.



Tiepolo, "Apollo Conducts the Bride, Beatrice, to Babarossa of Burgundy," 1751-52, Residenz Palace, Würzburg, Germany. Tiepolo's ceiling fresco of gods and heroes floating heavenward showed the vigorous movement and vivid colors of Baroque art.

ITALIAN BAROQUE

Artists in Rome pioneered the Baroque style before it spread to the rest of Europe. By this time, art academies had been established to train artists in the techniques developed during the Renaissance. Artists could expertly represent the human body from any angle, portray the most complex perspective, and realistically reproduce almost any appearance. Where Baroque diverged from Renaissance was the emphasis on emotion rather than rationality, dynamism rather than stasis. It was as if Baroque artists took Renaissance figures and set them spinning like tops. Three artists in different media best represent the pinnacle of Italian Baroque: the painter Caravaggio, the sculptor Bernini, and the architect Borromini.

CARAVAGGIO: THE SUPERNATURAL MADE REAL. The most original painter of the seventeenth century, Caravaggio (1571-1610) injected new life into Italian painting after the sterile artificiality of Mannerism. He took realism to new lengths, painting bodies in a thoroughly "down and dirty" style, as opposed to pale, Mannerist phantoms. In so doing, Caravaggio secularized religious art, making saints and miracles seem like ordinary people and everyday events.

Although specializing in large religious works, Caravaggio advocated "direct painting" from nature — often, it seemed, directly from the seamy slums. In "The Calling of St. Matthew," for example, the apostle-to-be sits in a dark pub, surrounded by dandies counting money, when Christ orders him, "Follow Me." A strong diagonal beam of light illuminates the thunderstruck tax-collector's expression and gesture of astonishment.

In "Supper at Emmaus," Caravaggio showed the moment the apostles realized their table companion was the resurrected Christ as an encounter in a wineshop. The disciples, pushing back chairs and throwing open their arms and a bowl of wormy fruit about to topple off the table make the action leap out of the picture frame, enveloping the viewer in the drama. "The Conversion of St. Paul" demonstrates Caravaggio's ability to see afresh a traditional subject. Other painters depicted the Pharisee Saul converted by a voice from heaven with Christ on the heavenly throne surrounded by throngs of angels. Caravaggio showed St. Paul flat on his back, fallen from his horse, which is portrayed in an explicit rear-end view. The hard focus and blinding spotlight

THE FIRST FEMINIST PAINTER

Caravaggio had many followers, called "i tenebrosi" or "the Caravaggisti," who copied his dark tonality and dramatic lighting in "night pictures." One of the most successful was the Italian Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653), the first woman painter to be widely known and appreciated. A precociously gifted artist who traveled widely and lived an eventful, independent life rare for a woman in that time, Gentileschi depicted feminist subjects in Caravaggio's style of brilliantly lighted main players against a plain, dark background.

As a 19-year-old art student, Gentileschi was roped by a fellow pupil and then subjected to a painful and humiliating trial in which she was tortured with thumbscrews to get her to recant. After her attacker was acquitted, Gentileschi devoted herself to painting women who wreak violence against men who have wronged them. In "Judith and Maidservant with the Head of Holofernes," Gentileschi painted the Hebrew heroine (in five different pictures) as an explicit self-portrait. Lit by a candle as the single source of light, the painting reeked with menace and terror, as Judith beheaded the lustful Babylonian general to save Israel.

THE FIRST BOHEMIAN ARTIST

If Caravaggio, as has been said, was the first artist intentionally seeking to shock and offend, he certainly succeeded. His contemporaries called him an "evil genius" and the "anti-Christ of painting," while the Victorian writer John Ruskin accused him of "perpetual... feeding upon horror and ugliness and filthiness of sin."

Caravaggio's life was as unorthodox as his art. A bohemian and rebel, Caravaggio consorted with the dregs of society. As we know from his lengthy police record, the surly artist was constantly brawling in taverns and streets. After stabbing a man in the groin over a tennis wager, he fled Rome to escape prosecution for murder. In chronic trouble with the law, Caravaggio wandered from city to city and from one lurid scandal to another.

Caravaggio was also disdainful of artistic convention and a very vocal opponent of tradition. When advised to study Classical models and adhere to Renaissance ideals of beauty, he instead hailed a gypsy off the street, preferring to paint this outcast rather than an idealized Greek goddess. Many thought he went too far when, in "Death of the Virgin," he used a drowned corpse as model for the Virgin, irreverently representing the Madonna with bare feet and swollen body, surrounded by grieving commoners. Although the painting was refused by the parish that commissioned it, the Duke of Mantua purchased it on the advice of his court painter, Rubens.

Caravaggio always insisted that back alleys, mean streets, and the unsavory folk he found there were the one true source of art, not rules decreed by others. After a stormy life, this radical talent died at the age of 37.

reveal details like veins on the attendant's legs and rivets on Saul's armor, while inessential elements disappear in the dark background.

Caravaggio's use of perspective brings the viewer into the action, and chiaroscuro engages the emotions while intensifying the scene's impact through dramatic light and dark contrasts. This untraditional, theatrical staging focuses a harsh light from a single source on the subject in the foreground to concentrate the viewer's attention on the power of the event and the subject's response. Because of the shadowy background Caravaggio favored, his style was called "il tenebroso" (in a "dark manner").

Many of Caravaggio's patrons who commissioned altarpieces refused to accept his renditions, considering them vulgar or profane. However, Caravaggio's choice of disreputable, lower-class folk as suitable subjects for religious art expressed the Counter Reformation belief that faith was open to all.

To the contemporary French painter Poussin, known for his peaceful scenes, Caravaggio was a subversive betrayer of the art of painting. To the police, he was a fugitive wanted for murder (see sidebar, p. 47). But to major artists like Rubens, Velazquez, and Rembrandt, he was a daring innovator who taught them how to make religious paintings seem both hyperreal and overwhelmingly immediate.

BERNINI: SCULPTURE IN MOTION. Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598-1610) was more than the greatest sculptor of the Baroque period. He was also an architect, painter, playwright, composer, and theater designer. A brilliant wit and caricaturist, he wrote comedies and operas when not carving marble as easily as clay. More than any other artist, with his public fountains, religious art, and designs for St. Peter's, he left his mark on the face of Rome.

The son of a sculptor, Bernini carved his remarkable marble "David" when age 25. Unlike Michelangelo's "David" (see p. 13) where the force was pent-up, Bernini's captured the moment of maximum torque, as he wound up to hurl the stone. Biting his lips from strain, Bernini's David conveyed power about to be unleashed, causing any observer standing in front of the statue to almost want to duck. This dynamic, explosive energy epitomized Baroque art and involved the viewer in its motion and emotion by threatening to burst its physical confines.



Bernini, "The Ecstasy of St. Theresa," 1645-52, Comoro Chapel, Santo Maria della Vittoria, Rome. Bernini fused sculpture, painting, and architecture in a total environment designed to overwhelm the emotions.

"THE ECSTASY OF ST. THERESA." Bernini's masterpiece — and the culmination of Baroque style — was "The Ecstasy of St. Theresa." He even designed a whole chapel as a stage set to show it off, including painted balconies on the walls filled with "spectators" sculpted in relief.

St. Theresa reportedly saw visions and heard voices, believing herself to have been pierced by an angel's dart infusing her with divine love. She described the mystical experience in near-erotic terms: "The pain was so great that I screamed aloud; but at the same time I felt such infinite sweetness that I wished the pain to last forever."

Bernini's marble sculpture represented the saint swooning on a cloud, an expression of mingled ecstasy and exhaustion on her face. Since the Counter Reformation Church stressed the value of its members reliving Christ's passion, Bernini tried to induce an intense religious experience in worshipers. He used all the resources of operatic stagecraft, creating a total artistic environment in the chapel. The saint and angel appear to be floating on swirling clouds, while golden rays of light pour down from a vault of heaven painted on the ceiling. The sculptor's virtuosity with textures made the white marble "flesh" seem to quiver with life, while the feathery wings and frothy clouds are equally convincing. The whole altarpiece throbs with emotion, drama, and passion.

ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL

For most of his life, Bernini worked on commissions for Rome's St. Peter's Cathedral. The focal point of the church's interior was Bernini's bronze canopy-altar (known as a "baldachia") beneath the central dome marking the burial site of St. Peter. Taller than a ten-story building, this extravagant monument features four gigantic, grooved, spiral columns (covered with carved vines, leaves, and bees) that seem to writhe upward like corkscrews. The ensemble, including four colossal bronze angels at the corners of the canopy, is the essence of Baroque style. Its mixture of dazzling colors, forms, and materials produces an overwhelming and theatrical effect of imaginative splendor.

For a climactic spot at the end of the church, Bernini designed the Cathedra Petri, another mixed-media extravaganza to enshrine the modest wooden stool of St. Peter. The sumptuous composition includes four huge bronze figures supporting — almost without touching it — the throne, which is enveloped by flights of angels and billowing clouds. Everything appears to move, bathed in rays of golden light from a stained glass window overhead.

Outside the cathedral, Bernini designed the vast piazza and surrounded it with two curving, covered colonnades supported by rows of four columns abreast. Bernini planned arcades flanking the huge oval space to be like the Church's maternal, embracing arms, welcoming pilgrims to St. Peter's.

Aerial view of the piazza, St. Peter's Cathedral, Rome.



BORROMINI: DYNAMIC ARCHITECTURE. What Caravaggio did for painting, Francesco Borromini (1599-1667) did for architecture. Just as the painter's spotlighted subjects seem to leap out at the viewer, Borromini's undulating walls create a sense of being strobe-lit. The highly original work of both artists revolutionized their respective fields.

Borromini was a rebellious, emotionally disturbed genius who died by suicide. The son of a mason, he worked first as a stonecutter under Bernini, who later became his arch-rival. But, while Bernini employed up to thirty-nine assistants to execute his hastily sketched designs, the brooding, withdrawn Borromini worked obsessively on the most minute decorative details. He rejected countless ideas before saying "questo!" (this one) when he finally settled on a choice.

Even in buildings of modest dimensions, Borromini combined never-before-linked shapes in a startling fashion. The odd juxtaposition of concave and convex surfaces made his walls seem to ripple. Indeed, this quality and his complex floor plans have been compared to the multiple voices of a Bach fugue, both designed to produce a mood of exaltation.

Despite the bold elasticity of Borromini's buildings, the structures were unified and cohesive. The scalloped walls of St. Ivo's Church in Rome continuously taper to the top of a fantastic six-lobed dome, with the dome's frame being identical to the shape of the walls below — an organic part of a whole, as opposed to a separate Renaissance dome set upon a supporting block. The variety of curves and counter-curves typical of Borromini's work can be seen in San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, where the serpentine walls seem in motion.

Borromini, facade, San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, 1665-67, Rome. Borromini's trademark was alternating convex and concave surfaces to create the illusion of movement.



FLEMISH BAROQUE

The southern Netherlands, called Flanders and later Belgium, remained Catholic after the Reformation, which gave artists ample incentive to produce religious paintings. The story of Flemish Baroque painting is really the story of one man, Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640).

"A prince of painters and a painter of princes," an English ambassador said of Rubens. He led a charmed life, which took him to all the courts of Europe as both painter and diplomat. He was truly a European rather than regional painter, working for rulers of Italy, France, Spain, and England as well as Flanders. As a result, his work perfectly synthesized the styles and concepts of the South and North.

A rare creative genius who had it all, both worldly success and personal happiness, Rubens was outgoing, classically educated, handsome, vigorous, and well traveled. He spoke six languages fluently and had inexhaustible stamina. A visitor to Rubens's studio recalled the maestro painting a picture while listening to Ovid in the original Latin, carrying on a learned conversation, and dictating a letter — all at the same time. As one patron said, "Rubens had so many talents that his knowledge of painting should be considered the least of them."

Energy was the secret of Rubens's life and art. His output of more than 2,000 paintings was comparable only to Picasso's. He was swamped by commissions, which made him both wealthy and renowned. He rose each morning at 4 A.M., and worked nonstop until evening. Still, he needed an army of assistants to keep up with the demand for his work. His studio has been compared to a factory, where Rubens did small color sketches in oil of his conception or outlined a work full-size, to be painted by assistants (which is how van Dyck got his start), then finished by the master himself.

His studio in Antwerp (open to visitors today) still retains the balcony Rubens designed overlooking his work area, where customers could watch him paint huge pictures. One recalled how Rubens stared at a blank panel with arms crossed, then exploded in a flurry of quick brushstrokes covering the entire picture.

RELIGIOUS PAINTING. One painting that created a sensation, establishing Rubens's reputation as Europe's foremost religious painter, was "The Descent from the Cross." It has all the traits of mature Baroque style: theatrical lighting with an ominously dark sky and glaringly spot-lit Christ, curvilinear rhythms leading the eye to the central figure of Christ, and tragic theme eliciting a powerful emotional response. The English painter Sir Joshua Reynolds called the magnificent body of Christ "one of



Rubens, "The Descent from the Cross," c. 1612, Antwerp Cathedral. This painting, full of Baroque curves and dramatic lighting, established Rubens's reputation.

the finest figures that ever was invented." His drooping head and body falling to the side conveyed the heaviness of death with intense, you-are-there accuracy.

FAT IS BEAUTIFUL. Rubens was probably best known for his full-bodied, sensual nudes. He was happily married to two women (when his first wife died, he married a 16-year-old). Both were his ideal of feminine beauty that he painted again and again: buxom, plump, and smiling with golden hair and luminous skin.

As the art historian Sir Kenneth Clark wrote in *The Nude*, skin represents the most difficult problem for a painter. Rubens's mastery was such, he promised patrons "many beautiful nudes" as a selling point. Whatever the subject, his compositions were always based on massive, rounded human figures, usually in motion. While most painters, because they revered the Classical style, worked from plaster casts or antique sculptures, Rubens preferred to sketch from living models.

HUNTING PICTURES. One characteristic Rubens shared with Hals and Velazquez was that his method of applying paint was in itself expressive. Rubens's surging brushstrokes made his vibrant colors come alive. Nowhere was this more evident than in his hunting pictures, a genre he invented.

MARIE DE'MEDICI SERIES

Rubens's most ambitious project was a sequence of paintings celebrating the life of the queen of France, Marie de'Medici, a silly, willful monarch chiefly remembered for squandering huge sums of money and quarreling incessantly with her spouse (she ruled temporarily after he was assassinated), and for commissioning Rubens to decorate two galleries with pictures immortalizing her "heroic" exploits.

"My talent is such," Rubens wrote, "that no undertaking, however vast in size . . . has ever surpassed my courage." True to his boast, he finished Marie's twenty-one large-scale oils in just three years, virtually without assistance. Even more difficult, however, must have been creating glorious epics out of such inglorious raw material. Here, too, the tactful Rubens was up to the task. He portrayed Marie giving birth to her son (the royal heir before

she had him banished) as a solemn nativity scene. His panel on Marie's education featured divinities like Minerva and Apollo tutoring her in music and eloquence.

In "Marie Arrives at Marseilles," the goddess of Fame heralds the queen's landing in France with golden trumpets. Rubens diplomatically omitted Marie's double chin (though in later scenes he did portray her queen-size corpulence) and concentrated instead on three voluptuous assistants to Neptune in the foreground, even lovingly adding beadlike drops of water on their ample buttocks.

Rubens shared the Baroque era's love of pomp, indicated by the painting's exuberant colors, rich costumes, and golden barge. He approached his life and work with vigor. No matter what the subject, he gave his paintings an air of triumph. As Rubens said, "It is not important to live long, but to live well!"



Rubens, "Marie Arrives at Marseilles," 1622-25, Louvre, Paris. Rubens painted the arrival of the French queen as a sensory extravaganza spilling over with color and opulence.

Van Dyck, "Charles I at the Hunt," 1635, Louvre, Paris. Van Dyck specialized in flattering portraits of elegant aristocrats, posed informally to give the official portrait new liveliness.



VAN DYCK: THE INFORMAL, FORMAL PORTRAIT. A true child prodigy, Sir Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641) was an accomplished painter when only 16. For a few years he worked with Rubens in Antwerp but, not content to play second fiddle, he struck out on his own, first to Italy and later to England to become court painter to Charles I.

The handsome, vain, fabulously gifted painter was dubbed "il pittore cavalleresco" (painter who gives himself fancy airs) for his snobbish dandyism. He was addicted to high society and dressed ostentatiously, strutting about with a sword and adopting the sunflower as his personal symbol. Van Dyck was a supreme portraitist, establishing a style, noble yet intimate and psychologically penetrating, that influenced three generations of portrait painters.

Van Dyck transformed the frosty, official images of royalty into real human beings. In this new kind of portrait, he posed aristocrats and royals in settings of Classical columns and shimmering curtains to convey their refinement and status. Yet van Dyck's ease of composition and sense of arrested movement, as though the subjects were pausing rather than posing, lent humanity to an otherwise stilted scene.

Another reason for van Dyck's popularity was his ability to flatter his subjects in paint, all becoming slim paragons of perfection, despite eyewitness accounts to the contrary. Charles I was stubby and plain, but in van Dyck's hands, he became a dashing cavalier king, standing on a knoll like a warrior surveying the battlefield beneath the canopy of a tree. One trick van Dyck used to great effect was to paint the ratio of head to body as one to seven, as opposed to the average of one to six. This served to elongate and slenderize his subject's figure.

DUTCH BAROQUE

Though Holland shared its southern border with Flanders, culturally and politically the two countries could not have been more different. While Flanders was dominated by the monarchy and the Catholic Church, Holland, or The Netherlands, was an independent, democratic, Protestant country. Religious art was forbidden in the severe, whitewashed churches and the usual sources of patronage — the church, royal court, and nobility — were gone. The result was a democratizing of art in both subject matter and ownership.

Artists, for the first time, were left to the mercy of the marketplace. Fortunately, the prosperous middle class had a mania for art collecting. One visitor to Amsterdam in 1640 noted, "As For the art off Painting and the affection off the people to Pictures, I think none other goe beeyond them, . . . All in generale striving to adorne their houses with costly pieces." Demand for paintings was constant. Even butchers, bakers, and blacksmiths bought paintings to decorate their shops.

Such enthusiasm produced a bounty of high-quality art and huge numbers of artists that specialized in specific subjects such as still lifes, seascapes, interiors, or animals. In the seventeenth century, there were more than 500 painters in Holland working in still life alone.

Dutch art flourished from 1610 to 1670. Its style was realistic, its subject matter commonplace. But what made its creators more than just skilled technicians was their ability to capture the play of light on different surfaces and to suggest texture — from matte to luminous — by the way light was absorbed or reflected. Most of these Dutch painters, a fairly conservative crew, are referred to as the Little Dutchmen, to distinguish them from the three great masters, Hals, Rembrandt, and Vermeer, who went beyond technical excellence to true originality.

STILL LIFE. As a genre of painting, the still life began in the post-Reformation Netherlands. Although the form was considered inferior elsewhere, the seventeenth century was the peak period of Dutch still life painting, with artists achieving extraordinary realism in portraying domestic objects. Often still lifes were emblematic, as in

THE STILL LIFE

Dutch still life masters who pioneered the form as a separate genre were interested in how light reflected off different surfaces. Heda's "Still Life" counterpoints the dull gleam of pewter against the sheen of silver or crystal.

In the eighteenth century, the French painter Chardin spread the still life art form to the south by concentrating on humble objects. Nineteenth-century painters like Corot, Courbet, and Manet used still life to examine objects' aesthetic qualities. Cezanne, the Cubists, and the Fauves employed the still life to experiment with structure and color, while Italian painter Morandi concentrated almost exclusively on still lifes. A photo-realist style of trompe l'oeil painting arose in the United States beginning with the Peale brothers' still lifes, followed by the lifelike "deceptions" of Harnett and Peto, up to contemporary painters like Audrey Flack.



Heda, "Still Life," c. 1636, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

"vanitas" paintings, with symbols like a skull or smoking candle representing the transience of all life.

LANDSCAPE. Before the Baroque era, landscape views were little more than background for whatever was going on in the front of the picture. The Dutch established landscape as deserving of its own artistic treatment. In contrast to France, where Poussin and Claude focused on an idealized nature, the great Dutch landscape artists, such as Aelbert Cuyp, Jacob van Ruisdael, and Meindert Hobbema, treated nature realistically, often set against towering clouds in a great sky.

RUISDAEL: "BIG SKY" PAINTINGS. The most versatile landscape artist was Ruisdael (1629-82). Although he painted sharply defined details, he emphasized great open stretches of sky, water, and fields and used dramatic contrasts of light and shadow and threatening clouds to infuse his work with melancholy. This expansiveness and somber mood distinguished him from hundreds of other landscape artists working at the time.

HALS: MASTER OF THE MOMENT. Frans Hals's (1580-1666) contribution to art was his ability to capture a fleeting expression. Whether his portraits depicted musicians, gypsies, or solid citizens, he brought them to life, often laughing and hoisting a tankard. His trademark was portraits of men and women caught in a moment of rollicking high spirits.

Hals's most famous painting, "The Laughing Cavalier," portrays a sly figure with a smile on his lips, a twinkle in his eyes, and a mustache rakishly upturned. Hals achieved this swashbuckling effect chiefly through his brushstrokes. Before Hals, Dutch realists prided themselves on masking their strokes to disguise the process of painting, thereby heightening a painting's realism. Hals put his own "signature" on his images through slashing, sketchlike brushstrokes.

In this "alia prima," technique, which means "at first" in Italian, the artist applies paint directly to the canvas without an undercoat. The painting is completed with a single application of brushstrokes. Although Hals's strokes were clearly visible at close range, like Rubens's and Velazquez's, they formed coherent images from a distance and perfectly captured the immediacy of the moment. Hals caught his "Jolly Toper" in a freeze-frame of life, with lips parted as if about to speak and hand in mid-gesture.

Hals transformed the stiff convention of group portraiture. In his "Banquet of the Officers of the Saint George Guard Company," he portrayed militiamen not as fighters but feasters at an uproarious banquet. Before Hals, artists traditionally painted group members as in a class picture, lined up like effigies in neat rows. Hals seated them around

a table in relaxed poses, interacting naturally, with each facial expression individualized. Although the scene seems impromptu, the composition was a balance of poses and gestures with red-white-and-black linkages. The Baroque diagonals of flags, sashes, and ruffs reinforced the swaggering, boys-night-out feeling.

Hals's outgoing, merry portraits of the 1620s and '30s reveal his gift for enlivening, rather than embalming, a subject. Sadly, at the end of his life, Hals fell from favor. Although he had been a successful portraitist, the love of wine and beer his paintings celebrated spilled over into his personal life. With ten children and a brawling second wife who was often in trouble with the law, Hals, "filled to the gills every evening," as a contemporary wrote, died destitute.



Hals, "The Jolly Toper," 1627, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Hals used sweeping, fluid brushstrokes to freeze the passing moment in candid portraits of merry tipplers.

Ruisdael, "Windmill at Wijk-bij-Duurstede," c. 1665, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Ruisdael's landscapes convey a dramatic mood through the wind-raked sky, mobile clouds, and alternating sun and shadow streaking the low horizon.



REMBRANDT: THE WORLD FAMOUS. Probably the best-known painter in the Western world is Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-69). During his lifetime, Rembrandt was a wildly successful portrait painter. Today his reputation rests principally on the probing, introspective paintings of his late years, their subtle shadings implying extraordinary emotional depth.

EARLY STYLE. For the first twenty years of his career, Rembrandt's portraits were the height of fashion, and he was deluged with commissions. Although his output was prolific, he was difficult to deal with. "A painting is finished," he said, "when the master feels it is finished." Customers often resorted to bribery to receive their portraits on time. During this prosperous period, Rembrandt also painted Biblical and historical scenes in a Baroque style. These intricately detailed works were lit dramatically, with the figures reacting melodramatically.

LATE STYLE. The year of "The Nightwatch," 1642, marked a turning point in Rembrandt's career. His dearly loved wife died prematurely (they had already lost three children in infancy) and he increasingly abandoned facile portraits with Baroque flourishes for a quieter, deeper style. In his mature phase, Rembrandt's art became less physical, more psychological. He turned to Biblical subjects but treated them with more restraint. A palette of reds and browns came to dominate his paintings, as did solitary figures and a pervasive theme of loneliness. He pushed out the limits of chiaroscuro, using gradations of light and dark to convey mood, character, and emotion.

ETCHING. Rembrandt is considered the most accomplished etcher ever. He handled the needle with such skill and speed, his etchings convey the spontaneity of a sketch. One of his best-known etchings, "Six's Bridge," a landscape, was said to have been done between courses during dinner when a servant dashed to a nearby village to fetch mustard.

Nightwatch. "The Nightwatch," an example of his early style, shows Rembrandt's technical skill with lighting, composition, and color that earned it the reputation as one of the world's greatest masterpieces.

The painting was erroneously believed to be a night scene because of the darkened varnish that coated it. After cleaning, it was evident the scene took place in the day, at the dramatic moment the larger-than-life captain at center gives his militia company its marching orders.

Like Hals, Rembrandt revolutionized the clichéd group portrait from stiff, orderly rows to a lively moment of communal action, giving a sense of hectic activity through Baroque devices of light, movement, and pose. The captain and lieutenant seem on the verge of stepping into the viewer's space, while contrasting light flashes and dark background keep the eye zig-zagging around the picture. The crisscrossing diagonals of pikes, lances, rifles, flag, drum, and staff make the scene appear chaotic, but—since they converge at right angles — they are part of a hidden geometric pattern holding everything together. Color harmonies of yellow in the lieutenant's uniform and girl's dress and red sash and musketeer's uniform also unify the design.

According to legend, since each member of the company had paid equally to have his portrait immortalized, Rembrandt's obscuring some faces appalled the sitters and marked the beginning of his decline from favor. A student of the painter wrote that Rembrandt paid "greater heed to the sweep of his imaginahon than to the individual portraits he was required to do," yet added that the painting was "so dashing in movement and so powerful" that other paintings beside it seemed "like playing cards."



Rembrandt, "The Nightwatch," 1642, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

EARLY STYLE, c. 1622-42

Used dramatic light/dark contrasts
Design seemed to burst frame
Scenes featured groups of figures
Based on physical action
Vigorous, melodramatic tone
Highly finished, detailed technique

LATE STYLE, c. 1643-69

Used golden-brown tones, subtle shading
Static, brooding atmosphere
Scenes simplified with single subject
Implied psychological reaction
Quiet, solemn mood
Painted with brood, thick strokes

PAINTINGS. Rembrandt's technique evolved from attention to minute detail to large-scale subjects given form through broad, thick smudges of paint. His first biographer wrote, "In the last years of his life, he worked so fast that his pictures, when examined from close by, looked as if they had been daubed with a bricklayer's trowel." He almost carved with pigment, laying on heavy impasto "half a finger" thick with a palette knife for light areas

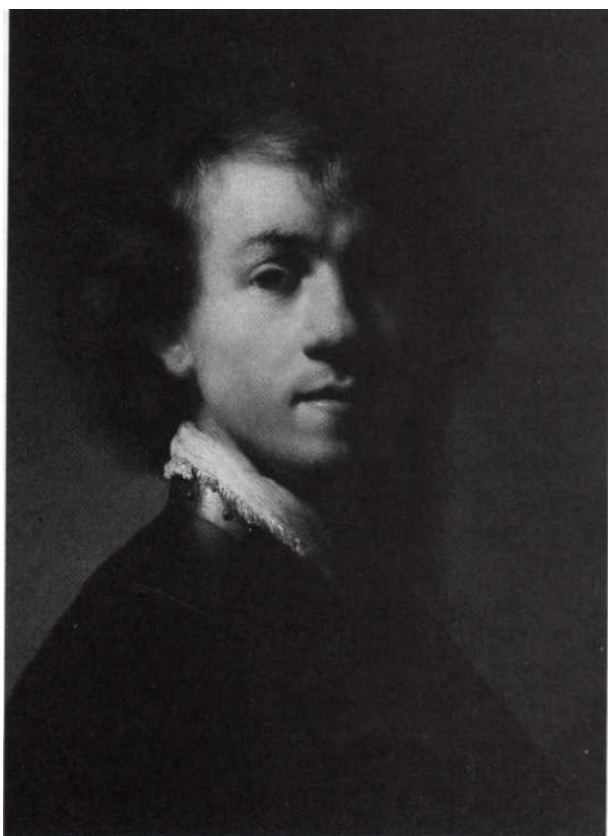
and scratching the thick, wet paint with the handle of the brush. This created an uneven surface that reflected and scattered the light, making it sparkle, while the dark areas were thinly glazed to enhance the absorption of light.

Rembrandt's only known comment on art was in a letter, where he wrote that he painted "with the greatest and most deep-seated emotion." The rest of his remarkable contribution to art he left on the canvas.

SELF-PORTRAITS

Rembrandt's nearly 100 self-portraits over the course of forty years were an artistic exploration of his own image that remained unique until van Gogh. The self-portraits ranged from a dewy-eyed youth to an old man stoically facing his own physical decay. In between were brightly lit portraits of the affluent, successful entrepreneur, dressed in furs and gold. Later, the distinctions between light and shadow became less pronounced as he used chiaroscuro to find his inner being.

Comparing an early and late self-portrait shows the change from fine detail to bolder strokes. In the first, done when Rembrandt was about 23, he used Caravaggesque lighting, with one side of the face in deep shadow. He paid as much attention to superficial costume detail (see the rivets on his iron collar) as to character traits. In the later self-portrait, when Rembrandt was 54, the inner man was the focus, conveyed through freer application of paint.



Rembrandt, "Self-Portrait," c.1629-30, Mauritshuis, The Hague.



Rembrandt, "Self-Portrait," 1660, MMA, NY.

VERMEER: MASTER OF LIGHT. Called the "Sphinx of Delft" because of the mystery about his life, the painter Johannes Vermeer (1632—75) is now considered second only to Rembrandt among Dutch artists. He remained in his native city of Delft until he died bankrupt at the age of 43, leaving a widow and eleven children. His surviving paintings are few, only thirty-five to forty. Perhaps he never painted more, for no painter until Ingres worked so deliberately.

And no painter except perhaps van Eyck was as skillful as Vermeer in his masterful use of light. While other artists used a gray/green/brown palette, Vermeer's colors were brighter, purer, and glowed with an intensity unknown before.

Besides his handling of color and light, Vermeer's perfectly balanced compositions of rectangular shapes lend serenity and stability to his paintings. A typical canvas portrays a neat, spare room lit from a window on the left and a figure engrossed in a simple domestic task. But what elevates his subjects above the banal is his keen representation of visual reality, colors perfectly true to the eye, and the soft light that fills the room with radiance. His pictures contain no central anecdote, passion, or event. The soft, buttery — almost palpable — light roaming over various surfaces is his true subject.

Vermeer used a "camera obscura" to aid his accuracy in drawing. This was a dark box with a pinhole opening that could project an image of an object or scene to be traced on a sheet of paper. Yet Vermeer did not merely copy the outlines of a projected scene. His handling of paint was also revolutionary. Although in reproduction the brushstrokes appear smooth and detailed, Vermeer often applied

paint in dabs and pricks so that the raised surface of a point of paint reflected more light, giving vibrancy and a sense of rough, three-dimensional texture. His technique was close to the pointillism of the Impressionists. One critic described his paint surface as "crushed pearls melted together."

In "The Kitchenmaid," his method of defining forms not by lines but by beads of light was evident, especially around the rim of the milk pitcher, a mosaic of paint daubs. Vermeer was also a master of varying the intensity of color in relation to an object's distance from the light source. The crusty bread picks up the strongest light and reflects it, through precise touches of impasto (or thickly applied paint). Almost too attentive to detail, Vermeer, to avoid monotony on the whitewashed wall, even adds stains, holes, and a nail. The composition is so balanced and cohesive that removing just one of the elements would threaten its sta-



Vermeer, "The Kitchenmaid," c. 1658, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. *Vermeer's true subject was light onto its effect on color and form.*

bility. Although the painting is devoid of dramatic incident, the maid's utter absorption in her task gives her work an air of majesty. As one critic said of Vermeer, "No Dutch painter ever honored woman as he did."

WHO WERE THE OLD MASTERS?

Besides the group portrait on the Dutch Masters cigar box, is there any agreement on which painters comprise the auction category "Old Masters"? It's actually a flexible concept — rather than an explicit listing — of notable painters from the Renaissance and Baroque periods. The following are some of the main artists sure to top anyone's list of Old Masters.

Bellini	Correggio	Masaccio	Tintoretto
Bosch	Durer	Michelangelo	Titian
Botticelli	El Greco	Poussin	Van Dyck
Bruegel	Giorgione	Raphael	Van Eyck
Canaletto	Hals	Rembrandt	Velazquez
Caravaggio	Holbein	Reni	Vermeer
Carracci	La Tour	Rubens	Veronese
Claude	Leonardo	Tiepolo	Zurbarán

ENGLISH BAROQUE

The seventeenth century was a period of upheaval in England, with Charles I losing his head, Cromwell destroying church art, and Parliament seizing power. While in literature the 1600s was an era of extraordinary creativity (Shakespeare, Donne, Milton), the visual arts in England lagged far behind. Since religious art was forbidden in Puritan churches and the taste for mythological subjects never caught on, English art was limited almost exclusively to portraits. In the past, England had imported its painters (Holbein and van Dyck). Now, for the first time, it produced three important native artists: Hogarth, Gainsborough, and Reynolds.

HOGARTH: THE ARTIST AS SOCIAL CRITIC. "I have endeavored to treat my subjects as a dramatic writer; my picture is my stage," wrote the painter/engraver William Hogarth (1697-1764). Influenced by contemporary satirists like Fielding and Swift, Hogarth invented a new genre — the comic strip — or a sequence of anecdotal pictures that poked fun at the foibles of the day. The masses bought engravings based on these paintings by the thousands as Hogarth became the first British artist to be widely admired abroad.

Hogarth's lifelong crusade was to overcome England's inferiority complex and worship of continental artists. He criticized the Old Masters as having been "smoked into worth" by time, and thereby rendered nearly indecipherable; he denounced fashionable portrait painters as "face painters." In his portraits, he refused to prettify the subject, believing that irregularities revealed character. Commissions, as a result, were few, which led him to



Hogarth, "Breakfast Scene," from *Marriage a la Mode*, c. 1745, NG, London. Hogarth is best known for satirical pictures poking fun at English society.

discover his true calling — satirical prints.

When Hogarth was still a boy, his schoolmaster father had been imprisoned for debt, an experience that permanently marked the painter. In his series *The Rake's Progress*, Hogarth candidly shows the seamy side of life, exposing the deplorable conditions of debtors' prison and Bedlam hospital for the insane. Hogarth could also be considered the first political cartoonist. He drew his targets from the whole range of society, satirizing with equal aplomb the idle aristocracy, drunken urban working class (a first in visual art), and corrupt politicians.

Hogarth's series *Marriage a la Mode* ridiculed a nouveau riche bride wed to a dissolute viscount in a marriage arranged to improve the social standing of the former and bank account of the latter. As Hogarth's friend, Henry Fielding, wrote in the comic novel *Tom Jones*, "His

designs were strictly honorable, as the phrase is; that is, to rob a lady of her fortune by way of marriage."

Hogarth used many small touches to suggest the storyline of his paintings. In "Breakfast Scene," a bride coyly admires the groom her father's dowry has purchased, while the dissheveled noble looks gloomy, hung over, or both. The clock, with its hands past noon, suggests a sleepless night of debauchery, further indicated by the cards on the floor, overturned chair, and broken sword. The lace cap in the aristocrat's pocket hints at adultery.

Uncompromising honesty tinged with humor were the hallmarks of Hogarth's art. He once said he would rather have "checked the progress of cruelty than been the author of Raphael's [paintings]."

HOW TO TELL THEM APART

GAINSBOROUGH AND REYNOLDS: PORTRAITS OF THE UPPER CRUST.

Two contemporaneous portrait painters of the era were Thomas Gainsborough (1727-88) and Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92). Both were highly successful, painting thousands of elegant, full-length portraits of the British aristocracy. Their works often hang side by side in art galleries, easily confused because of their common subject matter. In many ways, however, they defined the distinction between informal and formal.



Gainsborough, "Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan," c. 1785, NG, Washington. *In Gainsborough's fashionable portraits, the sitter posed informally in a natural setting, landscape background with a landscape background.*

Sitters in contemporary dress

GAINSBOROUGH: BACK TO NATURE. Gainsborough worshiped van Dyck. He learned from the master how to elongate figures to make them seem regal and set them in charmingly negligent poses to make them seem alive. Gainsborough refreshed British art with his loving portrayal of landscape backgrounds. He painted landscapes for his own pleasure, constructing miniature scenes in his studio of broccoli, sponges, and moss to simulate unspoiled nature. These did not sell, so Gainsborough had to content himself with inserting landscape backgrounds in his portraits.

In "Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan," his subject was dressed informally, seated on a rock in a rustic setting (the painter wished to add sheep for a more "pastoral" air). The natural beauty of both the landscape and subject harmonize perfectly. The framing tree at right arcs into the painting to lead the eye back, while the curves of clouds and mid-ground tree, shrubs, hills, and skirt bring the focus back to the sitter's face. This Baroque swirl of encircling eye movement repeats the oval of her face.

The leafy look of Gainsborough's paintings helped establish the concept, taken up in earnest by nineteenth-century painters like Constable, that nature was a worthwhile subject for art.



Reynolds, "Jane, Countess of Harrington," 1777, Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, CA. *Reynolds idealized his subjects, converting them to Classical deities.*

REYNOLDS

Hard-working, careful businessman, complete professional

Consummate gentleman/scholar, at home in most genteel social circles

Well educated in classics, England's first art theorist

Employed assistants and drapery painters

Aimed at "senatorial dignity" in portraits

Antique props: urns, pedestals, columns

Sitters in character as goddesses, saints

REYNOLDS: HOMAGE TO ROME. Testimony of Reynolds' devotion to the Grand Tradition is that he went deaf from spending too much time in the frosty rooms of the Vatican while sketching the Raphaels that hung there. While on the continent, he also caught a lifelong dose of "forum fever," thereafter littering his portraits with Roman relics and noble poses. His dilemma was that, although he could get rich at "face painting," only history painters were considered poets among artists. Reynolds tried to combine the two genres, finding fault with Gainsborough for painting "with the eye of the painter, not the poet."

Reynolds was a champion of idealizing reality. In separate portraits both he and Gainsborough did of the actress Mrs. Siddons, Gainsborough showed her as a fashionable lady, while Reynolds portrayed her as a Tragic Muse enthroned between symbols of Pity and Terror. He so idolized such masters as Raphael, Michelangelo, Rubens, and Rembrandt he even painted his self-portrait costumed as the latter.

His portraits succeeded in spite of his pedantic self. "Damn him! How various he is!" Gainsborough exclaimed of this artist who could paint imposing military heroes, genteel ladies, and playful children with equal skill. Ironically, in his best portraits Reynolds ignored his own rules. Instead of idealizing what he termed "deficiencies and deformities," he relied on an intimate, direct style to capture the sitter's personality.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY AND THE GRAND MANNER

Modeled on the French Academie Royale, the British Royal Academy of Arts was founded in 1768 with Sir Joshua Reynolds as its first president. In his fifteen "Discourses" over the course of twenty years, Reynolds preached a strict code of rules based on Classicism. Artists were required to uphold the Grand Manner, "the beau ideal of the French," Reynolds said, portraying heroic figures in idealized settings with ancient Roman trappings. The painting of serious, historical scenes was the favored subject. Yet since Reynolds made his living by portraits, he allowed this genre into the official canon, as long as sitters did not wear contemporary clothing. (Nude figures, however, were acceptable.) The idea was to improve upon nature, wiping out any "individual facial peculiarities" and purging the background of "grosser elements of ordinary existence." In his own work, Reynolds imitated Greek and Roman art, often modeling his subjects on gods and goddesses.

For 100 years, the Academy wielded unmatched authority. By the late nineteenth century, however, it was perceived as an anachronism that enshrined mediocrity and opposed progressive art. The novelist George Moore wrote in 1898, "that nearly all artists dislike and despise the Royal Academy is a matter of common knowledge."

BAROQUE ARCHITECTURE: ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL. England's main contribution to Baroque architecture was St. Paul's Cathedral, designed by Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723). In fact, Wren designed more than fifty stone churches in London, a feat necessitated by the Great Fire of London in 1666 that destroyed more than 13,000 houses and eighty-seven churches.

St. Paul's was Wren's masterpiece (indeed, his remains are entombed there), intended to rival Rome's St. Peter's. The project began inauspiciously, since workers were unable to demolish the sturdy pillars of the burned church. When blasting away with gunpowder didn't work, they resorted to a medieval battering ram. After a day of "relentless battering," the last remnants of the old church fell and the new church began to rise — a forty-year undertaking.

Wren was an intellectual prodigy — a mathematician and astronomer praised by Sir Isaac Newton. He used his engineering skills to design the church's dome, second in size only to St. Peter's. Its diameter was 112 feet, and at a height of 365 feet, it was higher than a football field. The lantern and cross atop the dome alone weighed 64,000 tons. How to support such a tremendous

load? Wren's pioneering solution was to construct the dome as a wooden shell covered in thin lead. He could then create a beautiful silhouette on the outside and a high ceiling in the interior with a fraction of the weight. St. Paul's is one of the major churches of the world. As Wren's inscription on his tomb in the great cathedral says, "If you seek a monument, look around you."



Wren, St. Paul's Cathedral, West facade, 1675-1712, London.

BAROQUE

Baroque art throughout Europe tended to be larger than life — full of motion and emotion — like the grandiose religious works produced in Rome.

Yet, rather than merely imitating Italian masterpieces, each country developed its own distinctive style and emphasis.

	ITALIAN	FLEMISH	DUTCH	SPANISH	ENGLISH	FRENCH
HEYDAY	1590–1680	1600–40	1630–70	1625–60	1720–90	1670–1715
EMPHASIS	Religious works	Altarpieces	Portraits, Still Lifes, Landscapes	Court Portraits	Portraits of Aristocracy	Classical Landscapes and Decorative Architecture
PATRON	Church	Church, Monarch	People	Monarch	Upper Class	Monarch
STYLE	Dynamic	Florid	Virtuoso	Realistic	Restrained	Pretentious
QUALITIES	Drama, Intensity, Movement	Sensuality	Visual Accuracy, Studies of Light	Dignity	Elegance	Order and Ornament

SPANISH BAROQUE

Spain's major gift to world art was Diego Velazquez (1599-1660). Extraordinarily precocious, while still in his teens he painted pictures demonstrating total technical mastery. At the age of 18, he qualified as a master painter. On a visit to Madrid, Velazquez did a portrait so perfect in execution it attracted the king's attention. His first painting of Philip IV pleased the monarch so much he declared from then on only Velazquez would do his portrait. At the age of 24, Velazquez became the country's most esteemed painter and would spend more than thirty years portraying the royal court.

Like Holbein's, Velazquez's royal portraits were masterpieces of visual realism, but the Spaniard's methods were the opposite of Holbein's linear precision. No outlines are visible in his portraits; he created forms with fluid brushstrokes and by applying spots of light and color, a precursor of Impressionism.

Velazquez differed from most Baroque artists in the simplicity and earthiness of his work. He never forgot his teacher's advice: "Go to nature for everything." As a result, he never succumbed to the pompous style of strewing allegorical symbols and Classical bric-a-brac about his paintings. Instead, he depicted the world as it appeared to his eyes. Velazquez's early paintings portrayed even holy or mythological figures as real people, drawn against a neutral background.

Whether portraying the king or a court dwarf, Velazquez presented his subjects with dignity and, in all cases, factuality. His approach humanized the stiff, formal court portrait tradition by setting models in more natural poses without fussy accessories. Although a virtuoso in technique, Velazquez preferred understatement to ostentation and

WORLD'S GREATEST PAINTING

In a 1985 poll of artists and critics, Velázquez's "Las Meninas" ("The Maids of Honor") was voted, by a considerable margin, "the world's greatest painting." Picasso paid it homage by doing a series of forty-four variations on the work. Velázquez took seriously Leonardo's dictate, "the mirror is our master," and tried to approximate what he saw as closely as possible, often working years on a canvas.

The painting was ostensibly a royal portrait of the five-year-old princess Margarita, attended by her ladies in waiting and two dwarfs. With the diverse additional portraits, it is also like a group painting of the subject: "Visitors to the Artist's Studio." In the middle ground is a mirrored reflection of the king and queen, in the background a full-length portrait of a court official on the steps.

Critics have speculated Velázquez was playing with the idea of the ambiguity of images, including many versions of portraiture, even on the left a self-portrait of himself in the act of reproducing this very scene from a mirror. His skill was such that all the images seem equally convincing, whether indirect (mirrored reflections and paintings of paintings) or "direct" portraits.

"Las Meninas" shows Velázquez's constant concern with design and composition. Although the figures seem informally grouped, the composition actually consists of a carefully balanced series of overlapping triangles. He used only the lower half of the canvas for portraits and filled the space above with a range of light and shadow to produce the illusion of space. Firm verticals and horizontals keep the viewer's eye from getting lost in the room. In 1650, a connoisseur of art said of Velázquez's work that, while all the rest was art, this alone was truth.



Velázquez, "Las Meninas," 1656, Prado, Madrid. *Velázquez created forms through color and light rather than through lines, achieving startlingly real images of the human figure.*

realism to idealism.

On his friend Rubens's advice Velazquez visited Rome to study Renaissance and Classic masters in the Vatican collection. While there, he painted perhaps his finest portrait, "Pope Innocent X." The sitter's sharp glance was so lifelike — almost predatory—the pope declared it "troppo vero" (too truthful).

Although Velazquez is considered a master of realism, he achieved his effects with loose brushstrokes that, when scrutinized at close range, seem to melt into blurred daubs of paint. As the contemporary Spanish writer on art Antonio Palomino said, "One cannot understand it if standing too close, but from a distance, it is a miracle!"

To accomplish this "miracle," Velazquez dabbed quick touches of paint with which to suggest reflected light. An Italian painter exclaimed of his work, "It is made of nothing, but there it is!"

THE TOP 10

In 1985, a panel of art experts for the *Illustrated London News* judged "Las AAeninas" as "by far the greatest work of art by a human being." The following is a list of the winners and how they placed:

1. Velazquez "Las AAeninas"
2. Vermeer "View of Delft"
3. Giorgione "The Tempest"
4. Botticelli "La Primavera"
5. Francesco "The Resurrection"
6. El Greco "The Burial of the Count Orgaz"
7. Giotto "The Lamentation"
8. GrOnewald "The Isenheim Altarpiece"
9. Picasso "Guernica"
10. Rembrandt "The Return of the Prodigal Son"

THE VELAZQUEZ ARTISTIC TREE

Because Spain was artistically isolated, Velázquez's work was not widely known until the nineteenth century. Then, his brilliant brushwork, which captured the visual world with an almost hyperrealism, inspired painters seeking to break free of the academic straitjacket. The tree shows some prominent artists directly influenced by Velázquez.

BACON — hallucinatory "Head Surrounded by Sides of Beef" showed his obsession with Velázquez's "Pope Innocent X."



SARGENT — influenced by technique, color, casual arrangement of multigroup figures.



WHISTLER — used dark, full-length figures on neutral ground, reduced content to essential expressive forms.



MANET — considered Velázquez's method totally new, said "I have found in him . . . my ideal of painting."



GOYA — learned subtle gradations of color, glowing highlights.

VELÁZQUEZ



La Tour, "The Penitent Magdalen," c. 1638-43, MMA, NY. The first important French painter of the seventeenth century was Georges de La Tour, who specialized in candlelit night scenes derived from Caravaggio. Here he pictured Mary Magdalen at the moment of her conversion, her face illuminated by a bright flame amid almost total darkness. La Tour simplified all forms to near-geometric abstraction so the light appeared to fall smoothly without refraction. This drew the observer into the circle of light to share the mood of inner stillness and intimacy. As one critic said of La Tour, "A candle has conquered the enormous night."

FRENCH BAROQUE

In the seventeenth century, France was the most powerful country in Europe, and Louis XIV tapped the finest talents to glorify his monarchy with a palace of unparalleled splendor. With the coming of Versailles, France replaced Rome as the center of European art (a distinction it retained until World War II), even as it modeled its art on Roman relics.

POUSSIN: MASTER OF COMPOSITION. The most famous French painter of the seventeenth century, Nicolas Poussin (pronounced poo SAHN; 1594-1665), worked not in France but in Rome. Passionately interested in antiquity, he based his paintings on ancient Roman myths, history, and Greek sculpture. The widespread influence of Poussin's work revived this ancient style, which became the dominant artistic influence for the next 200 years.

Poussin took Classical rationalism so seriously that, when Louis XIII summoned him to Paris to paint a Louvre ceiling fresco, he refused to conform to the prevailing code of soaring saints. People don't fly through the air, he insisted with faultless logic, thus losing the commission and returning to his beloved Roman ruins.

Left to his own devices, Poussin chose to paint in what he called "la maniera magnifica" (the grand manner). Or, as he put it, "The first requirement, fundamental to all others, is that the subject and the narrative be grandiose, such as battles, heroic actions, and religious themes." The artist must shun "low" subjects. Those who didn't avoid everyday life (like Caravaggio, whom he detested) "find refuge in [base subjects], because of the feebleness of their talents."

Poussin's work exerted enormous influence on the course of French (and, therefore, world) art for the next two centuries because all artists were trained in "Poussinism," an institutionalized Classicism.

CLAUDE: NATURE AS IDEAL. After Poussin, the best known French Baroque painter was Claude Lorrain (1600-82), known simply as Claude. Like Poussin, Claude was drawn to Italy, where he painted idyllic scenes of the Italian countryside. Where the two differed was in their inspiration, for Claude was inspired less by Classical forms than by nature itself and the serene light of dawn and dusk that unified his canvases.

Claude lived for extended periods among shepherds, sketching trees, hills, and romantic ruins of the Italian *campagna* in the early morning or late afternoon. His paintings were typically arranged with dark, majestic trees forming a partial arch that framed a radiant countryside view and intensified the central light. Claude had no interest in the tiny human figures that inhabited his countrysides; their only purpose was to establish scale for the natural elements. Indeed, he paid other artists to paint them for him.



Poussin, "Burial of Phocion," 1648, Louvre, Paris. Poussin's balanced, orderly scenes shaped Western art for 200 years.

VERSAILLES: PALACE OF POMP. The pinnacle of Baroque opulence was the magnificent chateau of Versailles, transformed from a modest hunting lodge to the largest palace in the world. It was a tribute to the ambition of one man, King Louis XIV (1638-1715), who aspired, it was said, "beyond the sumptuous to the stupendous." "L'etat c'est moi" (I am the state), said the absolute monarch known as the "Sun King." Surrounded by an entourage of 2,000 nobles and 18,000 soldiers and servants, Louis created a total environment of ostentatious luxury, designed to impress visitors with the splendor of both France and his royal self.

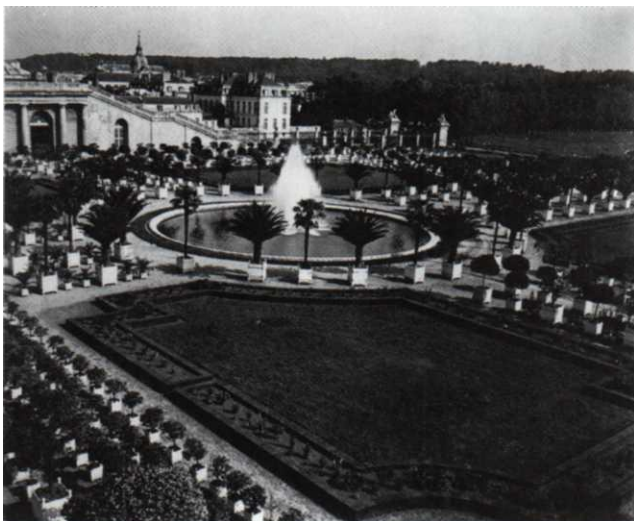
Versailles' hundreds of rooms were adorned with crystal chandeliers, multicolored marble, solid-silver furniture, and crimson velvet hangings embroidered in gold. The king himself, covered in gold, diamonds, and feathers, received important guests seated on a nine-foot, canopied silver throne. His royal rising (*lever*) and retiring (*coucher*) were attended by flocks of courtiers in formal rituals as important to the court as the rising and setting of the sun. Four hundred ninety-eight people were required merely to present the king with a meal. "We are not like private people," said the king. "We belong entirely to the public."

Visual impact took precedence over creature comforts in the palace. The vast marble floors made the interior so frigid, water froze in basins, while the thousands of candles illuminating soirees made summer events stiflingly hot. Despite such drawbacks, Louis XIV hosted fetes like jousting tournaments, banquets, and Moliere comedies. The ballroom was garlanded with flowers. Outdoor trees were illuminated with thousands of pots of candles and hung with oranges from Portugal or currants from Holland. As La Fontaine said, "Palaces turned into gardens and gardens into palaces."

The grounds contained a private zoo with elephants, flamingos, and ostriches, a Chinese carousel turned by servants pumping away underground, and gondolas on the mile-long Grand Canal. The Versailles court lived in unmatched luxury amid opulent furnishings and artworks, most of which qualify as decorative rather than fine art.



Le Brun & Hardouin-Mansart, Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, c. 1680. This 240-foot-long gallery was lined with massive silver furniture (later melted down to finance a war). With seventeen floor-to-ceiling windows and mirrors reflecting the sun, this gallery impressed one visitor as "an avenue of light."



GARDENING ON A GRAND SCALE

The vastness of Versailles' interior was dwarfed by extensive gardens designed by Andre le Notre. In place of marshes and forests, he imposed a mathematically exact scheme of gardens, lawns, and groves of trees. "The symmetry, always the symmetry," Louis XIV's mistress Madame de Maintenon complained. To avoid the monotony of geometric patterns, Le Notre emphasized water — both in motion, as in the gold-covered Fountain of Apollo, and in large reflecting pools. His scheme required so much water that Louis XIV assigned 30,000 troops in a failed attempt to divert the River Fure from 40 miles away.

Le Notre, Parterre du Midi, 1669-85, Versailles. The symmetrical patterns of Versailles' park and gardens restructured nature on a vast scale.

ROCOCO

Rococo was born in Paris, where it coincided with the reign of Louis XV (1723-74). By 1760, it was considered outmoded in France but was in vogue until the end of the century for luxurious castles and churches throughout Germany, Austria, and Central Europe. Rococo was primarily a form of interior decoration, the name deriving from the "rocaille" motif of shellwork and pebbles ornamenting grottoes and fountains.

In some ways, the Rococo style looks like the word itself. The decorative arts were the special display ground for its curvilinear, delicate ornamentation. Floors were inlaid in complicated patterns of wood veneer, furniture was richly carved and decorated with Gobelin upholstery and inlays of ivory and tortoiseshell. Clothing, silverwork, and china were also overwrought with curlicues as well as flowers, shells, and leaves. Even carriage designers avoided straight lines for carved swirls and scrolls, and horses wore immense plumes and bejew-

eled harnesses. Rococo art was as decorative and nonfunctional as the effete aristocracy that embraced it.

PAINTING PICNICS IN THE PARK. After Louis XIV died in 1715, the aristocracy abandoned Versailles for Paris, where the salons of their ornate townhouses epitomized the new Rococo style. The nobility lived a frivolous existence devoted to pleasure, reflected in a characteristic painting, the "fete galante," an outdoor romp peopled by elegantly attired young lovers. The paintings of Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), Francois Boucher (1703-70), and Jean-Honore Fragonard (1732-1806) signaled this shift in French art and society from the serious and grandiose to the frothy and superficial.

In Watteau's "Pilgrimage to Cythera," romantic couples frolic on an enchanted isle of eternal youth and love. Boucher also painted gorgeously dressed shepherds and shepherdesses amid feathery trees, fleecy clouds, and docile lambs. Boucher's

style was artificial in the extreme; he refused to paint from life, saying nature was "too green and badly lit." His pretty pink nudes in seductive poses earned him great success among the decadent aristocracy. Fragonard's party paintings were also frilly and light-hearted. In his best known, "The Swing," a young girl on a swing flirtatiously kicks off a satin slipper, while an admirer below peeks up her lacy petticoats.

WOMAN'S DAY

The pre-French-Revolution eighteenth century was a period when women dominated European courts. Madame de Pompadour was virtual ruler of France, Maria Theresa reigned in Austria, and Elizabeth and Catherine were monarchs of Russia. Female artists, too, made their mark, the most notable being two portrait painters to Queen Marie-Antoinette, ELISABETH VIGEE-LEBRUN (1755-1842) and ADELAIDE LABILLE-GUIARD (1749-1803). The Venetian painter ROSALBA CARRIERA's (1675-1757) fashionable portraits pioneered the use of pastels (chalklike crayons later used by the Impressionists).



Watteau, "Pilgrimage to Cythera," 1717, Louvre, Paris. *Watteau idealized his delicate fantasy landscapes, inhabited by graceful aristocrats engaged in amorous flirtation, with fuzzy color and hazy atmosphere.*

ROCOCO ART

MOOD:

Playful, superficial, alive with energy

INTERIOR DECOR:

Gilded woodwork, painted panels,
enormous wall mirrors

SHAPES:

Sinuuous S- and C-curves, arabesques,
ribbonlike scrolls

STYLE:

Light, graceful, delicate

COLORS:

White, silver, gold, light pinks, blues, greens

FRENCH BUZZWORDS:

la grace (elegance), *le gout* (refined taste)



Cuvillies, Mirror Room, 1734-39, Amalienburg, Germany. *The best example of Rococo interior, the Minor Room was designed by Francois de Cuvillies (1698-1768), who was originally hired as a court dwarf. This "maison de plaisance," or pleasure house, is profusely but delicately decorated. A series of arched mirrors, doors, and windows is surrounded by carved plants, cornucopias, animals, and musical instruments — oil silver-gilt on a cool-blue background. The rising and sinking curves of the ornamentation make this a tour de force of Rococo style.*

Gaudi, Casa Mild,
1907, Barcelona.

Although Rococo love of artifice was alien to the Spanish architect Antonio Gaudi (1852-1926), his work incorporated sinuous, Rococo curves. Gaudi's work grew out of Art Houveau and was based on his desire to jettison tradition and assume the random forms of nature. In its avoidance of straight lines and rippling effect — with windows shaped like lily pads — this apartment house is heir to the Rococo.



ROCOCO ARCHITECTURE: INTERIOR DECORATING. In eighteenth-century France, the exteriors of buildings continued to be Baroque, gradually giving way to Neoclassical. But inside private townhouses of Paris and the churches and palaces of Germany, Austria, Prague, and Warsaw, fanciful Rococo ornamentation ran wild.

The Nineteenth Century: Birth of the "Isms"



For Western civilization the nineteenth century was an age of upheaval. The church lost its grip, monarchies toppled, and new democracies suffered growing pains. In short, tradition lost its luster and the future was up for grabs. Unfamiliar forces like industrialization and urbanization made cities bulge with masses of dissatisfied poor. The fast pace of scientific progress and the ills of unrestrained capitalism caused more confusion.

The art world of the 1800s seethed with factions, each overreacting to the other. Instead of one style

dominating for centuries, as in the Renaissance and Baroque eras, movements and countermovements sprang up like crocuses in spring. What had been eras became "isms," each representing a trend in art. For most of the century, three major styles competed with one another: Neoclassicism, Romanticism, and Realism. Toward the end of the century, a blur of schools — Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Art Nouveau, and Symbolism — came and went in quick succession.

WORLD HISTORY

Louisiana Purchase	1803
Fulton invents steamboat	1807
Bolivar leads South American revolution	1811
Napoleon defeated at Waterloo	1815
Beethoven completes 9th Symphony	1823
First railroad built in England	1825
Queen Victoria crowned	1837
	1841
Marx and Engels issue <i>Communist Manifesto</i> , Gold discovered in California	1848
	1855
Flaubert writes <i>Madame Bovary</i>	1856 - 57
Mendel begins genetic experiments	1857
First oil well drilled, Darwin publishes <i>Origin of Species</i>	1859
Steel developed	1860
U.S. Civil War breaks out	1861
Lincoln abolishes slavery	1863
Suez Canal built	1869
Prussians besiege Paris	1871
	1873
	1874
Custer defeated at Little Big Horn, Bell patents telephone	1876
Edison invents electric light	1879
	1880
Population of Paris hits 2,200,000	1881
	1883
First motorcar built	1885
	1886
	1888
Hitler born	1889
	1890
	1891
	1892
	1893
Dreyfus trial begins	1894
Freud develops psychoanalysis	1895
Curies discover radium	1898

ART HISTORY

Daguerre invents photography
Collapsible tin tubes patented for oil paint
Courbet's Pavilion of Realism
Snapshot photography developed
Salon des Refuses launches modern art
First color photos appear
Impressionists hold first group show
Von Gogh begins painting career
Monet settles at Giverny
First Chicago skyscraper built
Impressionists hold last group show
Portable Kodak camera perfected
Eiffel Tower built
Monet's first haystacks series
Gauguin goes to Tahiti
Rodin sculpts <i>Bolzac</i>
Art Nouveau spreads
Monet finishes Rouen Cathedral series
Vollard shows Cezanne paintings, Lumiere Brothers introduce movies

NEOCLASSICISM: ROMAN FEVER

From about 1780 to 1820, Neoclassic art reflected, in the words of Edgar Allan Poe, "the glory that was Greece, /And the grandeur that was Rome." This revival of austere Classicism in painting, sculpture, architecture, and furniture was a clear reaction against the ornate Rococo style. The eighteenth century had been the Age of Enlightenment, when philosophers preached the gospel of reason and logic. This faith in logic led to the orderliness and "ennobling" virtues of Neoclassical art.

The trendsetter was Jacques-Louis David (pronounced Dah VEED; 1748-1825), a French painter and democrat who imitated Greek and Roman art to inspire the new French republic. As the German writer Goethe put it, "the demand now is for heroism and civic virtues." "Politically correct" art was serious, illustrating tales from ancient history or mythology rather than frivolous Rococo party scenes. As if society had overdosed on sweets, principle replaced pleasure and paintings underscored the moral message of patriotism.

NEOCLASSICISM

VALUES:

Order, solemnity

TOPE:

Colm, rational

SUBJECTS:

Greek and Roman history, mythology

TECHNIQUE:

Stressed drawing with lines, not color; no trace of brushstrokes

ROLE OF ART:

Morally uplifting, inspirational

FOUNDER:

David

In 1738, archeology-mania swept Europe, as excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum offered the first glimpse of well-preserved ancient art. The faddish insistence on Greek and Roman role models sometimes became ridiculous, as when David's followers, the "primitifs," took the idea of living the Greek Way literally. They not only strolled about in short tunics, they also bathed nude in the Seine, fancying themselves to be Greek athletes. When novelist Stendhal viewed the nude "Roman" warriors in David's painting "Intervention of the Sabine Women," he was skeptical. "The most ordinary common sense," he wrote, "tells us that the legs of those soldiers would soon be covered in blood and that it was absurd to go naked into battle at any time in history."

The marble frieze statuary brought from Athens' Parthenon to London by Lord Elgin further whetted the public appetite for the ancient world. "Glories of the brain" and "Grecian grandeur" is how the poet John Keats described the marbles. Leaders of art schools and of the French and British Royal Academies were solidly behind the Neoclassic movement and preached that reason, not emotion, should dictate art. They emphasized drawing and line, which appealed to the intellect, rather than color, which excited the senses.

The hallmark of the Neoclassical style was severe, precisely drawn figures, which appeared in the foreground without the illusion of depth, as in Roman relief sculpture. Brushwork was smooth, so the surface of the painting seemed polished, and compositions were simple to avoid Rococo melodrama. Backgrounds generally included Roman touches like arches or columns, and symmetry and straight lines replaced irregular curves. This movement differed from Poussin's Classicism of a century earlier in that Neoclassical figures were less waxen and ballet-like, more naturalistic and solid.

Ancient ruins also inspired architecture. Clones of Greek and Roman temples multiplied from Russia to America. The portico of Paris's Pantheon, with Corinthian columns and dome, copied the Roman style exactly. In Berlin, the Brandenburg gate was a replica of the entrance to Athens' Acropolis, topped by a Roman chariot. And Thomas Jefferson, while serving as ambassador to France admired the Roman temple Maison Carree in Nimes, "as a lover gazes at his mistress." He renovated his home, Monticello, in the Neoclassical style.

FRENCH NEOCLASSICISM

DAVID: PAINTING THE PAST. It was on a trip to Rome, when he first saw Classical art, that David had his breakthrough vision. He said he felt as if he "had been operated on for cataract." He avidly drew hands, eyes, ears, and feet from every antique sculpture he encountered, saying, "I want to work in a pure Greek style." Before long, David's disciples were throwing bread pellets at Watteau's "Pilgrimage to Cythera," to show their contempt for what they felt was "artificial" art.

In "Oath of the Horatii," three brothers swear to defeat their enemies or die for Rome, illustrating the new mood of self-sacrifice instead of self-indulgence. Just as the French Revolution overthrew the decadent royals, this painting marked a new age of stoicism. David demonstrated the difference between old and new through contrasting the men's straight, rigid contours with the curved, soft shapes of the women. Even the painting's composition underscored its firm resolve. David arranged each figure like a statue, spot-lit against a plain background of Roman arches. To assure historical accuracy, he dressed dummies in Roman costumes and made Roman helmets that he could then copy.

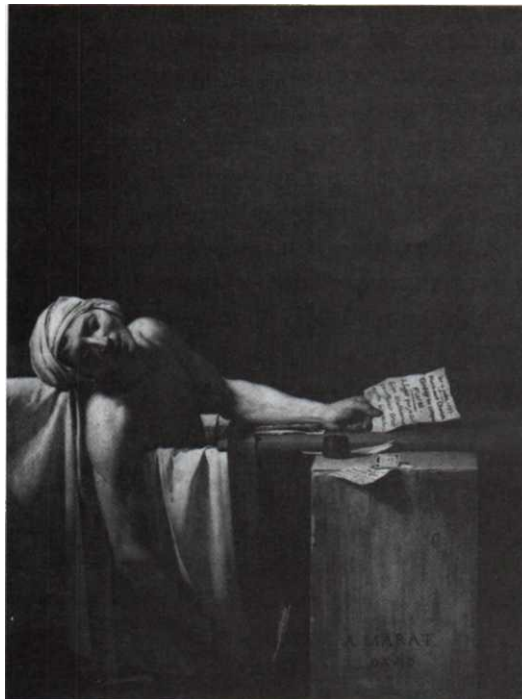
David, a friend of the radical Robespierre, was an ardent supporter of the Revolution and voted to guillotine King Louis XVI. His art was propaganda for the republic, intended to "electrify," he said, and "plant the seeds of glory and devotion to the fatherland." His portrait of a slain leader, "Death of Marat," is his masterpiece. Marat, a close friend of David, was a radical revolutionary stabbed to death by a counterrevolutionary in his bath. (Before the Revolution, while hiding from the police in the Paris sewers, Marat had contracted psoriasis and had to work in a medicated bath, using a packing box for a desk.) Right after the murder, David



David, "Oath of the Horatii," 1784, Louvre, Paris. David's "Oath of the Harahi" marked the death of Rococo and birth of Neoclassical art, which should, David said, "contribute forcefully to the education of the public."

rushed to the scene to record it. Although the background is coldly blank, David's painting emphasized the box, bloodstained towel, and knife, which, as actual objects, were worshiped by the public as holy relics. David portrays Marat like a saint in a pose similar to Christ's in Michelangelo's "Pieta."

When Robespierre was guillotined, David went to jail. But instead of losing his head, the adaptable painter became head of Napoleon's art program. From the taut compositions of his revolutionary period, he turned to pomp and pageantry in his paintings of the little emperor's exploits, such as "Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine." Although his colors became brighter, David stuck to the advice he gave his pupils, "Never let your brushstrokes show." His paintings have a tight, glossy finish, smooth as enamel. For three decades, David's art was the official model for what French art, and by extension, European art, was supposed to be.



David, "Death of Marat," 1793, Musees Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels. David painted the slain revolutionary hero like a modern-day Christ.

INGRES: ART'S FINEST DRAFTSMAN. Following David, the first half of nineteenth-century art was a contest between two French painters: Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (pronounced ANN gruh; 1780-1867), champion of Neoclassicism, and Eugene Delacroix (pronounced duh la KRWAH; 1798-1863), ardent defender of Romanticism. Ingres came naturally to Neoclassicism, for he was the star pupil of David.

An infant prodigy, at the age of 11 Ingres attended art school and



Ingres, "Portrait of the Princesse de Broglie," 1853, MMA, NY. *Ingres's clear, precise forms, idealized beauty, and balanced composition sum up the Neoclassical style.*

at 17 was a member of David's studio. The young disciple never let his brushstrokes show, saying paint should be as smooth "as the skin of an onion." Ingres, however, went even further than his master in devotion to the ancients. In his early work, he took Greek vase paintings as his model and drew flat, linear figures that critics condemned as "primitive" and "Gothic."

Then Delacroix and Gericault burst on the scene, championing emotion and color rather than intellect and draftsmanship as the basis of art. Against the "barbarism" of these "destroyers" of art, Ingres became the spokesman of the conservative wing, advocating the old-time virtue of technical skill. "Drawing is the probity of art," was his manifesto. He cautioned against using strong, warm colors for visual impact, saying they were "antihistorical."

The battle sank into name calling, with Ingres labeling Rubens, the hero of the Romantics, "that Flemish meat merchant." He considered Delacroix the "devil incarnate." When Delacroix left the Salon after hanging a painting, Ingres remarked, "Open the windows. I smell sulfur." In turn, the Romantics called the paintings of

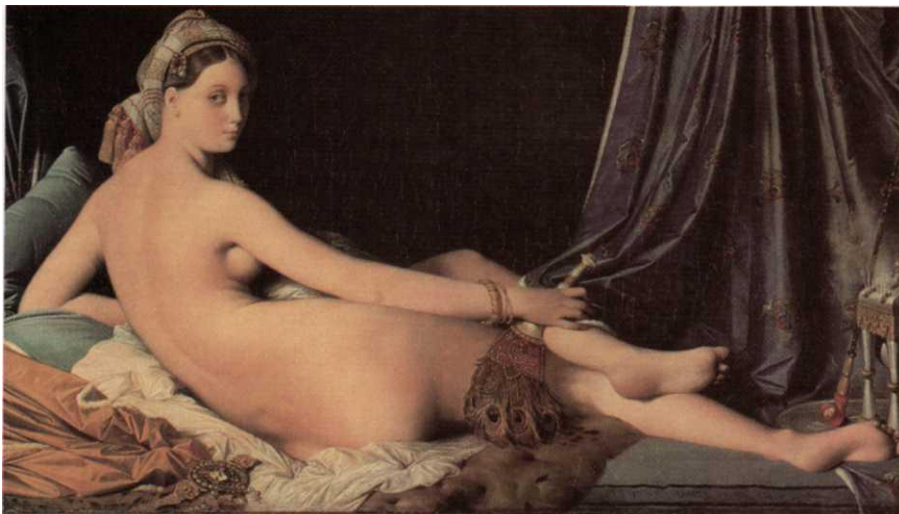
Ingres and his school "tinted drawings."

Ironically, this arch-defender of the Neoclassic faith sometimes strayed from his devout principles. True, Ingres was an impeccable draftsman whose intricate line influenced Picasso, Matisse, and Degas (who remembered Ingres's advice to "draw many lines"). But Ingres's female nudes were far from the Greek or Renaissance ideal. The languid pose of his "Grande Odalisque" was more Mannerist than Renaissance. Although identified with controlled, academic art, Ingres was attracted to exotic, erotic subjects like the harem girl in "Odalisque." Critics attacked the painting for its small head and abnormally long back. "She has three vertebrae too many," said one. "No bone, no muscle, no life," said another. Ingres undoubtedly elongated the limbs to increase her sensual elegance.

Ingres preached logic, yet the romantic poet Baudelaire noted that Ingres's finest works were "the product of a deeply sensuous nature." Indeed, Ingres was a master of female nudes. Throughout his career, he painted bathers, rendering the porcelain beauty of their flesh in a softer style than David's.

In "Portrait of the Princesse de Broglie," Ingres paid his usual fastidious attention to crisp drapery, soft ribbons, fine hair, and delicate flesh, without a trace of brushwork. The color has an enamellike polish and the folds of the costume fall in precise, linear rhythm. Ingres is chiefly remembered as one of the supreme portraitists of all time, able to capture physical appearance with photographic accuracy.

Ingres, "La Grande Odalisque," 1814, Louvre, Paris. *This portrait shows Ingres's trademarks of polished skin surface and simple forms contoured by lines, in contrast to the irregular drapery.*



ODALISQUE

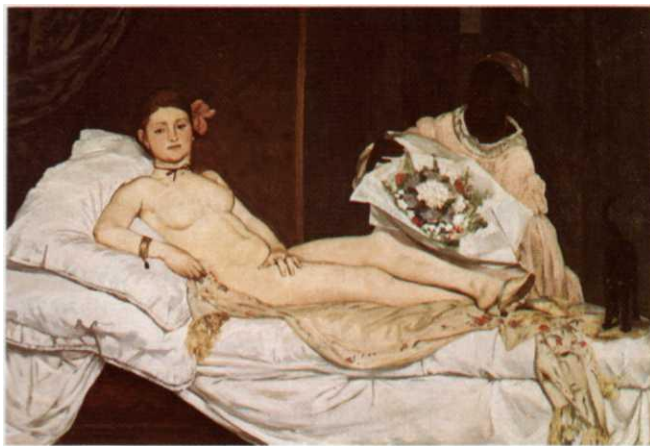
The reclining, or recumbent, female nude, often called Odalisque after the Turkish word for a harem girl, is a recurrent figure throughout Western art. Here is how some artists have given their individual twist to a traditional subject.



Giorgione, "Sleeping Venus" (the Dresden Venus), c. 1510, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden. The first known recumbent female nude as an art subject was by the Venetian Giorgione, a Renaissance painter about whom little is known. He probably painted "Sleeping Venus" in 1510, the year of his early death from the plague. Titian was said to have finished the work, adding the Arcadian landscape and drapery. Traits associated with this popular genre of painting are a simple setting, relaxed pose propped on pillows, and the absence of a story. Giorgione was handsome and amorous, a keen lover of female beauty, yet he portrays his Venus as a figure of innocence, unaware of being observed.



Goya, "The Nude Maja," 1796-98, Prado, Madrid. Goya was denounced during the Inquisition for this "obscene," updated version featuring full frontal nudity. The title means "nude coquette," and Goya's blatantly erotic image caused a furor in prudish Spanish society. His friend and patron, the aristocratic but very unconventional Countess of Alba, is believed to be the model. A clothed replica of the figure, in an identical pose but very hastily sketched, also exists. It is said that Goya painted it when the Count was on his way home, to justify all the time the painter had spent in the Countess' company. Goya was probably inspired by Velazquez's "Rokeby Venus," a recumbent nude seen from the back. Although an outraged suffragette slashed Velazquez's "Venus," Goya's nude is much more seductive, with her soft, smooth flesh contrasted to the crisp brushwork of satin sheet and lace ruffles.



Manet, "Olympia," 1863, Musee d'Orsay, Paris. Manet's "Olympia" also caused a public outcry. With her bold, appraising stare and individualized features, this was obviously no idealized goddess but a real person. One critic called her a "female gorilla." Others attacked Manet's nonacademic technique: "The least beautiful woman has bones, muscles, skin, and some form of color. Here there is nothing." "The shadows are indicated," another wrote, "by large smears of blacking." "Most considered the painting's sexuality immoral: "Art sunk so low does not even deserve reproach."

Huge crowds flocked to the Salon to see what the fuss was about. After the canvas was physically attacked, it was hung out of reach, high above a doorway. One viewer complained, "You scarcely knew what you were looking at—a parcel of nude flesh or a bundle of laundry." Manet became the acknowledged leader of the avant-garde because of "Olympia's" *succes de scandale*.



Rivers, "I Like Olympia in Blackface," 1970, Centre Pompidou, Paris. New York painter Larry Rivers, born in 1923, was a member of the generation following Abstract Expressionism that challenged abstract art's dismissal of realism and developed Pop art. Rivers combined the free, vigorous brushstrokes of Abstract Expressionism with subject matter from diverse sources ranging from advertising to fine art. Color, not subject matter, according to Rivers, "is what has meaning." His version of Manet's "Odalisque" gives a fresh face to a centuries-old concept.

AMERICAN NEOCLASSICISM

The founding of the American republic coincided with the popularity of Neoclassicism. Since the ancient Roman republic seemed an apt model, the new country clothed itself in the garb of the old. It adopted Roman symbols and terms like "Senate" and "Capitol" (originally a hill in ancient Rome). For a century, official buildings in Washington were Neoclassic knock-offs.

The fact that Neoclassic became *the* style was mostly due to Thomas Jefferson, an amateur architect. He built the University of Virginia as a learning lab of Classicism. The ensemble included a Pantheon-like Rotunda and pavilions in Roman temple forms. Jefferson used Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian orders to demonstrate the various styles of architecture to students.

In sculpture, antique figures in an idealized, Classical style were also the rage. One of the most acclaimed works of the nineteenth century was Hiram Powers's "Greek Slave" (1843), a marble statue of a naked girl in chains that won international fame. Horatio Greenough applied Neoclassical doctrines less successfully. The practical American public laughed at his statue of a bewigged George Washington with a nude torso and Roman sandals.

The first American-born painter to win international acclaim was Benjamin West (1738-1820), whose work summed up the Neoclassic style. He was so famous for battle scenes that he became president of the British Royal Academy and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. West spent his entire career in England, and his London studio was a mandatory stop for visiting American painters.

BEGINNINGS OF AMERICAN ART. The fact that a talented American had to pursue his craft in England was due to the backward state of the arts. Most colonists were farmers, preoccupied with survival and more interested in utility than beauty. They were from working-class stock, hardly the type to commission works of art. The influence of Puritanism with its prejudice against

"graven images" meant that the church would not be a patron. There were no large buildings to adorn or great wealth to buy luxury items. Silver and furnishings showed fine craftsmanship and Federal architecture was handsome. But sculpture was practically unknown except for graveyard statuary.

The first American painters were generally self-taught portrait or



"The Peale Family," 1770-1773, New-York Historical Society.

Peale: The Leonardo of the New World. Charles Wilson Peale (1741-1827) was a model Enlightenment man. A scientist as well as artist who was unfailingly curious and energetic, his list of skills and interests rivaled Leonardo's. He came to painting through craftsmanship and was a saddler, watchmaker, silversmith, and upholsterer before becoming the most fashionable portraitist in the colonies. Peale was also a Revolutionary war soldier, politician, and ingenious inventor. He co-invented a new type of spectacles, porcelain false teeth, a steam bath, and a stove that consumed its own smoke. He was also first to excavate a mastodon skeleton, which he exhibited in the natural history museum he founded in Philadelphia with more than 100,000 objects. His list of firsts included the first art gallery in the colonies and the first art school.

Peale was the father of seventeen children. He named them after painters and they obliged him by becoming artists, like the portraitist Rembrandt, still-life painter Raphaelle, and artist/naturalist Jitian. "The Peale family" includes nine family members and their faithful nurse (standing with hands folded). Peale himself stoops at left holding his palette. He titled the painting on the easel "Concordia Animae" (Harmony of Souls), indicating the painting's theme.

The composition emphasizes the essential unity of the group. Although they are divided into two camps, all are linked by contact of hand or shoulder except the nurse. The figures slightly overlap, with the scattered fruit also binding the two halves. Peale suggests a visual tie by the painter's brother seated at left sketching his mother and her grandchild at right. This type of picture, or "conversation piece," was popular in eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century painting. It represents perfectly the ideal of *e pluribus unum*.

Peale's most famous work is "The Staircase Group," a life-size trompe l'oeil portrait of his two sons climbing stairs with a real step at the bottom and door jamb as a frame. Peale painted the scene so convincingly that George Washington reportedly tipped his hat to the boys.

At the age of 86, the inexhaustible Peale was known to whoop down hills riding one of the first bicycles. He finally succumbed to overexertion while searching for a fourth wife.

sign painters. Their work was flat, sharply outlined, and lacking in focal point. Portraiture was, not surprisingly, the most sought-after art form, since politics stressed respect for the individual. Itinerant limners, as early painters were called, painted faceless single or group portraits in the winter and, in spring, sought customers and filled in the blanks.



Copley, "Portrait of Paul Revere," c. 1768-70, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Copley's portraits of Boston society offered sharp glimpses into his subjects' personalities.

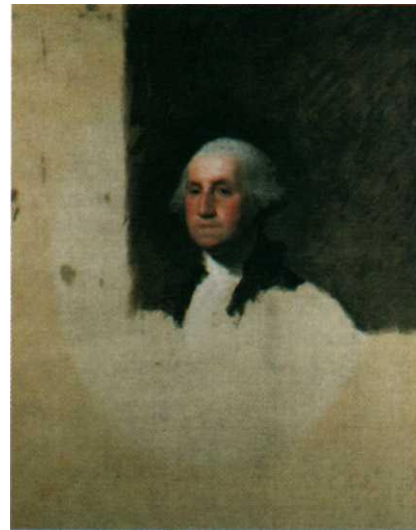
COPLEY: THE FIRST GREAT AMERICAN PAINTER. Painting in America was considered a "useful trade like that of a Carpenter or shoe maker, not as one of the most noble Arts in the world," complained America's first painter of note, John Singleton Copley (pronounced COPP lee; 1738-1815). Despite this disrespect, the Bostonian taught himself the profession by studying anatomy books and reproductions of paintings. In his teens, he set up as a portrait painter and, by the age of 20, completely outstripped any native artist. He was the first colonial to have a work exhibited abroad. With Copley, art in America grew up.

Copley had an astonishing ability to record reality accurately. His subjects had real bulk, and he brilliantly simulated reflected light on various textures. Copley also portrayed his sitter's personality with penetrating observation. Eliminating the columns and red curtains used to dress up portraits, he concentrated on the fleeting expressions and gestures that reveal character. Although he painted his well-to-do clients' costumes in detail, he focused on the individuality of their faces, where each wrinkle suggested character.

PAINTING THE CHARACTER OF THE COLONIES. Copley's portrayal of his friend, a shirt-sleeved Paul Revere, was an innovation for its time, when a portrait never pictured manual labor. Yet Copley posed the silversmith holding a teapot he had made, his tools in clear sight. Revere had not yet taken the midnight ride that Longfellow set to verse but was already a leading opponent of British rule. His shrewd, uncompromising gaze and the informal setting without courtly trappings summed up the Revolution's call for independence.

STUART: THE FIRST DISTINCTIVE AMERICAN STYLE. Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828) was America's other great painter of the Neoclassic period. Stuart refused to follow established recipes for painting flesh, saying he would not bow to any master, but "find out what nature is for myself, and see her with my own eyes." He used all the colors to approximate flesh but without blending, which he believed made skin look muddy, like saddle leather. Something of a pre-Impressionist, Stuart made skin seem luminous, almost transparent, through quick brushstrokes rather than layered glazes. Each stroke shone through the others like blood through skin, giving a pearly brilliance to his faces. Flesh, Stuart said, is "like no other substance under heaven. It has all the gaiety of a silk mercer's shop without its gaudiness and gloss, and all the soberness of old mahogany without its sadness."

Stuart was the equivalent of court painter for the new republic. His contribution was in simplifying portraiture, discarding togas and passing gestures to emphasize timeless aspects. Stuart painted faces with such accuracy that Benjamin West said Stuart "nails the face to the canvas."



Stuart, "George Washington," (The Athenaeum Portrait), 1796, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Stuart's portraits of George Washington demonstrate how the painter went beyond the European tradition. By stripping away all nonessentials (the background was never completed), Stuart implies that greatness springs only from individual character. The portrait omits Washington's smallpox scars but hints at his endurance in the firm line of his mouth. Some have questioned whether the tightly clamped lips indicated not the fortitude to survive Valley Forge but the general's uncomfortable wooden teeth.

In any event, this image has become the most famous American portrait of all time. A victim of his own success, Stuart came to hate the job of duplicating the likeness, which he called his "hundred dollar bills." Now this national icon stares from its niche on the one-dollar bill.

GOYA: MAN WITHOUT AN "ISM"

The paintings of the Spanish artist Francisco de Goya (1746-1828) fit no category. His work was indebted only to the realism of Velazquez, the insight of Rembrandt, and, as he said, to "nature." Goya was a lifelong rebel. A libertarian fiercely opposed to tyranny of all sorts, the Spanish artist began as a semi-Rococo designer of amusing scenes for tapestries. Then he became painter to Charles IV of Spain, whose court was notorious for corruption and repression. Goya's observation of royal viciousness and the church's fanaticism turned him into a bitter satirist and misanthrope.

His work was subjective like the nineteenth-century Romantics', yet Goya is hailed as the first modern painter. His nightmarish visions exposing the evil of human nature and his original technique of slashing brushstrokes made him a forerunner of anguished twentieth-century art.

Goya's "Family of Charles IV" is a court painting like no other. The stout, red-faced king, loaded with medals, appears piggish; the sharp-eyed trio at left (including an old lady with a birthmark) seems downright predatory; and the queen insipidly vacant. Critics have marveled at the stupidity of the thirteen family members of three generations for not having realized how blatantly Goya exposed their pomposity. One critic termed the group a "grocer and his family who have just won the big lottery prize." The painting was the artist's homage to Velazquez's "Las Meninas" (see p. 60). Goya — like his predecessor — placed himself at left behind a canvas, recording impassively the parade of royal arrogance.

ART OF SOCIAL PROTEST. Goya was equally blunt in revealing the vices of church and state. His disgust with humanity followed a near-fatal illness in 1792 that left him totally deaf. During his recovery, isolated from society, he began to paint demons of his inner fantasy world, the start of a preoccupation with bizarre, grotesque creatures in his mature work.

A master graphic artist, Goya's sixty-five etchings, "The Disasters of War" from 1810-14, are frank exposes of atrocities committed by both the French and Spanish armies during the invasion of Spain. With gory precision, he reduced scenes of barbarous torture to their horrifying basics. His gaze at human cruelty was unflinching: castrations, dismemberments, beheaded civilians impaled on bare trees, dehumanized soldiers staring indifferently at lynched corpses.

"The Third of May, 1808" is Goya's response to the slaughter of 5,000 Spanish civilians. The executions were reprisal for a revolt against the French army in which the Spaniards were condemned without regard to guilt or innocence. Those possessing a penknife or scissors ("bearing arms") were marched before the firing squad in group lots.

The painting has the immediacy of photojournalism. Goya visited the scene and made sketches, and yet his departures from realism give it additional



Goya, "Family of Charles IV," 1800, Prado, Madrid.
The Spanish monarchy was so vain and imbecilic they failed to notice that Goya portrayed them in all their ostentation.



power. He lit the nocturnal scene with a lamp on the ground, casting a garish light. In the rear, the church is dark, as if the light of all humanity had been extinguished. Bloody carcasses project toward the viewer, with a line of victims stretching off in the distance. The immediate victims are the center of interest, with a white-shirted man throwing wide his arms in a defiant but helpless gesture recalling the crucified Christ. The acid shades and absence of color harmony underscore the event's violence.

In other paintings of that time, warfare was always presented as a glorious pageant and soldiers as heroes. Goya contrasted the victims' faces and despairing gestures with the faceless, automatonlike figures of the firing squad. Although deafness cut Goya off from humanity, he passionately communicates his strong feelings about the brutality and dehumanization of war.

LATE STYLE: BLACK PAINTINGS. Goya became obsessed with depicting the suffering caused by the political intrigue and decadence of the Spanish court and church. He disguised his repulsion with satire, however, such as in the disturbing "black paintings" he did on the walls of his villa, Quinta del Sordo (house of the deaf). The fourteen large murals in black, brown, and gray of 1820-22 present appalling monsters engaged in sinister acts. "Saturn Devouring His Children" portrays a voracious giant with glaring, lunatic eyes stuffing his son's torn, headless body into his maw. Goya's technique was as radical as his vision. At one point he executed frescoes with sponges, but his satiric paintings were done with broad, ferocious brushstrokes as blazing as the events portrayed.

Goya died in France, in self-imposed exile. He was the father of 20 children but left no followers. His genius was too unique and his sympathies too intense to duplicate.

Goya, "The Third of May, 1808," 1814-15, Prado, Madrid. Goya protested the brutality of war by individualizing the faces of the victims of the faceless firing squad. The poet Baudelaire praised Goya for "giving monstrosity the ring of truth."

ROMANTICISM: THE POWER OF PASSION

"Feeling is all!" the German writer Goethe proclaimed, a credo that sums up Romantic art. Rebelling against the Neoclassic period's Age of Reason, the Romantic era of 1800-50 was the Age of Sensibility. Both writers and artists chose emotion and intuition over rational objectivity. As the German Romantic landscape painter Caspar David Friedrich wrote, "The artist should paint not only what he sees before him, but also what he sees in him." Romantics pursued their passions full-throttle. Living intensely rather than wisely had its price. Romantic poets and composers like Byron, Keats, Shelley, Chopin, and Schubert all died young.

Romanticism got its name from a revived interest in medieval tales called romances. "Gothic" horror stories combining elements of the macabre and occult were in vogue (it was during this period that Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*), as was Gothic Revival architecture, seen in the towers and turrets of London's Houses of Parliament. The "in" decorating look was arms and armor. Sir Walter Scott built a pseudo-Gothic castle, as did the novelist Horace Walpole, where he could, he said, "gaze on Gothic toys through Gothic glass."

Another mark of Romanticism was its cult of nature worship. Painters like Turner and Constable lifted the status of landscape painting by giving natural scenes heroic overtones. Both man and nature were seen as touched by the supernatural, and one could tap this inner divinity, so the Romantic gospel went, by relying on instinct.



Géricault, "The Raft of the Medusa," 1818-19, Louvre, Paris. *Géricault inaugurated Romanticism with this canvas contrasting images of extreme hope and despair.*

ROMANTICISM

VALUES:
Intuition, Emotion, Imagination

INSPIRATION: Medieval and Baroque eras,
Middle and Far East

TONE: Subjective, spontaneous, nonconformist

COLOR: Unrestrained; deep, rich shades

SUBJECTS: Legends, exotica, nature, violence

GENRES: Narratives of heroic struggle, landscapes,
wild animals

TECHNIQUE: Quick brushstrokes, strong light-and-shade
contrasts

COMPOSITION: Use of diagonal

FRENCH ROMANTICISM

GERICAULT. Theodore Géricault (pronounced JHAY ree coe; 1791—1824) launched Romanticism with one painting, "The Raft of the Medusa." He based the huge (16' x 23 V₂ ') canvas on a contemporary event, a shipwreck that caused a political scandal. A government ship, the *Medusa*, carrying French colonists to Senegal sank off the west coast of Africa due to the incompetence of the captain, a political appointee. The captain and crew were first to evacuate and took over the lifeboats, towing a makeshift raft piled with 149 passengers. Eventually they cut the towrope, leaving the immigrants to drift under the equatorial sun for twelve days without food or water, suffering unspeakable torments. Only fifteen lived.

Géricault investigated the story like a reporter, interviewing survivors to hear their grisly tales of starvation, madness, and cannibalism. He did his utmost to be authentic, studying putrid bodies in the

morgue and sketching decapitated heads of guillotine victims and faces of lunatics in an asylum. He built a model raft in his studio and, like an actor immersing himself in a role, even lashed himself to the mast of a small boat in a storm.

This extraordinary preparation accounts for the painting's grim detail. But Gericault's romantic spirit is at the root of its epic drama. The straining, contorted body language of the nude passengers says everything about the struggle for survival, a theme that obsessed the artist.

Because of the graphic treatment of a macabre subject and the political implications of the government's incompetence, the painting created a huge sensation. Romantic passion was, for the first time, visible in extremis, capturing not some idealized form from the past but contemporary reality. The painting's fame broke the stranglehold of the Classical Academy. From this time, French art was to stress emotion rather than intellect.

In his private life, Gericault was also an archetypal Romantic. Like the fiery poet Lord Byron who died the same year, "safety last" could have been his motto. He had no concern for his own well-being and dedicated himself to a life of passion and defending the down-trodden. His teacher called Gericault a madman, and the Louvre banned him for brawling in the Grande Galerie. Fascinated with horses, Gericault died at the age of 32 after a series of riding accidents.

Although he exhibited only three paintings publicly in his decade-long, meteoric career, Gericault left an indelible mark. His energetic handling of paint and rousing scenes of titanic struggle kicked off the Romantic era in French art.

DELACROIX: PAINTER OF PASSION. Eugene Delacroix became leader of the Romantic movement after Gericault's death. A moody, solitary man, he always ran a slight fever. Delacroix believed the artist should feel the agony of creation and, like his friend the composer Frederic Chopin, he was consumed by the flame of genius. "The real man is the savage," he confided to his journal. As the Romantic poet Baudelaire put it, Delacroix was "passionately in love with passion."

Delacroix chose his subjects from literature or from stirring topical events. Instead of the Neoclassic style of antique calm, violence charged his exotic images. Delacroix painted an early work, "Massacre at Chios," as soon as he heard the news of Turks slaughtering Christians on the island of Chios. Although purists called it a "massacre of painting," spectators wept when they saw the pitiful babe clutching its dead mother's breast.

OUT OF AFRICA. In 1832, a visit to Morocco changed Delacroix's life. He infiltrated a harem and made

hundreds of sketches. Delacroix was fascinated by the colorful costumes and characters, like throwbacks to a flamboyant past. "The Greeks and Romans are here," he wrote, "within my reach." For the next thirty years, he stuck to lush colors, swirling curves, and animals like lions, tigers, and horses knotted in combat.

"The Death of Sardanapalus" shows Delacroix's attraction to violence. Delacroix based the painting on Byron's verses of the Assyrian emperor Sardanapalus, who, faced with military defeat, ordered his possessions destroyed before immolating himself on a funeral pyre. Delacroix portrays the shocking instant when servants execute the king's harem girls and horses. It is an extravaganza of writhing bodies against a flaming red background. The intense hues, vivid light/dark contrasts, and turbulent forms in broad brushstrokes are a virtual manifesto of Romanticism.

Delacroix, "Death of Sardanapalus," 1827, Louvre, Paris. Fascinated by physical and emotional excess, Delacroix portrays a wild, writhing scene as an emperor's concubines are murdered.



NEOCLASSICISM VS. ROMANTICISM



Ingres, "Paganini," 1819, Louvre, Paris.

For twenty-five years Delacroix and Ingres led rival schools whose squabbling dominated the Paris art scene. Their two pointings of the virtuoso violinist Paganini demonstrate the different outlooks and techniques of the Neoclassic and Romantic movements.

Ingres was a talented violinist himself and knew Paganini personally, yet his version of the maestro is an objective, formal portrait of the public man. With photographic accuracy, his crisp, precise lines duplicate exactly Paganini's physical appearance. This is a rational man, totally in control.

Delacroix defines the musician's form through color and energetic, fluid brushwork, as opposed to lines. Unlike Ingres's ramrod-straight figure, Delacroix's Paganini is curved like a violin, carried away by the ecstasy of performance. Eyes closed, foot almost tapping, Delacroix's pointing is a figure of passionate abandon. This is the inner man in the throes of emotion.



Delacroix, "Paganini," c. 1832, Phillips Collection, Washington, DC.

CONTRIBUTIONS. Delacroix liberated painting from the Classical concept of color as a tint applied over forms defined by line drawing. Under his hand, color — especially vibrating adjacent tones — became the indispensable means to model forms, a discovery extended by van Gogh, Renoir, Degas, Seurat, and Cezanne. The admiring van Gogh remarked, in fact, that "only Rembrandt and Delacroix could paint the face of Christ."

Delacroix did not attempt to reproduce reality precisely but aimed at capturing its essence. He established the right of a painter to defy tradition and paint as he liked. Goya, who had been similarly idiosyncratic, saw Delacroix's work when the Spaniard was an old man and heartily approved.

Delacroix, whose output was enormous, claimed he had enough compositions for two lifetimes and projects to last 400 years. He painted at a fever-pitch, furiously attacking the whole canvas at once, saying that, "If you are not skillful enough to sketch a man falling out of a window during the time it takes him to get from the fifth story to the ground, then you will never be able to produce monumental work." A friend eulogized Delacroix as a painter "who had a sun in his head and storms in his heart; who for 40 years played upon the keyboard of human passions."

THE ARTIST'S PALETTE

The Machine Age — in full swing by the nineteenth century — brought improved materials that affected the way artists painted. For one thing, a wider range of colors was available. Before, artists used earth colors because most pigments came from minerals in the earth. Now chemical pigments were invented that could approximate a greater variety of the colors in nature. Emerald green, cobalt blue, and artificial ultramarine were a few of the pigments discovered.

The burden of laboriously preparing colors shifted from the artist to professional tradesmen. Part of every artist's training had been how to grind paint by hand and mix it with linseed oil to create oil paint. Now machines ground pigments that were mixed with poppy oil as a binder and sold to artists in jars. With the poppy oil, the paint retained the mark of the brush more, for a textured effect as in van Gogh's paintings. For the Impressionist generation, in fact, the visible sign of brushwork represented an artist's individual signature.

With these innovations, chiaroscuro, or the multilayered, subtle gradations of color to suggest three-dimensional volume, gradually became obsolete. No longer did artists — as they had since Leonardo's time — indicate shadows by thin, transparent washes of dark color and highlights by thick, opaque clots of light pigment. Painters represented both light and shade in opaque colors applied with a loaded brush. Instead of successive layers of paint, each applied after the preceding one had dried, the rapid, sketchlike *alla prima* style took over by 1850, allowing artists to produce an entire work at a single sitting.

The biggest change resulted from the invention of the collapsible tin tube for paint in 1840, which made the artist's studio portable. By the 1880s, the Impressionists chose to paint outdoors using the new bright colors, so they could heed Corot's maxim, "Never lose the first impression which has moved you."

ENGLISH ROMANTICISM

Two English painters, born only a year apart, did more than anyone to establish landscape painting as a major genre. Yet stylistically J.M.W. Turner and John Constable could not have been further apart. Constable made nature his subject, while for Turner the subject was color. Constable painted placid scenes of the actual countryside, while Turner's turbulent storms existed mainly in his imagination.

CONSTABLE: FIELD AND STREAM. What William Wordsworth's poems did for England's Lake District, John Constable's (1776-1837) landscapes did for East Anglia, now known as Constable country, on the east coast of England. Both romanticized boyhood rambles through moors and meadows as the subject for poetry and art.

Constable's work was not well received during his lifetime. His father, a prosperous miller, bitterly opposed Constable being a "lowly" painter, and Constable did not sell a painting until he was 39. Members of the Academy called his work, now considered bold and innovative, "coarse" and "rough."

In turn, Constable looked down on conventional landscape painters who based their work on tradition rather than what they actually saw. He said others were always "running after pictures and seeking the truth at second hand." Constable, in contrast, never went abroad and learned only from close observation of nature in his native Suffolk. His views of the English countryside are serene, untroubled, and gentle: "the sound of water escaping from mill-dams," he wrote, "willows, old rotten planks, slimy posts, and brickwork — I love such things. These scenes made me a painter."

As a boy, Constable had learned to "read" the sky while setting the sails on his father's windmills, and as a man he applied this interest in meteorology to his painting. He often went "skying" — sketching cloud formations as source material for paintings. The sky, he believed, was "the key note, . . . and the chief organ of sentiment" in a painting. This love of clouds and sun and shadow led him to make the first oil sketches ever painted outdoors, starting in 1802, thus anticipating the Impressionists' open-air methods (though Constable executed the final finished paintings — "six-footers," he called them — in his studio).

Constable believed landscapes should be based on observation. His rural scenes reflect an intense love of nature, but he insisted they were not idealized: "imagination never did, and never can, produce works that are to stand by comparison with realities," he wrote.

Because of his devotion to actual appearances, Constable rebelled against the coffee-colored tones then in vogue for landscapes,

correctly insisting they were actually the result of darkened varnish on Old Master paintings. When a friend claimed Poussin's original tints were the brownish color of a violin, Constable responded by putting a violin on the grass to demonstrate the difference.

Constable simulated the shimmer of light on surfaces by tiny dabs of color stippled with white. (Many found these white highlights incomprehensible, calling them "Constable's snow.") He put tiny red dots on leaves to energize the green, hoping the vibrations between complementary hues would convey an impression of movement like the flux of nature.

Constable, "The Hay Wain," 1821, NG, London. Constable portrays the farmer with his hay wagon (or "wain") as an integral part of the landscape, emphasizing Constable's mystical feeling of man being at one with nature. Critics found this landscape so lifelike one exclaimed, "The very dew is on the ground!"



TURNER: A TURN TOWARDS ABSTRACTION. Like Constable, J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851) began painting bucolic landscapes with a smooth, detailed technique. Also like Constable, he later experimented with more radical techniques and evolved a highly original style that influenced later generations of artists. The two painters differed, however, in Turner's love of the dramatic, of subjects like fires and storms. Turner painted nature in the raw.

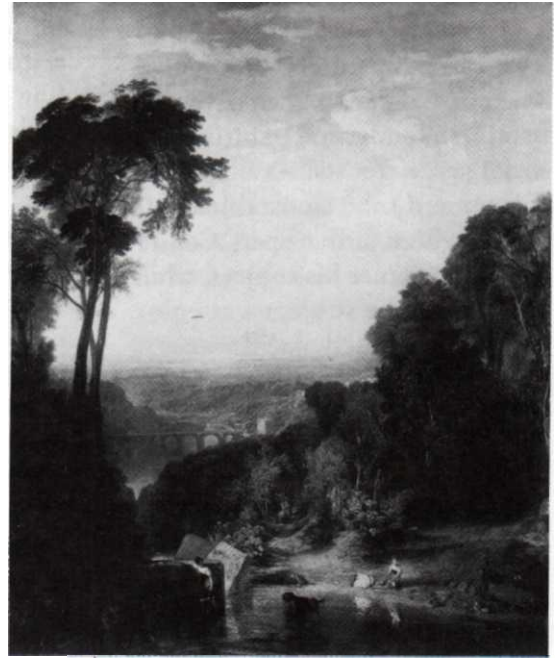
The child of a poor London barber, Turner skipped school to sketch his father's customers. By the age of 12 he was selling his watercolors and at 15 had exhibited at the Royal Academy. His calm, familiar, rural scenes were an immediate hit with the public and made him a financial success. Once Turner began to travel to the continent, he became fascinated by the wilder aspects of nature and evolved his distinct style. He aimed to evoke awe in his viewers and shifted his subject from calm countrysides to Alpine peaks, flaming sunsets, and the theme of man's struggle against the elements.

Turner's style gradually became more abstract as he attempted to make color alone inspire feeling. The foremost colorist of his day, Turner was the first to abandon brown or buff priming for a white undercoat, which made the final painting more brilliant. He neutralized deep tones by adding white and left light tones like yellow undiluted for greater luminosity. People said he put the sun itself into his paintings.

"Rain, Steam, and Speed — The Great Western Railway" is a typical late painting in which Turner eliminated detail to concentrate on the essential form of a locomotive speeding over a bridge toward the viewer. This was one of the first paintings of a steam train, which had been invented only twenty years before. In it Turner tried to express the idea of speed, air, and mist through veils of blue and gold pigment. Turner supposedly researched the painting by sticking his head out of a train window for ten minutes during a storm. Critics jeered at the work when it appeared for its lack of realism. Constable meant to criticize Turner's mature work when he called it "golden visions" and said, "He seems to paint with tinted steam, so evanescent and airy."

At the end of his life, just before exhibiting his nearly abstract paintings, Turner painted in people and added titles to make them more comprehensible to the public. Violently attacked, these canvases were considered unfinished and indistinguishable from each other. One critic accused Turner of thinking "that in order to be poetical it is necessary to be almost unintelligible." Although Turner never considered himself an abstract painter, paintings discovered after his death contain no recognizable subject whatsoever, just swirling masses of radiant color. His discovery of the power of pigment had an enormous influence on the course of modern art. Turner pushed the medium of paint to its expressive limit. His last works anticipate modern art in which paint itself is the only subject.

Turner became increasingly reclusive in his later years, hiding from acquaintances and living under an assumed name. He turned down handsome prices and hoarded his best paintings, selling only those he considered secondary. On his deathbed, the story goes, Turner asked to be taken to the window so he could die gazing at the sunset.



Turner, "Crossing the Brook," 1815, Tate Gallery, London. Although Turner became the most original landscape artist, his early work was a tame imitation of traditional techniques and content.



Turner, "Rain, Steam, and Speed — The Great Western Railway," 1844, NG, London. This painting of a steam locomotive demonstrates the shimmering light and pearly atmospheric glow of Turner's near-abstract, late work, in which he implies rather than depicts a subject.

AMERICAN ROMANTICISM

Romantic painting in America encompassed two subjects: nature and the natural man. The former included landscapes and the latter were genre paintings of common people in ordinary activities. In both, the subjects were seen through rose-colored glasses, like the seven dwarfs' "hi-ho, hi-ho" version of working in a mine. Forests were always picture-postcard perfect, and happy settlers without exception were cheerful at work or play.



Cole, "The Oxbow (The Connecticut River Near Northampton)," 1836, MMA, NY. *Leader of the Hudson River School, Cole emphasized the grandeur and immensity of America's landscape.*

THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE: AH, WILDERNESS. Before 1825, Americans considered nature menacing. The first thing colonial settlers did was burn or hack down vast tracts of virgin woods to make clearings for fields and villages. They admired nature only when it was tamed in plantations and gardens. After 1830 a shift occurred. America's natural wonders became a bragging point equal to Chartres or the Colosseum. As tides of settlers poured westward, pushing back frontiers, the wilderness became a symbol of America's unspoiled national character.

This shift in sentiment affected art. American writers like Emerson and Thoreau preached that God inhabited nature, which dignified landscapes as a portrait of the face of God. Suddenly the clichéd formula art of London, Paris, and Rome, which had before guided American painting, was obsolete. The grandeur of the American continent became the artist's inspiration.

The Hudson River School was America's first native school of painting. Its members, Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, John F. Kensett, and Thomas Doughty, delivered visual sermons on the glories of nature. They were the first to concentrate exclusively on landscapes, which replaced portraits as the focus of American art. Their patriotic scenes of the Hudson River area conveyed a mood of worshipful wonder. They combined realistic detail with idealized composition in a new form of romantic realism. Typically, the scenes were on a large scale with sweeping panoramic horizons that seemed to radiate beyond the painting's borders, suggesting America's unlimited future.

COLE: HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL LEADER. Thomas Cole (1801-48) was the founder of the Hudson River School of Romantic landscapes. Cole, a self-taught artist, lived on a bluff overlooking the Hudson River. An outdoor enthusiast, he rambled on foot throughout the area in the spring, summer, and fall, scaling peaks to make pencil sketches of untouched natural scenes. During the winter, after his memory of particular locales had faded to a fuzzy afterglow, he portrayed the essential mood of a place in oil paintings. Cole's finished work — a combination of real and ideal — reflects this working method. He presents foreground in minute detail and blurs distant vistas to suggest the infinite American landscape.

In "The Oxbow," Cole faithfully reproduced rocks, juicy vegetation, a gnarled tree, and his folding chair and umbrella. The blond panorama of the Connecticut River Valley and receding hills seems to stretch forever. The painting depicts the moment just after a thunderstorm, when the foliage, freshened by a cloudburst, glistens in a theatrical light.

Cole's work expressed the proud belief that America was a primeval paradise, a fresh start for humanity. For the optimistic Hudson River School, communion with nature was a religious experience that cleansed the soul as surely as rainfall renewed the landscape. As Cole wrote in his diary before painting this picture, "I would not live where tempests never come, for they bring beauty in their train." America may have lacked picturesque ancient ruins, but its lush river valleys and awesome chasms and cascades were subject enough for the Hudson River School.

ARTIST-EXPLORERS: BIERSTADT AND CHURCH. The generation of painters after the Hudson River School tackled more far-flung landscapes. Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900) and Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902) were the Lewis and Clark of painting — "intrepid limners" they were called — as they sketched the savage beauty of nature from the lush vegetation of the tropics to the icebergs of the Arctic.

Bierstadt specialized in sweeping views of thrilling natural wonders. His career coincided with the westward movement begun by the forty-niners and their wagon trains. At the age of 29, Bierstadt joined a survey team mapping a westward route. Face to face with the Rocky Mountains, he found his personal mother lode: sketching the overwhelming vistas of the mountains. When he returned to his New York studio, he surrounded himself with photographs, sketches, Indian artifacts, and animal trophies and began to paint the views of the American West that made him world famous.

"The Rocky Mountains" is one of Bierstadt's typical images of the West as a Garden of Eden. He employed his usual compositional devices of a highly detailed foreground (the peaceful encampment of Shoshone Indians) and distant soaring mountains pierced by a shaft of sunlight. His paintings were like a commercial for westward expansion, as if that were America's Manifest Destiny.



Bierstadt, "The Rocky Mountains," 1863, MMA, NY. Bierstadt captured the adventurous frontier spirit as well as the concept of the noble savage in harmony with nature.

THE P. T. BARNUM OF AMERICAN ART

Bierstadt's paintings were as vast in scale as the scenes he depicted — wall-sized canvases as big as a 9'x12' rug. A running joke was that his next subject would be "all outdoors" and that he had built a chateau near the widest part of the Hudson River so he would have

GENRE PAINTING: THE AMERICAN DREAM IN ACTION

Genre painting also gained respect in the first half of the nineteenth century. No longer placed on painting's lowest rung, these scenes of the common people engaged in everyday activity were enormously popular.

BINGHAM: SON OF THE PIONEERS. The first important painter of the West was George Caleb Bingham (1811-79), known for his scenes of frontier life. Criticized in the East for uncouth subjects like riverboatmen playing cards, fishing, and chewing tobacco, he saw himself as a social historian immortalizing pioneer life.

Unlike many other artists who took the wilderness as a subject, Bingham was part of the life he portrayed. He spent his childhood on a hard-scrabble farm in Missouri and was apprenticed to a cabinetmaker before trying his hand at sign painting. He taught himself to paint with a how-to manual and homemade pigments, then took off down the Missouri and Mississippi rivers painting portraits. Bingham was soon acclaimed for celebrating the march west and the activities of the frontier. To Bingham, the commonplace was grand and bargemen at a hoedown were just as noble as ancient heroes in battle.

Bingham, "Fur Traders Descending the Missouri," 1845, MMA, NY. In this classic "genre" painting, Bingham romanticizes the settling of the Wild West.



REALISM

During the first half of the nineteenth century, as artistic wars between Neoclassicism and Romanticism raged, Realism, a force that would dominate art for the second half of the century, slowly began to emerge. With the first grindings of the Machine Age, Neoclassicism's anachronisms and Romanticism's escapism would prove to be no match for Realism's hard edge.

In a sense, Realism had always been a part of Western art. During the Renaissance, artists overcame all technical limitations and represented nature with photographic accuracy. From van Eyck to Vermeer to Velazquez, artists approximated visual reality with consummate skill. But before Realism, artists in the nineteenth century modified their subjects by idealizing or sensationalizing them.

The "new" Realism insisted on precise imitation of visual perceptions without alteration. Realism's subject matter was also totally different. Artists limited themselves to facts of the modern world as they personally experienced them; only what they could see or touch was considered real. Gods, goddesses, and heroes of antiquity were out. Peasants and the urban working class were in. In everything from color to subject matter, Realism brought a sense of muted sobriety to art.



Daumier, "The Third-Class Carriage," c. 1862, MMA, NY. A spiritual heir to William Hogarth, Honoré Daumier (1808-79) drew savagely satirical caricatures that punctured the pomposity of Royalists, Boapartists, and politicians. King Louis Philippe jailed Daumier for his cartoon of the king swallowing "bags of gold extorted from the people." Still Daumier continued his attacks. "The Third-Class Carriage" portrayed working-class passengers as dignified, despite being crammed together like lemmings. This was the earliest pictorial representation of the dehumanizing effect of modern transportation.

ROSA BONHEUR (1822-99) was the nineteenth century's leading painter of animals. Her pictures of sheep, cows, tigers, and wolves reflected her passion for the animal kingdom. When someone reproached her saying, "You are not fond of society," the French artist replied, "That depends on what you mean by society. I am never tired of my brute friends." Her home in Paris was a menagerie of goats, peacocks, chickens, even a steer, waandering in and out of the studio. When she painted outdoors, dogs lay about her in a circle.

Bonheur's lifelike images reflected her thorough research. For "The Horse Fair," Bonheur sketched at the Paris horse market for a year and a half, disguised as a man.



Bonheur, "The Horse Fair," 1853-55, MMA, NY.

FRENCH REALISM

COURBET. The father of the Realist movement was Gustave Courbet (pronounced Koor BAY; 1819-77). A man of great pragmatism, he defied the conventional taste for history paintings and poetic subjects, insisting that "painting is essentially a concrete art and must be applied to real and existing things." When asked to paint angels, he replied, "I have never seen angels. Show me an angel and I will paint one."

His credo was "everything that does not appear on the retina is outside the domain of painting," As a result, Courbet limited himself to subjects close to home, like "Burial at Ornans" a 22-foot-long canvas portraying a provincial funeral in bleak earth tones. Never before had a scene of plain folk been painted in the epic size reserved for grandiose history paintings. Critics howled that it was hopelessly vulgar.

When an art jury refused to exhibit what Courbet considered his most important work, "Interior of My Studio," the painter built his own exhibition hall (actually a shed) called the "Pavilion of Realism" — the first one-man show ever. There was nothing restrained about Courbet. He loudly defended the working class and was jailed for six months for tearing down a Napoleonic monument. He detested the theatricality of Academic art; his drab figures at everyday tasks expressed what Baudelaire termed the "heroism of modern life."



Courbet, "Interior of My Studio, a Real Allegory Summing Up Seven Years of My Life as an Artist," 1854-55, Musee d'Orsay, Paris. Courbet portrays the two spheres of influence that affected his art. At left are the ordinary people that are his subjects, and at right, representatives of the Paris art world. The focal point is a self-portrait of the artist. His pivotal position between the two worlds implied that the artist was something of a go-between, linking the real world to the art world.

THE BARBIZON SCHOOL: REALISTIC FRENCH COUNTRYSIDES. Influenced by Constable, who painted actual scenes rather than imagined ones, a group of landscape painters known as the Barbizon School brought the same freshness to French art. Beginning in the 1830s, they painted outdoors near the town of Barbizon. The most famous names associated with this school were Millet and Corot.

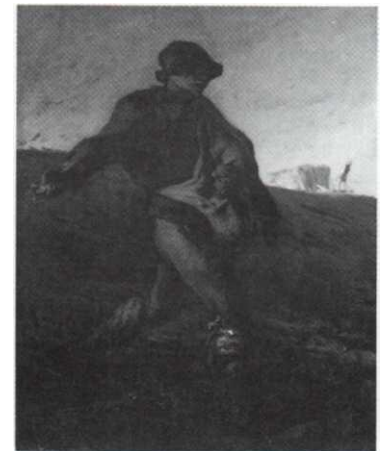
COROT: MISTY TREES. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (pronounced Kore ROH; 1796-1875) was taught "to reproduce as scrupulously as possible what I saw in front of me." He brought a natural, objective style to landscape painting, capturing the quality of a particular place at a particular moment. Corot used a limited palette of pearly, silvery tones

with olive green, and soft, wispy strokes. The nearly monochromatic landscapes of his later years were so popular they have become some of the most widely forged paintings in the world, giving rise to the comment, "Corot painted 3,000 paintings, of which 6,000 are in America."

Peasant Portraits. Jean-Francois Millet (pronounced Mee LA Y; 1814-75) is forever linked to portrayals of rural laborers plowing, sowing seed, and harvesting. Born to a peasant family, he once said he desired "to make the trivial serve to express the sublime." Before, peasants were invariably portrayed as doltish. Millet gave them a sturdy dignity.



Corot, "Ville d'Avray," 1870, MMA, NY. Barbizon painters like Corot painted directly from nature.



Millet, "The Sower," c. 1850, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

AMERICAN REALISM

HOMER. "He is a genuine painter," novelist Henry James said of Winslow Homer (1836-1910). "To see, and to reproduce what he sees, is his only care." A self-taught artist, Homer steered clear of outside influence and theory, basing his work on direct observation of nature. "When I have selected the thing carefully," he said of his method, "I paint it exactly as it appears." His skill made him the major American marine painter and watercolorist of all time.

First apprenticed to a lithographer, Homer became a successful illustrator for popular magazines. His drawings of idyllic farm scenes and girls playing croquet kept him steadily employed. As a Civil War artist; he produced illustrations of camp life. At the age of 27, he began — without instruction — to paint in oils. Homer's friends thought his total indifference to European art was "almost ludicrous," but Homer insisted on inventing himself. "If a man wants to be an artist," he said, "he should never look at paintings."

CRASHING WAVES AND STORMY SEAS. In the 1880s Homer retreated to Maine where he began to paint the raging sea. In shipwreck paintings like "The Gulf Stream" and "The Life Line," man-against-the-elements became a recurrent theme. Later Homer dropped human figures from his sea paintings altogether and simply portrayed high winds driving blue-green waves against boulders under gray skies. He sometimes waited days for just the right light, dashing out at midnight to paint moonlight on the waves. His ability to portray harsh, stormy weather, to the point where you can almost feel the icy spray, remains unmatched.

At the age of 38 Homer struck out in a new direction. Watercolors had long been used by artists in preparatory studies, but Homer was the first to display his watercolors as finished works and thereby installed the form as a major medium. His marine watercolors are luminous and brightly colored, with patches of white paper left radiant like the glaring tropical sun. In the hands of other painters, watercolors often looked anemic, but in Homer's bold style, they had the authority of oils.



Homer, "Sloop, Nassau," 1899, MMA, NY. *Homer was America's premier marine painter and watercolorist, fascinated by the power and energy of the sea.*



Homer, "Snap the Whip," 1872, MMA, NY. *Homer brought a new realism to genre painting, presenting exuberant images of rural America.*

WATERCOLOR

Invented by ancient Egyptians and used by Renaissance artist Durer to tint ink drawings, the watercolor came into its own in the mid-nineteenth century as a vehicle for painting English landscapes. Used before primarily for sketches, the watercolor was finally recognized as a technique with its own potential.

Although most beginning artists start with watercolor because the clean-up and materials (brush, paint box, paper, and water) are simple, it is actually a very demanding medium. Its significant characteristics are the fluidity and transparency of the point, which allows the white background to show through. Artists who have used watercolor with special skill are Cezanne, Sargent, Dufy, Grosz, Klee, and especially Winslow Homer and John Marin.

EAKINS: THE ANATOMIST. Thomas Eakins (pronounced AY kins; 1844-1916) was such an uncompromising realist that when he decided to paint a crucifixion, he strapped his model to a cross. His first concern, he maintained, whether painting a religious picture or, more commonly, portraits and Philadelphia scenes, was to get the anatomy right.

Eakins approached his profession logically and systematically, mastering the necessary technical skills in progressive stages. To learn anatomy, he dissected cadavers and became so knowledgeable on the subject he lectured to medical students. He plotted out the perspective of his paintings with mathematical precision, laying out the structure in grids by mechanical drawing. He was as straightforward as artists came. "I hate affectation," he wrote. "I am learning to make solid, heavy work."

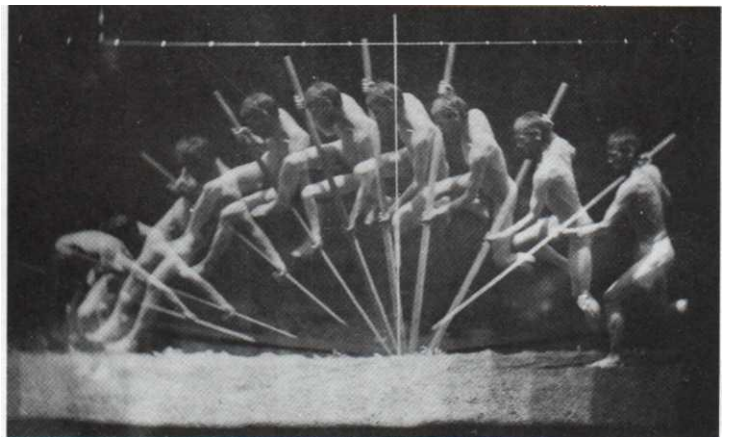
RADICAL TEACHING METHOD. As director of the Pennsylvania Academy, Eakins revolutionized art instruction. The accepted practice was to draw from plaster casts of ancient sculpture. Eakins detested such second-hand learning: "The Greeks did not study the antique," he said. "Nature is just as varied and just as beautiful in our day as she was in the time of Phidias." He required students to draw the nude from life, studying its motion and anatomy. The idea was ahead of its time: when he insisted on a class of both men and women drawing from what a newspaper called "the absolute nude," Eakins was fired in disgrace. Indeed, many of Eakins' attitudes were ahead of their time. When professional careers were closed to women and blacks, he encouraged them to study art. One of his pupils, Henry O. Tanner (1859-1937), became the first important black painter and the most successful black American artist before Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence.

PORTRAITS. From the late 1870s on, Eakins painted mostly portraits. Each captured the essence of the individual, yet because he never flattered a sitter, many customers refused the commissioned works. "The negative response was often brutally discourteous and disagreeable," wrote his biographer. Of those accepted, an inordinate number — probably 10 percent — were destroyed. Today Eakins is considered America's finest nineteenth-century painter and, in the opinion of many, the greatest painter America has produced.

STARK REALISM. Eakins depicts an actual breast-cancer operation by the surgeon Dr. Agnew, who lectures to medical students. Critics considered Eakins's "anatomy lessons" a "degradation of art" and denounced him as a "butcher" for his graphic portrayals. The Pennsylvania Academy refused to display the painting at its exhibition, but for Eakins, clinical fact made the painting all the more truthful.



Eakins, "The Agnew Clinic," 1889, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



Eakins, "Pole-Vaulter: Multiple Exposure Photograph of George Reynolds," 1884-85, MMA, NY. Eakins was a pioneer in the new technique of photography. Anticipating the invention of the movie camera, he, with Eadweard Muybridge, was first to take rapid, multiple exposures. Eakins used photo sequences of a man running or hurling a javelin to analyze the anatomy of movement.

WHISTLER: ART FOR ART'S SAKE. James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) was one of the most controversial artists of the nineteenth century and a leading theoretician of the Art for Art's Sake doctrine. Before a painting is anything else, Whistler maintained, it is, first and foremost, a blank surface covered with colors in varying patterns. His portraits, landscapes, and night pictures were less representations of a subject than experiments in decorative design. He intended no moral uplift in his paintings, saying, "Art should be independent of all claptrap." This radical notion that a design exists in and of itself, not to describe a subject or tell a story, would later change the course of Western art, just as his paintings were precursors of modern abstraction.

Whistler's life was as unconventional as his art. Born in Lowell, Massachusetts, he spent much of his childhood in St. Petersburg, Russia, which he claimed as his birthplace. "I shall be born when and where I want, and I do not choose to be born in Lowell," he said. After flunking out of West Point for a "deficiency in chemistry," Whistler bounced around without a profession until reading in *La Vie de boheme* of the wild life of Parisian art students. At the age of 21 he sailed for Europe, never to return to America.

Whistler played the bohemian to the hilt, flaunting his relationship with his red-haired model/mistress and parading conspicuously about London in foppish dress. With his lavish life-style, he was frequently in debt. He pawned his jacket for an iced tea on a hot day, and once, after a meal, announced, "I have just eaten my washstand." Given to public tantrums, Whistler upbraided the



Whistler, "Arrangement in Gray and Black No. 1," 1872, Musee d'Orsay, Paris. Whistler's strong sense of pattern and design made him insist that this painting was about shapes and colors, not his mother.



Whistler, "Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket," 1875, Detroit Institute of Arts. This painting of fireworks in the night sky foreshadowed abstraction.

"Philistines" who failed to appreciate his work. His insulting diatribes to the press prompted Degas's warning, "My friend, you behave as if you had no talent."

One notorious dispute shocked all of London. When Whistler exhibited "Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket," the influential critic John Ruskin denounced it as an affront to art and likened it to "flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." Outraged, Whistler sued for libel. In the widely publicized trial, he testified with caustic wit. When asked to justify a fee of 200 guineas for what Ruskin maintained was a "slovenly" painting executed in a maximum of two days, Whistler said its price was based on "the knowledge of a lifetime." He explained the painting's lack of identifiable objects: "I have meant to divest the picture from any outside anecdotal sort of interest. ... It is an arrangement of line, form, and color first."

Whistler's most famous work, "Arrangement in Gray and Black No.1," is universally and incorrectly known as "Whistler's Mother." The artist believed the identity of the sitter was irrelevant to the painting, calling it an "arrangement" of forms. Whistler seemed to be heeding the advice of his friend French poet Mallarme to "paint not the thing, but the effect that it produces."

SARGENT: PORTRAITS OF HIGH SOCIETY. The last great literal portrait painter (before the camera made such art less in demand) was John Singer Sargent (1856-1925). Truly an international artist, he was described as "an American born in Italy, educated in France, who looks like a German, speaks like an Englishman, and paints like a Spaniard." Although he painted with Monet at Giverny, Sargent modeled himself after the Spanish painter Velazquez, the acknowledged master of visual realism.

Sargent's childhood was rootless, as his American parents flitted from one hotel to another all over the Continent. By 19 Sargent had begun formal art training in Paris and by the age of 25 he was already a sensation — though not the kind he had hoped for. The work which was to have cemented his reputation created a scandal instead. Sargent painted a bold, full-length portrait of a famous Parisian beauty, posed in a deeply cut gown, her strap dangling immodestly off her shoulder



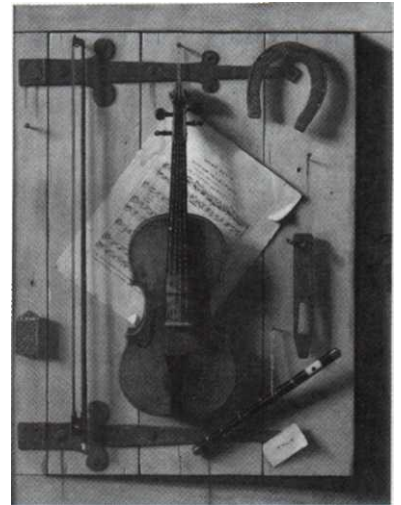
Sargent, "Mr. and Mrs. I. N. Phelps Stokes," 1897, MMA, NY. Sargent painted portraits of high society in an elegant, elongated style.

EARLY PHOTO-REALISM

Harnett, "Still Life - Violin and Music," 1888, MMA, NY.

⁷ Michael Harnett (1848-92) was the most emulated American still life painter of his generation. His microscopically accurate paintings of ordinary objects (called "deceptions") were so convincing, they literally "fooled the eye" (the meaning of the term "trompe l'oeil"). Spectators had to be fenced off to keep them from wearing away the paint by touching. While academic painters exhibited their prettified nudes in the Paris Salon, Harnett's work hung in saloons. In fact, a Harnett trompe l'oeil made one pub so famous, people lined up to gape at the painting. Regulars routinely won bets with customers who insisted the painted objects were real. Harnett was nearly arrested by Treasury agents who considered his pictures of currency to be counterfeiting.

"Still Life—Violin and Music," is a tour de force of realism. Through the use of shadows (the sheet music and calling card are shown with edges bent, the door stands ajar), Harnett simulates a wide range of depth. The objects are arranged with geometrical precision. Vertical axes (the bow, wood slats, and metal latch) intersect horizontal lines defined by hinges and wood frame. The slightest rearranging of any object would upset the composition's careful balance.



(he later painted over the strap, restoring it to propriety). Although he called the painting "Madame X," everyone recognized the subject, and, with her shocking lavender makeup, she became the laughing stock of Paris. Her mother demanded that he withdraw the work from view. Shocked by the response, Sargent left Paris for London, where he vowed to abandon frankness for flattery in all future portraits.

Sargent had a gift for posing his prosperous subjects naturally to bring them to life. When asked if he sought to represent the inner person behind the veil, Sargent replied, "If there was a veil, I should paint the veil. I can only paint what I see."

THE SOCIAL REGISTER. Witty, urbane, and perfectly at ease among the upper crust, Sargent could pick his subjects and name his price. He excelled at the "portrait d'apparat," or portrait of a person — usually

rich and powerful — in his or her home setting. Although he concentrated on the full-length figure, his portraits included opulent accessories like Ming vases, yards of satin, red velvet draperies, and gleaming gold.

In "Mr. and Mrs. I. N. Phelps Stokes," Sargent intended to portray only Mrs. Stokes in a van Dyck pose with a huge dog at her side. Unfortunately, no Doberman was available, so he sketchily substituted her husband, whose vague, shadowy face indicates he was clearly an afterthought. Sargent lavished more care on the crisply drawn female figure, her face radiant with intelligence and charm. The sharp folds of her starched skirt serve to elongate her height and exaggerate her slenderness in Sargent's clean, linear design. Such elegant paintings in the tradition of Gainsborough and Reynolds made Sargent a huge success on both sides of the Atlantic.

ARCHITECTURE FOR THE INDUSTRIAL AGE

For much of the nineteenth century, revival styles like pseudo-Greek or Roman temples and updated Gothic castles dominated architecture. When the Industrial Revolution made new materials like cast-iron supports available, architects at first disguised them in Neoclassical Corinthian columns. Only in purely utilitarian structures like suspension bridges, railroad sheds, and factories was cast iron used without ornament. Gradually, however, an awareness grew that new materials and engineering methods demanded a new style as practical as the Age of Realism itself.

The Crystal Palace (1850-51), housing the first World's Fair in London, demonstrated the aesthetic possibilities of a cast-iron framework. Joseph Paxton (1801-65), an engineer who specialized in greenhouses, designed the iron-and-glass structure as a huge conservatory covering 21 acres and enclosing mature trees already on the site. Because machines stamped out cast-iron elements in prefabricated shapes, construction was a snap. In an astonishing six months, workers put the building together like a giant erector set. A barrel-vaulted transept of multiple panes of glass in an iron skeleton ran the length of the building. Interior space, flooded with light, seemed infinite, the structure itself almost weightless.



Paxton, *The Crystal Palace*, 1850-51, (destroyed by fire, 1935), Guildhall Library, London. *The Crystal Palace* was the first iron-and-glass structure built on such a huge scale that showed industrial materials were both functional and beautiful.

ARTSPEAK

"Realism" is one of the few terms used in art criticism where the style and the actual meaning of the word are one and the same. Many other art terms, however, have specialized meanings that can confuse the beginner. The following is a list of frequently used art terms that can seem like doublespeak.

RELIEF — a projecting design carved or modeled on a flat background.

PERSPECTIVE — a technique for representing space and three-dimensional objects on a flat surface.

FIGURATIVE — style that accurately represents figures, animals, or other recognizable objects (also called representational; its opposite is abstract or nonobjective).

GRAPHIC — art on a flat surface based on drawing and use of line (as opposed to color or relief); especially applied to printmaking.

PLANE — a flat, two-dimensional surface with a defined boundary.

STATIC — arrangement of shapes, lines, colors that reduces visual movement when looking at a picture (opposite of dynamic).

FLAT — without illusion of volume or depth; also pure color lacking gradations of tone.

COMPLEMENTARY — opposite colors on the color wheel (green/red, orange/blue).

VALUES — degree of light or dark in a color.

MONUMENTAL — pertaining to monuments; heroic scale.



Eiffel, Eiffel Tower, 1889, Paris. A triumph of modern engineering, the Eiffel Tower flaunted its iron-and-steel skeleton, devoid of allusions to past architectural styles.

Use of cast iron spread after mid-century, permitting buildings to be bigger, more economical, and fire-resistant. Many buildings with cast iron facades still stand in New York's SoHo district, and the United States Capitol dome was constructed of cast-iron in 1850-65. After 1860, when steel was available, vast spaces could be enclosed speedily. The invention of the elevator allowed buildings to grow vertically as well as horizontally, preparing for the advent of the skyscraper.

The greatest marvel of engineering and construction of the age was the Eiffel Tower. Built as the central feature of the 1889 Paris Exhibition, at 984 feet it was the world's tallest structure. The Tower consisted of 7,300 tons of iron and steel connected by 2.5 million rivets. It became a daring symbol of the modern industrial era.

ARTS AND CRAFTS. Countering the growing prestige of Industrialism was the Arts and Crafts Movement led by British author and designer William Morris (1834-96). Throughout Europe and America, the Arts and Crafts Movement of the late nineteenth century influenced decorative arts from wallpaper and textiles to book design. The group advocated a return to the hand-craft tradition of art "made by the people, and for the people, as a happiness to the maker and the user." Morris succeeded temporarily in reviving quality in design and craftsmanship, which was threatened with extinction by mass production. He did not, however, achieve his goal of art for the masses. Hand-made objects were simply too expensive.

The Arts and Crafts Movement was influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an earlier English art group formed in 1848 to restore art to the "purity" of Italian art before Raphael. It included the painters W. H. Hunt, J. E. Millais, and D. G. Rossetti.

Morris, "Cray" chintz, 1884, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



ART NOUVEAU

Art Nouveau, which flourished between 1890 and World War I, was an international ornamental style opposed to the sterility of the Industrial Age. Art Nouveau relied upon twining, flowering forms to counter the unaesthetic look of machine-made products. Whether called Jugendstil (Youth Style) in Germany, Modernista in Spain, Sezessionstil in Austria, Stile Liberty in Italy, or Style Moderne in France, Art Nouveau was easily recognizable by its sinuous lines and tendrillike curves. It was used to maximum effectiveness in the architecture of Antonio Gaudi (see p. 65) and the Belgian Victor Horta, and in interior design of the period in general. Art Nouveau's trademark water lily shape exerted a pervasive influence on the applied arts such as wrought-iron work, jewelry, glass, and typography.

BEARDSLEY: AESTHETIC DECADENCE. Aubrey Beardsley (1872-98) was an illustrator whose curvilinear drawings ideally reflect Art Nouveau design. Beardsley's black-and-white illustrations for his friend Oscar Wilde's *Salome* caused a sensation when the book was published. In one illustration, Salome kisses the severed head of John the Baptist, whose dripping blood forms a stem. The drawing's perverse eroticism typified fin-de-siecle decadence. Beardsley eliminated shading in his graphic art, contrasting black and white patterns in flowing, organic motifs.



TIFFANY: GLASS MENAGERIE. The epitome of Art Nouveau's creeping-vine motif was the glasswork of American Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933). Tiffany's lamps cascaded with stained-glass wisteria, his vases blossomed into lotuses, and his stained-glass windows dripped clusters of grapes. Whatever the object, all Tiffany designs were bowers of willowy leaves and petals in gleaming colors.

Son of the founder of New York's Tiffany's jewelers, Tiffany studied painting, then designed stained-glass windows for churches. When he replaced martyrs and saints with poppies and peacocks, his work became immensely popular. In the floral, landscaped windows celebrating nature's profusion, Tiffany created some of the most innovative glasswork ever.

Tiffany studios, "Grape Vine," 1905, MMA, NY. *Tiffany's Art Nouveau works in stained glass reflected his two passions: nature and color.*

Beardsley, "Salome," 1892, Princeton University Library. *Beardsley used Art Nouveau's sinuous, curving lines based on plant forms.*



BIRTH OF PHOTOGRAPHY

In the early nineteenth century scientific discoveries in optics and chemistry converged to produce a new art form: photography. In 1826 French chemist Nicéphore Niepce (1765-1833) made the first surviving photographic image, a view of the courtyard outside his home. To obtain the hazy image, Niepce exposed a polished pewter plate for eight hours.

His collaborator, Louis-J.-M. Daguerre (1789-1851), invented a more practical process of photography in 1837. His first picture, "Still Life," was a brilliantly detailed view of a corner of his studio, exposed for 10 to 15 minutes. In 1839 Daguerre inadvertently took the earliest known photograph of a human being. His picture of a Parisian boulevard known to have been crowded with rushing pedestrians is eerily empty of life, except for a man having his shoes shined — the only human being who stood still long enough for his image to register during the long exposure.

An Englishman, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-

77), further improved the process of photography with his invention of calotypes, or the photo negative, announced in 1839. He had begun experimenting by pressing leaves, feathers, and pieces of lace against prepared paper that was exposed to sunlight. His later prints of projected images were blurred compared to the sharp daguerreotypes, but were achieved with paper negatives and paper prints.

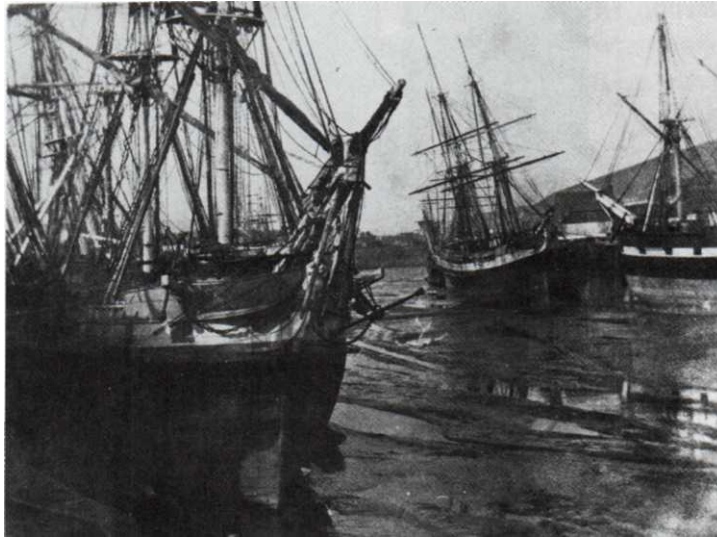
Other advances soon followed. In 1851 a process called wet-plate reduced exposure time to seconds and produced prints almost as precise as Daguerre's. Then the tintype was invented, with an image on a thin metal plate instead of delicate glass. Next the dry-plate liberated the photographer from dashing into the darkroom immediately. Not only would the image keep longer before developing, the speed of exposure was so fast the photographer no longer needed a tripod. By 1858, instant photography replaced the daguerreotype. In the 1880s, portable hand-held cameras and roll film took over.



Niepce, "View from His Window at Gras," 1826, Gernsheim Collection, University of Texas at Austin. *This is the first surviving photograph, exposed for eight hours.*



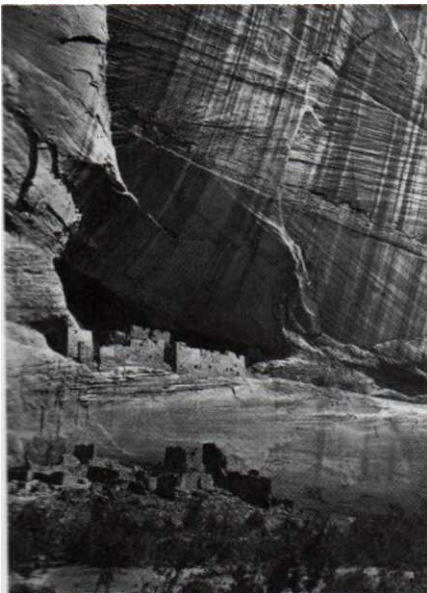
Daguerre, "A Portrait of Charles L. Smith," 1843, International Museum of Photography of George Eastman House, Rochester, NY. *Daguerre invented a practical method of photography.*



Fox Talbot, "Sailing Craft," c 1844, Science Museum, London. Fox Talbot developed paper negatives and prints.

TYPES OF POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY

TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY. Professional photographers swarmed to wayward locales to document far-off wonders and feed the public's appetite for the exotic. Suddenly the pyramids and sphinxes of Egypt, Old Faithful erupting, Niagara Falls, and the Grand Canyon were accessible to armchair travelers. These first mobile shutterbugs surmounted



O'Sullivan, "Canyon de Chelly, Arizona," 1867, International Museum of Photography of George Eastman House, Rochester NY. Travel photographs of the American West convinced Eastern legislators to establish the first national parks.

formidable difficulties, lugging heavy equipment and fragile plates up Alpine peaks, working under broiling sun, and then in the stifling gloom of portable darkrooms. Blackened fingers, clothes corroded by silver nitrate, and often great physical danger could not daunt the early pioneers of photography.

WAR PHOTOGRAPHY AND MATTHEW BRADY. In more than 7,000 negatives, Matthew Brady (1823-96)



Brady, "Ambulance Wagons and Drivers at Harewood Hospital," 1863, Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Civil War photographer Brady's authentic pictures demonstrated the new medium's claim to be a "mirror with a memory."

brought home the horrors of the Civil War. "A spirit in my feet said go, and I went," he explained. In addition to his spirit, he had to take along a wagonload of equipment. Troops called his darkroom on wheels the "Whatsit" wagon. It often became the target of enemy fire as Brady crouched inside processing glass plates while battles raged around him. Since it took three minutes to make an impression on a plate, Brady was confined to pictures of soldiers posing in camp, battlefields, and corpses in trenches. His photos of skeletons with canteens still slung around them recorded the grim reality of war with a heretofore-unknown authenticity and inspired Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. ,

At Bull Run, Brady was almost killed and was lost for three days. Still wearing his long linen duster, straw hat, and a borrowed sword, a gaunt and hungry Brady straggled into Washington. After loading up on new supplies, he rushed back to the front.

DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY. Jacob Riis (1849-1914) was a New York police reporter who had direct experience with the violence of sordid city slums. After flash gunpowder (the equivalent of a modern flashbulb) was invented, he had the element of surprise on his side and invaded robbers' hangouts, sweatshops, and squalid tenements to document appalling conditions on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Riis published the shocking details in newspaper exposes and a book, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). His graphic images led to the first legislation to reform housing codes and labor laws.



Riis, "Street Arabs in the Area of Mulberry Street," c. 1889, Jacob A. Riis Collection, Museum of the City of New York. *Muckraking photojournalist Riis documented unsavory living and working conditions among the urban poor, as in this shot of homeless children.*



PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY. Nadar (1820-1910), a French caricaturist, began to photograph the leading artistic figures of Paris in 1853. His portraits of luminaries like George Sand, Corot, Daumier, and Sarah Bernhardt were more than just stiff documentary portraits. He conceived, posed, and lighted the figures to highlight their character traits. For instance, in his photograph of Bernhardt, the archetypal tragic actress, he posed her swathed in a dramatic sweep of drapery. Nadar was among the first to use electric light for photographs and invented aerial photography, hovering above Paris in a hot air balloon. He built one of the largest balloons in the world, *Le Geant* ("the giant"), and was once swept away to Germany and dragged 25 miles over rough terrain before he could halt the runaway craft.

Nadar, "Sarah Bernhardt," 1859, International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, NY. *Nadar photographed Paris's leading lights like the famed actress.*



Cameron, "Call, I follow; I follow; let me die," c. 1867, Royal Photographic Society, Bath. Cameron was the first to shoot pictures out of focus in order to convey atmosphere.

EARLY PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

It's no wonder our ancestors look stiff and grim in early daguerreotypes, given the pain

involved in capturing an image. To take the first photo portraits, Samuel F. B. Morse made, his wife and daughter sit dead still for twenty minutes on the roof of a building in glaring light with their eyes closed (he later pointed out the danger of this use of the Daguerreotype as it should be used, and he will raise himself to a height that we do not know." His bitter rival, Ingres, denied that photographs could ever be fine art but also used them as portrait studies, admiring "their exactitude that I would like to achieve." His portraits have a silvery style similar to daguerreotypes.

ART PHOTOGRAPHY. Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-79) wanted to capture nothing less than ideal beauty. When given a camera at the age of 48, she began making portraits of famous Victorians who also happened to be her friends: Tennyson, Carlyle, Browning, Darwin, and Longfellow. Cameron excelled at defining personality in intense portraits and said, "When I have had such men before my camera my whole soul has endeavored to do its duty towards them in recording faithfully the greatness of the inner as well as the features of the outer man. The photograph thus taken has been almost the embodiment of a prayer." She was first to have lenses specially built for a soft-focus effect in her allegorical and often overly sentimental genre pictures.

PHOTOGRAPHY'S IMPACT ON PAINTING

When the French romantic painter Delaroche, known for his painstakingly detailed scenes, heard of the first photograph, he proclaimed, "From this day, painting is dead!" The art of painting miniature portraits was immediately doomed, replaced by the ubiquitous daguerreotypes which could be ready in fifteen minutes for 12y. cents. The Fouve painter Vlaininck spoke for fearful painters when he said, "We hate everything that has to do with the photograph."

Other artists viewed photographs as helpful adjuncts. Delacroix used them as studies for hard-to-hold poses, saying, "I have made a study of the Daguerreotype as it should be used, and he will raise himself to a height that we do not know." His bitter rival, Ingres, denied that photographs could ever be fine art but also used them as portrait studies, admiring "their exactitude that I would like to achieve." His portraits have a silvery style similar to daguerreotypes.

Soon many painters saw the advantage of using photographs for portraits instead of interminable sittings. After artists had reproduced the camera like-

ness, the subject had only to sit for final color touch-ups. Bierstadt found photos useful models for his panoramic landscapes, while Courbet and Manet also used them. Degas's frozen-action shots helped him devise unusual poses and unconventional compositions. Within three generations after the invention of photography, painters abandoned the image for abstraction.

Gradually photographers began to insist their craft was more than a trade of snapping portraits or groundwork for painting but a fine art in itself. As the writer Lamartine put it, photography was "not a mechanical art, but a noble phenomenon, where the artist collaborates with the sun." The camera excelled at reproducing images realistically, but photographers aspired to imitate painting. To compete with the artist's imagination, "art photographers" began to shoot images slightly out of focus, retouch negatives, add paint to prints, superimpose negatives, and otherwise manipulate the mechanically produced images. A new art form for the post-Industrial-Revolution world was born.