

World Art and Culture

By

D. Farrell Smith, B.A., M.A.T.S., Grad Cert.

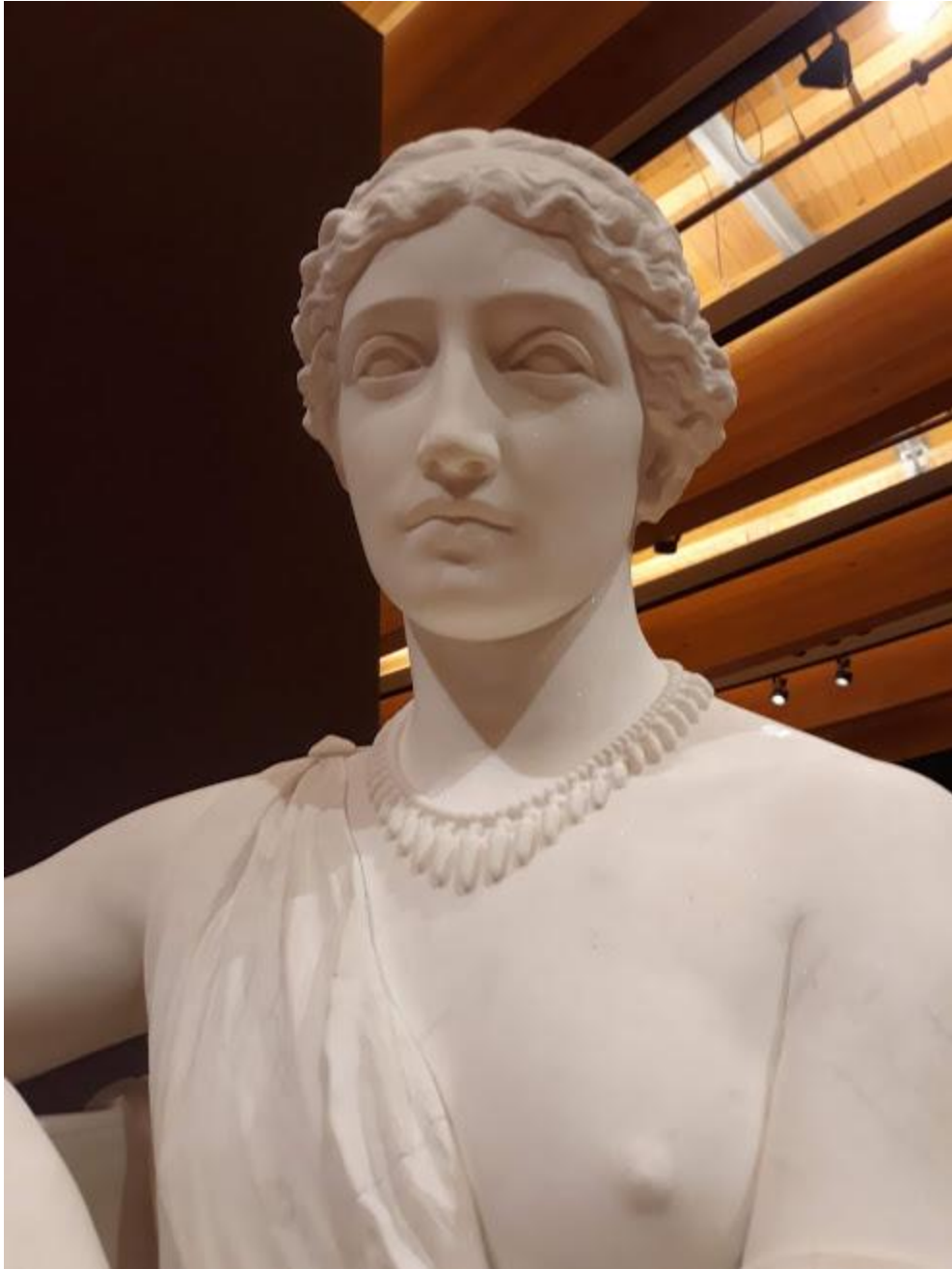


Photo by David F. Smith
Sculpture by William Wetmore Story¹

¹ <https://crystalbridges.org/blog/sappho/>, Accessed 4/29/2020, location: Bentonville, Arkansas

Chapter One: Beginnings

Where did all of the ideas of self expression begin? There are many worldviews with their own opinions and myths regarding the beginning of all things. We, however, will be studying specifically the rise of humanity from the dust of beginnings to the advanced culture of modernism. This journey will take us from desert civilization to the mighty Romans to the rise of Islam and Europe and the continuous march to a new definition of modern. After all, Modern is merely a description of what currently is the standard, therefore, for early man, the standard of modernity would be fire while in our current life the standard would be each new advancement of AI. This has been a continual march of innovation as the mind of man grew to understand the elements around us all and to learn to begin to explore and innovate where necessity begins. That is where we begin, what I call the **Art of Necessity--*Innovation that is created in order to meet a utility need.***

For instance, a person desiring to make fire with a bowstring firestarter would have to manufacture the needed implements to create the fire. In the course of time, no doubt they would make their own marks to indicate ownership or even perhaps create designs on it that are symbolic of their beliefs or identity. Art of necessity meets current needs and is very rarely an expression of the aesthetic. Rather it is a utility needed for survival. However, there is no doubt that a good deal of skill and specialization must take place to manufacture effective tools for meeting personal needs. That is why I give the title “art” because it is an expression of the person’s need in its manufacture. **Craftsmanship--*is the ability to create something with effective and pleasing results.***

Early man did not simply “discover” fire like in the Spongebob episode where lightning strikes a stick and our hero has the brilliant idea of cooking a Sea Anemone. Instead, through trial and error, over time the concept of manufacturing fire became a known skill. The implements, however, are more advanced thinking to bring about the desired result. The main idea of Early man was survival.

Neanderthal

Regardless of your worldview, there was a point at some time in the past where small bands of family groups moved about in the world. The word Neanderthal comes from the word Neander, the valley where the very first example of Neanderthal man was found. It is a valley near Dusseldorf, Germany. The period in which we see the earliest evidence of man’s attempt at Art of Necessity is during the Paleolithic period. **Paleolithic--*old stone age*** is a period where man’s need for utility necessitated the use of stone being manipulated into tools that they could put to use. The earliest examples of this are quite primitive and involved just sharpening a staff into a pointed spear and hardening it in the fire.

As time continued, man began to use a method called flint-knapping. **Flint-knapping--*using a rock to chip off razor-sharp shards of stone for cutting tools.*** Flint-knapping also involves more craftsmanship to form arrowheads, spearheads, and chopping tools to make life a little easier for early man. Most of them were family units that were multi-generational. Life-spans

were short and burdened by a need for the strongest to get the lion's share of wild game. Even in family life, there was competition. Families expanded through what can best be described as assimilating or kidnapping females from other family units in order to continue generation. This assured the genetic continuation of certain families. Otherwise, that family line eventually died out in favor of other more successful groups.

Social grooming was another important facet to early man. **Social grooming** is best described as the family combing through hair and body looking for parasites, fleas, and ticks to toss into the fire. As bizarre as this sounds, it was time of bonding for the family as they relaxed under the gentle touch of a family member. It was a rare moment of love and intimacy among family. Without such actions, they would have suffered horribly under the conditions in which they lived. This allowed them to be healthier and to have a stronger bond as a family.

Life was harsh for early man. The changing climate brought new challenges every year. This type of lifestyle is referred to as Hunter-gatherer. **Hunter-gatherer** is made up of the males, who hunted for wild game, while the females and children would gather herbs, fruits, bird eggs, and any game they could hand-catch. This is how the family unit stayed together. Their unique body chemistry and enzymes in their stomach allowed them to eat food raw or cooked. Cooking it preserved it longer, while eating it raw would give needed nutrients. A ranging hunter would need about 4000 calories a day just to maintain the constant action needed and the long hunts.

Neanderthals have been discovered now all over the world. A unique discovery in Israel years ago revealed the presence of a hyoid bone, indicating that it was possible that Neanderthal had a spoken language, although it is lost to time due to the fact there is no writing anywhere in the world at this time. Communication was likely oral with only cave painting existing to detail the daily life, hunting grounds, and indications of religion. It is obvious that some form of belief in an afterlife existed in prehistory, as many times, individuals were buried with meaningful items that were theirs in life. Usually, they were buried on their side in a fetal position. There is some indication of cannibalism in prehistory as well.

Their strong, stocky bodies were well built for the harsh climate. Their noses are large and able to detect scents that modern humans are unable to detect. They were the definition of humanity during their time on the Earth. Their range is 130000 to 40000 years ago. They are the archaic sub-species of humanity. Eventually, their kind disappeared as a new species appeared on the horizon. **Cro-Magnon**.

Additional sites regarding neanderthal and interesting articles along with great pictures:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/world-history-beginnings/origin-humans-early-societies/a/what-were-paleolithic-societies-like>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neanderthal>

Cro-Magnon

Cro-Magnon man is the first anatomically modern humans to appear on the historic timeline. They are **Homo Sapien**, which means Wise Man. Modern humans are called **Homo Sapien Sapien**-literally rendered "Wise wise Man," although a trip to Walmart will cause you to doubt that title. They are the ones that begin the long march toward civilization. They continued

to specialize in tool making and are the first of humanity that began to create art as an expression of self. They designed jewelry, pottery, and other items that contained decoration that was symbolic or just for expression.

Much of the cave drawings are the work of Cro-Magnon and where we draw a great deal of knowledge about their lives. The drawings depict everything from hunting stories, to maps, to everyday life and the first hints of the development of a cosmology. **Cosmology** can be defined as the perception of what and how the universe is and came into being. Early man described events in nature as works of forces beyond their understanding and therefore attributed it to various deities that eventually developed into a **Pantheon**, a collection of gods and goddesses that are worshipped. One of the markers of civilization is *an organized religion or group belief*.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/global-prehistory-ap/paleolithic-mesolithic-neolithic-apah/a/lascaux>

The bulk of what we know is pure speculation based upon the various depictions of their life and the development of their crafts. As they continued to specialize, they continued the march toward what is recognized as civilization. This period of history is referred to as the Upper Paleolithic leading toward tribal systems arising and eventually towns.

Cities

The earliest cities that arise from the central plains and wilderness areas, the oldest are **Damascus, Syria; Catal Huyuk, Turkey; and Jericho, West Bank, Israel**. Of the three, only Damascus and Jericho remain a city today. Jericho is credited as being the oldest but that is in dispute among scholars. There are some 20 plus consecutive settlements that have been excavated at Jericho dating to nearly 10,000BC. However, for our present study, we will concentrate on the ancient city of Catal Huyuk.

Excavations indicate that Catal Huyuk arose in the area of Modern day Turkey around **10,000BC**. It is the first collection of individuals living in one place. Their city grew to about 8000 people at one point. This location begins to show all of the markers of civilization but one....writing. There is no recorded writing of any kind, nor development of any alphabet in Catal Huyuk. We do not know how they communicated nor what their language sounded like but they left a wealth of information in their utility and expressive art and their demonstrations of cosmology. There is no discernable pantheon of deities but there is strong indication of a belief in an afterlife with meaningful items buried with their dead. Very often, when someone died, they were simply buried in the floor of the house.

How would you like to be having an evening dinner a few feet about dead Uncle Og? Doesn't sound appetizing to me. They were usually buried in a fetal position, perhaps as a recognition of the Earth being mother. Although, it is known that in many cases, a person who dies unattended will be found in such a position. Items such as cups, weapons, necklaces, or meaningful things to person were interred with them. After they had decayed, the people of Catal Huyuk would sometimes dig up the skull and keep it, painting it as perhaps a memento or there is some speculation that they were engaged in some sort of ancestral worship. **Ancestral**

worship is where individuals will pay homage or worship the memory or seek the intervention of their dead family members.

The people of Catal Huyuk developed a city where most dwelled either in their quarters or on the rooftops with communal ovens for cooking and baking. It is best described as a giant apartment complex.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/prehistoric-art/neolithicart/neolithic-sites/a/atalhyk>

<https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/208784132696719225/>

<http://www.telesterion.com/catal2.htm>

The use of **obsidian**, a form of volcanic glass, was prevalent in Catal Huyuk but had to have been traded for with someone else or at the very least, they spent a great deal of time gathering it from the volcano some 80 miles away. The possibility of trade suggests that there still may be another collection of people yet undiscovered in the region. Obsidian and other forms of manipulatable rock were used all the way up into the 1800s and are still in use in some regions of the world that have not come into the modern world.

Jericho

As was stated earlier, when Jericho has been excavated many levels of civilizations have been detected that span nearly **12,000 years** of human history. One important facet of their development is it is widely understood that the emergence of the **Loom**, a device for weaving and creating textiles arises. The rise of the loom allowed for mass production of clothing and further development of societal levels and means of depicting station in society. The emergence of the **loom** in Jericho is nearly as important as the emergence of writing.

Jericho has a similar history as Catal Huyuk but their settlements were more **individualized housing** rather than the communal living observed in Catal Huyuk. The culture engaged in trade with area tribal groups and seemed to have their own cosmology. It is in Jericho that we see the emergence of a “skull cult” where they venerate the skull, much like those of Catal Huyuk, but they were ornately decorated and sea shells were often used to depict eyes. Some skulls were even plastered and painted to recreate the original look of the person. Additionally, they were engaged in some form of Lunar (Moon) worship. Most religions of that rise out of these periods engaged in some form of sacrificial worship of animals and sometimes even people.

Although no conclusive evidence has been found of the biblical account of Jericho, there was a time when it was fortified with large and wide walls with towers that were likely used for lookout. All the successive settlements are painstakingly excavated to preserve as much of the history as we can. Today Jericho is a thriving community in the highly disputed West Bank of Israel, however, it is located away from the historical Jericho by a few miles.

Other Paleolithic and Neolithic Sites

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/prehistoric-art/neolithicart/neolithic-sites/a/nuragic-architecture-su-nuraxi-barumini-sardinia>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/prehistoric-art/neolithicart/neolithic-sites/v/stonehenge-unesconhk>

The First Civilization: Sumer

The fascinating culture of what is often called the **Cradle of Civilization**, describes the region called Mesopotamia, which means “Land between Two Rivers.” To be precise, it is modern day Iraq where once, before cyclic climate change turned the area into an arid region, there were once plains of green in a thriving and fertile land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. There are several different civilizations that rise up in this region of the course of a few thousand years from the Sumerians to the Assyrians to the Babylonians. The history of this region centers more around the rise and fall of **City-States**, a kind of regional power then exerts its authority over lesser domains and assimilates them into their culture. The first major regional power in Mesopotamia were the Sumerians,

The Sumerian culture really gets its rise at about **3000BC** when the tribal groups have united into a culture. Sumer is the first culture that shows all the **Markers of Civilization**, which are: “Stable food, Social Structure, Government, Religion or formal belief system, Culture, Technology, and Oral and written language.”² Sumer demonstrated all facets of this list including what scholars firmly believe is the very first system of writing called **Cuneiform**, a type of wedge-shaped system of writing. The Sumerians claim that their civilization was brought to Earth intact by the god **Enki**. (I’m not saying it was aliens.....but....it was aliens).

Figure 1:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/cuneiform>

This system of writing ranged from Law Code to everyday accounting in business and trade. It is complex and was written using a type of cylinder that was carved and then pressed and rolled onto clay tablets. We have a wealth of collections of Cuneiform tablets excavated for many centuries and they are still finding them today in the Iraq and Iran regions of the world. This complex system helped the Sumerians to rise to significance early in Mesopotamian history but their history goes further back than the established rise of Sumer around 3000BC.

As a matter of fact, the earliest cultures of Mesopotamia seemed to be nomadic “rain-driven” culture, meaning they followed the rain for planting. Because of their nomadic

² <https://wildwoodclassaction.wordpress.com/tag/seven-markers-of-civilization/>, accessed 4-22-2020

tendencies and a lack of the other markers of civilization, we would call them a **“Proto-Civilization,”** that is, a pre-version of the later civilization. Whenever they united and established themselves in the land of Sumer, they took on the name **“Sumerian,”** which basically translates as “black-headed” people.

The Sumerians were innovative people, developing complex irrigation and they literally “invented” the wheel, most scholars claim. I know that seems outlandish but for some bizarre reason, they had used a basic square and brute strength to move things and some genius basically thought, “Hey, let’s round off the corners and see how that goes!” It is also in Sumer that we see the first literary work called **“The Epic of Gilgamesh,”** an epic poem highlighting the exploits of a god-king and his worthy opponent and eventual friend Enkidu (Ehn-Kie-Doo). In this story, like over 200 other cultures throughout the world, there is a story of a great flood that covers the Earth with only one family and all the world’s animals surviving. When two or more civilizations discuss the same event in their culture it is called **Multiple Attestation.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pGhEu9elnA> for a summary of Gilgamesh

The **Sumerian Kings List** is exhaustive from ancient mythic god-kings to historically true kings of City-States. It is not unusual for a civilization to keep a good record of even their most insignificant kings in order to preserve the throne. We see this in many cultures including Egypt and the Bible (1 and 2 Kings). In Sumer, there is an emergence of what is referred to as **“Dynastic Rule,”** that is, it is carried on through a royal family heir. These kings rule the City-States that we discussed earlier and usually wasn’t a vast kingdom. For present comparison, it would be like Muskogee, OK dominating the area of Wagoner, Checotah, and Fort Gibson, the combination of their territories and Muskogee center would be the City-State.

The Geography of Sumer has two specific geographic areas, one, a plains area eventually leading into a more high hills area. Most of the early rain-driven cultures stayed to the plains and depended upon the water from the hills in drier times. By the 5th century, they had developed some simple irrigation and as irrigation grew, so did the complexity of the Sumerian culture. Their power structure brought about the necessity of government, which continued their eventual march into civilization and the need for law. Their great lawgiver was a man named **Hammurabi**, a king of great importance that created a cohesive set of laws governing everyday life.

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/hammurabi>

Sumerian Art was mostly inspired by their religion. They had developed a highly complex pantheon of gods and goddesses that governed everyday life and natural forces. It was a quarrel among the gods that led to the story of the great flood in the Sumerian Culture. It was so violent a flood that it is sad that even the gods hid in fear of the wrath they had unleashed. Therefore, their devotion to the Sumerian pantheon inspired sculpture and architecture that went hand in hand with their belief. The gods were depicted with enormous eyes to indicate their all seeing eyes (Aliens? Ok....maybe not, but still). They were very stiff in presentation with

hands usually clasped in front of them but for the most part, they looked and acted very human in their stories, except for the Marduk, the great bull.

Their architectural accomplishments were the **Ziggurats** that they created, a kind of stepped pyramid. A few still stand to this day in modern day Iraq, the most well-known is the **Great Ziggurat of Ur**.

<https://www.ancient.eu/image/197/great-ziggurat-of-ur/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSxL3xjIR_c

These structures are immense structures and a tribute to the advancement of their culture. They show strong knowledge of architectural pressure and were designed to last for thousands of years, and as you can see, they have lasted. One of the ziggurats that is no longer here is one mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, the Tower of Babel, which archeologists surmise that over time, the structure was disassembled for raw material to build the city and streets. These immense structures were the high places of worship of the Sumerian deities. A sacred place for them and their beliefs. Sadly, much of the great art of the Sumerians were destroyed by the ravages of the maniacs in the terror group **Isis**, such as the famed “winged horsemen” that many are familiar with.

<https://apnews.com/74a5625e5dff4ff8b43e4797780433af/iraqi-forces-push-toward-tikrit-battle-against>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamassu>

The cities of Sumer were designed in a maze to confuse invaders. It was an efficient way of winning battles with the frequent wars that occurred. Some streets ended in a dead end and a slaughter for those caught in the trap. It is in Sumer that the mudbrick arch gets its rise and is still in architectural use today. The frequent battles eventually led to a shift in power and there is a succession of dominant cultures in Mesopotamia. The succession of power is: -Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian.

The contributions of the Sumerian culture cannot be denied, from the use of irrigation to the invention of the wheel to the mudbrick arch, many of the innovations are still in use today and are a major point in the development of mankind.

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-middle-east/sumer>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/ancient-near-east1/sumerian/a/the-sumerians-and-mesopotamia>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHpmLrWBjnM>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxUAtvLy7_w&t=3s

Just for fun: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dfl4ZaiucpQ&t=548s>

Chapter Two: Egypt

Sometime around the rise of such communal living tribes such as Catal Huyuk, a group of hunter-gatherers were forming tighter communities in the area we call Egypt. As these tribal units grew, they formed two distinct cultures. One is called the **Naqada** (Nah-cah-dah), the other the **Badarian**, both cultures overlap one another but the Naqada become the dominant culture of Upper Egypt. When one looks at a map of Egypt, **Upper Egypt** is the southern portion of Egypt and **Lower Egypt** is the northern portion that empties into the Mediterranean

<https://ancientegyptonline.co.uk/naqada/>

<http://emhotep.net/from-pits-to-palaces-part-2-naqada-i-culture-and-burial-practices/>

<https://originalpeople.org/pre-history-africa-the-badarian-culture/>

<https://www.livius.org/articles/concept/egypt/predynastic-egypt/>

The beginning of Dynastic rule begins when King Menes (Also called Narmer) unites upper and lower Egypt. The crown of all pharaohs from that point on contain the symbols of these two cultures, **the Vulture and the Cobra**. The reason for the two names is that “**Menes**” is a title of honor meaning “he who endures” and the official name that is contained more frequently in the archeological findings and ancient writings is the name **Narmer**. He established rule as king and carried it dynastically forward through his descendents. One could therefore say that this is the beginning of what is often referred to as the Old Kingdom of Egypt.

<https://www.ancient.eu/Menes/>

The people of Egypt didn't call their land Egypt, instead they referred to it as “**Kemet**” meaning the “Black Lands,” a reference to the rich soil surrounding the Nile that made it possible for the development of irrigation and exploitation of the annual flooding of the Nile that brought nourishment to the river valley. Very similar to the Sumerians, this Old Kingdom culture rises around 3000 BC as a distinctively Egyptian culture. The rich heritage and power of the Old Kingdom is famous.

It is during this time that the Pyramids are constructed, including the famous Great Pyramid at Giza. Contrary to popular belief, these Pyramids were not built on the back of slave labor, rather, it was the common folk that worked and were well paid and taken care of for their hard work. The craftsmanship of constructing these monumental architectures is absolutely beyond our imagination that a primitive culture could build such things. (Again, I am not saying it was aliens....but...it was aliens). Some of the blocks of the great pyramids are the size of small houses. The whole concept of them moving such objects is mind-boggling. However, Pyramids didn't actually start off as pyramids.

The first “tomb” of craftsmanship was called a **Mastaba**, “an ancient Egyptian tomb made of mud brick, rectangular in plan with sloping sides and a flat roof.”³ These objects of solid

³ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/mastaba?s=t>, accessed 4-23-2020

mud brick reached heights of 17 to 25 feet and into the ground for as many feet. These objects are the beginning of the concept of the pyramid. There are several mastabas located in Egypt today, all of which had been robbed in antiquity by grave robbers. The structures, however, remain and are a testament to the beginnings of the Old Kingdom architecture. These amazing structures were tombs for the oldest of the Egyptian Old Kingdom pharaohs. Their development led to the Pyramid.

One of the first pyramids is the **Stepped Pyramid of Djoser**, a kind of series of Mastabas stacked on top of another, decreasing in size until it came to a small point. It is widely believed that this innovation led to the development of the pyramid. This ancient pyramid was designed by an Old Kingdom Statesman, Nobleman, and Physician named **Imhotep**. Imhotep was an knowledgeable Egyptian physician, who even successfully completed brain surgery in the ancient times. He was incorrectly placed in the timeline by the hit movie, *The Mummy*, starring Brendan Fraser. In the movie, Imhotep was a malevolent entity bent on revenge and reviving his long lost love, Anaksunamun, who in reality is some 1000 years AFTER Imhotep existed.

You can read all about the stepped pyramid here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyramid_of_Djoser

As the pyramid developed, they were able to create the sloping effect by having the knowledge of the Pythagorean theorem and Pi. Of course, they did not call it that but in order to achieve the precision of their building, it was either that.....or..(I'm not saying its aliens....but...). These pyramids are fascinating and there are several. For instance, the **Red Pyramid**, the first successful attempt at a smooth sided pyramid. It is called the Red Pyramid because when people of Egypt used the outer surface stones for building, it revealed a rusty red color beneath, which is more obvious during sunrise and sunset.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Pyramid

Additionally, there is the **Bent Pyramid**, built by Snefuru; it rises from the desert floor at a 53° angle until further up it turns to a 43° angle. Archeologists consider this a transitional pyramid to the more well known versions. It is a very obvious bent shape to it and is a popular tourist attraction outside of Cairo, Egypt.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bent_Pyramid

This brings us to the Great Pyramid complex at Giza. The largest of the three pyramids is the **Great Pyramid of Cheops** (also called Khufu). This monumental structure is a testimony to the architectural accomplishment of the Old Kingdom. It is made of limestone and granite and stands at a whopping 458 feet tall and covers an area of 13 acres and is made of some 2.3 million stones each weighing around 2000 lbs. In its completed original form, the outside would have shined in the glint of the sun with a gypsum cap that generated a bright reflection.

We don't actually know what the Great Pyramid was used for...originally it was considered a tomb but research has shown that no organic material is detected in the structure, although, similar to other tombs, it has the King's and Queen's so-called burial chambers. It is rumored to line up with the belt of Orion and some speculate it was an ancient astronomical observatory but there is no conclusive proof that it was used for that. The entire complex contains the Great Pyramid of Cheops, the smaller one for Khafre, and the smallest for Menkaure. There is also a queen's pyramid and other stepped pyramids that dot the landscape in front of them, crowned by the Great Sphinx, a Lion body with a man's face. It is missing its nose because Napoleon's soldiers used it for target practice with their cannons is one legend.

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-arthistory/chapter/the-old-kingdom/>

The Old Kingdom developed sculpture and architecture so far that it influenced future dynasties in their artistic endeavors. Included in their development is **Bas Relief**, a technique where an image is chipped out from a surface, giving it a three dimensional look. The opposite is called **Sunken relief**, a technique of chipping the image into the surface giving it a shadow effect. Nearly all sculpture and hieroglyphs were painted in radiant colors that time has erased, leaving us with just a hint of the glory of the Old Kingdom

The Middle Kingdom

The Middle Kingdom, dated at 2055BC to 1650BC, is a classical form of Egypt that regularized the written language, called hieroglyphics into its highest form. The Middle Kingdom, however, never achieved the level of the gargantuan pyramids but were able to create other stylistic nuances of their own. We mustn't, however, detract from amazing innovations and architectural accomplishments that they achieved during this period and was a stable series of dynasties for several generations. The beginning of the Middle Kingdom is very similar to the beginning of Egypt's history itself with King Menes (Narmer).

As a matter of fact, **Pharaoh Mentuhotep II** was able to reunify Egypt much like Menes did and ushered in what is widely regarded as the "renaissance" or rebirth of Egypt. Many of their sculptures are wrought in Gold or other precious metals. Vibrant colors and artistic efforts create a dynamic contribution to the art of Ancient Egypt. One of the most monumental of the architectural wonders that was begun during the Middle Kingdom is the **Temple System at Karnak**, where a wealth of information about the ancient pharaohs can be found.

The Pyramids of the Middle Kingdom were not as well constructed as the Old Kingdom's so therefore very few of them remain to this day. Most are just piles of rubble or a disorganized outcropping of haphazard stones that are crumbling away. Egypt, however, rose from the ashes of the First Intermediate Period into the Middle Kingdom to become, once again, a super-power of the ancient world. It is also in this period there is extensive use of the obelisk, the most famous one to you is the Washington monument, which is based on the **Obelisk**, a tall tower with a miniature pyramid at the top. It is one of the most identifiable objects of Egypt along with

the pyramid. **Pylons** are gigantic gateways constructed in Ancient Egypt, another identifiable trait of Egyptian Architecture.

Middle Kingdom pyramid:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_pyramids#/media/File:AmenemhetIPyramid.jpg

Obelisk:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obelisk#/media/File:Louxor_obelisk_Paris_dsc00780.jpg

Pylon:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pylon_\(architecture\)#/media/File:Pylons_and_obelisk_Luxor_temple.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pylon_(architecture)#/media/File:Pylons_and_obelisk_Luxor_temple.JPG)

This stable series of dynasties culminated in a break with the dynasty when one of the first female pharaohs arose named Queen Sobekneferu. The fall of the Middle Kingdom arose after political and geo-political upheaval led to instability in Egypt called the **Second Intermediate Period**. This period was marked by invasions of a people called the **Hyksos**, who brought with them, for the first time, the Chariot as a war machine. Both the First and Second intermediate periods are similar in their political upheavals. Ahmose, the great Pharaoh was credited with driving out the Hyksos and then assimilating the Chariot into Egyptian war techniques.

From that time forward, when the Hyksos were finally driven out by **Pharaoh Ahmose**, the chariot was a mainstay of the Egyptian forces and likely led to their military dominance in the rise of the what is referred to as the **New Kingdom**, dated at 1550 to 1069BC

Middle Kingdom Links:

<https://discoveringegypt.com/ancient-egyptian-kings-queens/egyptian-dynasties-middle-kingdom/>

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/ancient-egypt>

The New Kingdom

One of the most compelling parts of Ancient Egypt is the **New Kingdom** with some of its most well-known pharaohs. Among some of the well-known is **Seti I and II, Ramses the Great, Akhenaten, Tutankamun, Horemheb, and Hapshetsut**, a female pharaoh. The New Kingdom is sometimes called the **Kingdom of the Sun** because of their sun worship and some political upheavals that occurred centered around their religion. It is certainly the best documented section of Egypt's history and is rich with scandal, intrigue, and heroes.

The New Kingdom rose out of the turmoil of the Second Intermediate Period when Pharaoh Ahmose drove out the invaders, the Hyksos and established his claim to the United

Kingdom of Egypt. Much of the reason it is so well-documented is because literacy had further developed throughout the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period and most were, by now, communicating by letter and keeping strong accounting using Hieroglyphs.

When **Ahmose I** drove out the Hyksos, he expanded Egypt's borders further into the Sinai, providing a defensible buffer zone for Egypt's borders. Later kings like Thutmose III expanded these buffer zones into an empire that solidified and consolidated Egypt's power into an Ancient Super-power, complete with devastating war machines incorporated into their arsenal that they had adopted from the Hyksos. Although in their writings, the New Kingdom characterize the Second Intermediate Period as chaotic and destructive, all indications from archeology portray a perhaps strong, even warm relationship between the Hyksos in the North and the Egyptians in the South until the wars began and the Hyksos were overthrown.

This is the well known Egypt where all the tales of mummies and their curses get their rise. Mummies are a fascinating study because they were able to preserve some mummies so well, that we can extract and study their DNA today and see what illnesses they suffered and any operations that they may have had in ancient times. One of the more famous of the mummies is that of **Ramses II**.

https://mummipedia.fandom.com/wiki/Ramses_II

<https://www.ancient-origins.net/history-famous-people/mummy-passport-0010944>

With Pharaoh Ramses II, we can even make some conjecture about what color his hair was and the condition of his teeth. The Mummification process was a very involved activity.

For a fascinating and involved reading on how mummification took place, follow the link below:

<https://www.mylearning.org/stories/a-step-by-step-guide-to-egyptian-mummification/220?>

This preservation technique was utilized for a few thousand years. By doing so, we have many mummies to study, most of the Pharaohs were taken from their burial place in the **Valley of the Kings**, the final resting place of the noble families of the New Kingdom. It is in the Valley of the Kings that one of the greatest discoveries in archeological history occurred on November 4, 1922. However, one of the most compelling of Pharaohs has never been found. His name was originally Amenhotep IV but he changed his name to Akhnaten.

Akhnaten

One of the most controversial and fascinating of the Pharaohs is the so-called heretic King, **Akhnaten**. This new kingdom pharaoh introduced a new concept to Egypt. **Monotheism**, a belief in only one god was instituted in place of the ancient gods that had been worshipped for thousands of years. You can probably imagine how that would sit with the priests of thousands of temples to gods and goddesses of Old Egypt. This is one of the earliest examples of Monotheism, Mono--meaning "one," Theism--meaning "godism." The new god was **Aten**, the

sun disk. Now, the Egyptians had already worshipped the Sun but exclusivity was brand new and not widely accepted but Akhnaten was Pharaoh, his word was law and he was the visible representation of the sun disk Aten on Earth.

Worshipping Pharaoh was also nothing new but it was always through the lens that when pharaoh died, he became Osirus, dread lord of the dead. This was different...the sun was living and incarnate in Akhnaten and both demanded worship. Temples were built or renamed. Images of the old gods were put aside and the sun disk replaced it. He moved the capital to a new city and center of worship called **Amarna**.

The upheaval in Egypt led to instability and betrayal and scandal within the government and Akhnaten was removed along with **Queen Nefertiti**, who was considered one of the most beautiful women of Ancient Egypt. His images were all but destroyed and the temples torn down or burned and the Old gods reinstated. The new pharaoh, however, did not break the dynastic rule as Akhnaten's son, King Tutankamun was elevated to the throne at the tender age of 9.

Links:

<https://www.ancient.eu/Akhenaten/>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Akhenaten>

<https://www.livescience.com/39349-akhenaten.html>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/ancient-mediterranean-ap/ancient-egypt-ap/v/house-altar-depicting-akhenaten-nefertiti-and-three-daughters>

King Tut

Following his father, Tut only reigned for 9 years, dying at around the age of 18 or 19. Like many of the pharaohs that preceded him, King Tut was married to his sister to preserve the royal throne and line. This union, like so many others, would likely produce genetically broken offspring, confirmed by studying the mummified remains of their offspring. One child that died in childbirth suffered spinal bifida, scoliosis, and a deformity of the scapula. His short reign was likely controlled by the Royal Vizier, Ki, who is implicated as a possible reason that Tut died so young. It has never been conclusively proven that Tut died naturally, although, his genetics would predispose him to physical deformities.

Scholars speculate that he may have fallen victim to a scheme between Ki, General Horemheb, and Ankhesenamun, Tut's much older wife/sister. This is pure speculation because indications are that Tut suffered several bouts of malaria, suffered from scoliosis, and had a necrotic left foot that left him crippled and required the use of a cane. Nevertheless, he was trained in the warrior arts, such as archery. His sudden death was no doubt a shock to the now settling Egypt that had just endured the Akhnaten scandal. His burial was abrupt but he was mummified in accordance with traditions. He lay undiscovered for thousands of years until 1922

Links:

<https://www.biography.com/royalty/king-tut>

<https://www.ancient.eu/Tutankhamun/>

The Discovery

A young and devoted archeologist and artist living in Cairo named Howard Carter spent most of his life searching the Valley of the Kings. Most of his work was supported by being an illustrator for better financed digs. **Theodore Davis**, Carter's rival, was an American with a penchant for showmanship, was devoted to discovery of all and wanted everyone to know that it was he that had been the driving force of discoveries. When Davis finally decided that the Valley of the Kings was all dug out, he retired home satisfied with his discoveries, although he had never found a single intact tomb in his research and digs.

Howard Carter, however, was convinced that there was one more tomb yet undiscovered, that of King Tutankamun. He was approached by George Herbert, 5th Earl of Carnarvon, who had taken up an interest in Egyptology while in recovery from a car wreck he had suffered in England. Egypt's dry climate was believed to assist in recovery. **Howard Carter**, the discoverer of Tut's tomb created a grid-like search system that is still widely used today. This system allowed him to systematically eliminate areas. The work was moving along at a fairly rapid pace, although the French directors doubted that Carter would find anything.

His dig was abruptly interrupted by the outbreak of **World War I**. Carter worked as a courier and translator for the British Government during the war. Still, he remained in Egypt and pined away at the thought of finding the lost tomb. As he continued, he hoped to convince Carnarvon to continue financing the dig. After the end of World War I, Carnarvon, along with his beautiful daughter returned to Egypt to continue. There is rumor that there was a small relationship between Carter and his daughter but there is no conclusive proof. Carter was back to work soon. However, the dig began to get expensive and soon Carnarvon tired of the effort and pulled their funding.

Carter was despondent to be so close only to have the funding pulled so he set his mind on visiting Carnarvon in England to try one last time. He even requested that he be allowed to finance and dig under Carnarvon's permit. The passion of Carter won Carnarvon over and soon Carter was back to work in the Valley of the Kings. Carnarvon and his daughter returned to Egypt to look in on the dig. And so it was one sunny afternoon, a **young messenger boy** sat down to rest and was toying with the ground with a stick. He noticed a straight light in the sand and dug with his hands to reveal the corner of a step. Rushing to Carter, he brought him to the step. Carter knew he had found a tomb.

After much effort, a passage descending to a sealed opening was soon revealed and Carnarvon and his daughter joined Carter at the sight. Making a small hole in the plaster, Carter

held a light inside. Carnavon said, “Well, what do you see?” Carter replied, “Wonderful things!” After a short and secret entrance into the tomb Carter discovered to his own delight that it was intact....the mummy was still in its **Sarcophagus**, a burial coffin in Ancient Egypt. He closed his eyes and said, “I found you.”

The story was a sensation all over the world and reporters descended in a frenzy to Egypt. Carter was frustrated with the attention and interruptions as he and his team meticulously catalogued the contents of the tomb. Sadly, Carnavon would never enjoy much for his effort. He was bitten by a mosquito while there and later cut it while shaving. He acquired a blood infection and died not long afterwards. This caused an uproar and rumors of a Mummy’s curse.

Links:

<https://www.history.com/news/king-tut-photos-tutankhamen-tomb-restoration>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/ancient-mediterranean-ap/ancient-egypt-ap/a/tutankhamuns-tomb>

A Mummy’s Curse or Coincidence?

If you are interested in conspiracy theories, then Tut’s curse is for you! When they entered the tomb, an ancient spell in Hieroglyphs cursed anyone who disturbed the tomb with these words: Death shall come on swift wings if anyone dares disturb this tomb. Was it coincidence that a small insect brought about the death of the financier of the dig and that he would die? Is it coincidence that his dog is rumored to have howled out and died at the same moment in England? (*I don’t know how they would know this). Is it coincidence that the moment that Carnavon died the lights went out in Cairo? (*Yes, because the lights in Cairo were always flickering out at this time). How about Carter’s pet canary? It was eaten by a Cobra, one of the symbols of the Pharaohs! Several of the dig participants were later killed in a car wreck...coincidence? I mean, I am not saying it was aliens....but.....

Tut’s exhibit periodically tours the world and completed a tour in the United States in 2009. It is currently on tour in England, France and the United States until 2021.

The Second Great Discovery: The Rosetta Stone

During the French and English wars of the 19th century, a French soldier discovered an Egyptian **Stele**, a kind of slate monument usually carved in bas relief announcing pharaonic pronouncements. It was referred to as the Rosetta Stone. This amazing discovery was first in the possession of the French but in their surrender, they were forced to turn it over to the English. This stele would be a profound discovery for humanity because it unlocked the code of ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphs as a written language. It is as big a discovery as the Tutankamun discovery.

The transfer of ownership from French to English set off a race to uncover what the stele said and by whom it was spoken. Determining who was easy, it was written in Greek. It was a

proclamation of Ptolemy V, one of the descendants of Alexander the Great's General Ptolemy, who had taken Egypt as his dominion and proclaimed his dynasty as pharaohs. What set this discovery apart was that there were three scripts on the stele in Greek, Middle Egyptian, and Hieroglyphics. This, for the first time allowed us to begin to understand the spoken language through what was written.

The English scholar that set on the task was Physicist **Thomas Young**, who was the first to determine that the stone spelled out the names of Egyptian Royals. His competitor, however, was **Jean-Francois Champolion**, an ambitious and devoted linguist from France. He studied the Coptic language to understand Ancient Egyptian. His efforts would come into conflict with the Church, who view him as a threat because they feared the translation would conflict with their beliefs. Despite their opposition, Champolion was able to translate the Rosetta Stone and thereby won the race against the English, to which Thomas Young graciously congratulated the young scholar.

The text of the Rosetta Stone states, in part:

“In the reign of the new king who was Lord of the diadems, great in glory, the stabilizer of Egypt, and also pious in matters relating to the gods, superior to his adversaries, rectifier of the life of men, Lord of the thirty-year periods like Hephaestus the Great, King like the Sun, the Great King of the Upper and Lower Lands, offspring of the Parent-loving gods, whom Hephaestus has approved, to whom the Sun has given victory, living image of Zeus, Son of the Sun, Ptolemy the ever-living, beloved by Ptah;

*In the ninth year, when Aëtus, son of Aëtus, was priest of Alexander and of the Savior gods and the Brother gods and the Benefactor gods and the Parent-loving gods and the god Manifest and Gracious; Pyrrha, the daughter of Philinius, being athlophorus for Bernice Euergetis; Areia, the daughter of Diogenes, being **canephorus** for Arsinoë Philadelphus; Irene, the daughter of Ptolemy, being priestess of Arsinoë Philopator: on the fourth of the month Xanicus, or according to the Egyptians the eighteenth of Mecheir.*

THE DECREE: The high priests and prophets, and those who enter the inner shrine in order to robe the gods, and those who wear the hawk's wing, and the sacred scribes, and all the other priests who have assembled at Memphis before the king, from the various temples throughout the country, for the feast of his receiving the kingdom, even that of Ptolemy the ever-living, beloved by Ptah, the god Manifest and Gracious, which he received from his Father, being assembled in the temple in Memphis this day, declared: Since King Ptolemy, the ever-living, beloved by Ptah, the god Manifest and Gracious, the son of King Ptolemy and Queen Arsinoë, the Parent-loving gods, has done many benefactions to the temples and to those who dwell in them, and also to all those subject to his rule, being from the beginning a god born of a god and a goddess—like Horus, the son of Isis and Osirus, who came to the help of his Father Osirus; being benevolently disposed toward the gods, has concentrated to the temples revenues both of silver and of grain, and has generously undergone many expenses in order to lead Egypt to

prosperity and to establish the temples... the gods have rewarded him with health, victory, power, and all other good things, his sovereignty to continue to him and his children forever.”⁴

Links:

<https://blog.britishmuseum.org/everything-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about-the-rosetta-stone/>

<https://www.history.com/news/what-is-the-rosetta-stone>

<https://discoveringegypt.com/egyptian-video-documentaries/mystery-of-the-rosetta-stone/>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-Francois-Champollion>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0160932707000282>

Ptolemy Dynasty

We will not spend a great deal of time dealing the Ptolemaic dynasties but it is a period filled with battle and colorful characters culminating in a tale of politics, lust, betrayal, and murder with Marc Antony, Cleopatra VI, Julius Caesar, Brutus, and Octavius. For insight in this period, read the play, Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare. This dynasty rose after the death of Alexander the Great, who died in Alexandria, Egypt after a fever. Ptolemy was one of his generals and the empire was divided among the four generals.

The Ptolemys dominated Egypt until the time of the Romans, who eventually seized control of Egypt from their dynasties and effectively ended the concept of pharaonic rule. The whole world seemed to belong to Rome.

Links:

https://www.ancient.eu/Ptolemaic_Dynasty/

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ptolemy-I-Soter>

⁴ https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosetta_Stone. Accessed 4-29-2020

Chapter Three:

Minoans

The beginning of the story for Greek culture begins, partially, on the island of Crete. It is there we find the history of the **Minoans**, a mysterious Mediterranean culture that, although it was thriving, vanished into the pages of history. Although there is speculation of where they went, there is no consensus. The study of the Minoans is fascinating because they are the first organized Greek culture of the area. They were an advanced culture in their arts and their highly developed cosmology is the precursor to Greek Mythology that will spring up on the Greek mainland later in the Mycenaean civilization.

The earliest discoveries of an advanced Bronze aged culture appeared in the mid to late 19th century. **Arthur Evans**, an archeologist, discovered extensive ruins and the **Knossos palace complex** in the early 20th century. His research and excavations revealed an extensive and maze-like complex at the Knossos palace that brings to mind the legend of the Minotaur and the maze of Minos. Their culture was rich in artistic expression and beauty, nestled in the beautiful backdrop of the deep blue of the Mediterranean.

The story of the Minoans rises from activity as early as 7000BC with indications of early settlements. By 5000BC, advanced architecture had begun and the **island of Crete**, an island off the coast of mainland Greece and home to the Minoans had begun its march toward civilization. These settlements eventually coalesced into the group we call the Minoans. The Minoans flourished from **2700BC to 1500BC**.

Links:

https://www.ancient.eu/Minoan_Civilization/

<https://ancient-greece.org/history/minoan.html>

Knossos

To understand the advancement of the Minoans, we need to look closer at the work of Arthur Evans. The palace at Knossos was called "**The Labyrinth**," which means the house of the double axes. The word Labyrinth has come to mean "maze" in our culture because of this structure. The pillars were made from inverted tree trunks that tapered toward the bottom and allowed the wide tops to bear the weight of the massive roof beams to rest on them, disseminating the pressure from the beams through gravity into the ground.

There are two palace periods in which the Knossos complex stood, The Old Palace Period and the New Palace period. The **Old Palace period** dates 1900 to 1700BC. The **New Palace Period** dates 1700 to 1450BC, where expansion and updating took place. In its glory, the palace would have been magnificent with all essential buildings such as living quarters, armaments, warehouses, etc built around an open air central courtyard, which is true to the Greek style for centuries. This area had been populated since Neolithic times and the building of the Palace caused deforestation in the area. The Palace covered 6 acres.

Links:

<https://ancient-greece.org/archaeology/knossos.html>

<https://www.livescience.com/27955-knossos-palace-of-the-minoans.html>

Minoan Art

The Minoans developed advanced abilities in creating amazing clay and pottery figurines with a technique called **Faience**, where a glass paste is fired upon application, giving the object a shine and lustrous glaze that is smooth in texture. Most of the figurines are of female goddesses, most likely due to the live giving concept of motherhood. Most are depicted pregnant with open blouses. They usually are holding onto snakes as some sort of symbol of cunning. They are associated with water, regeneration, and protection of the home.

Pottery concentrated mostly on geometric or ocean inspired visuals such as octopi or fish. Highly skilled laborers left a wealth of reconstructed pottery that show a specialization in creating these vessels. They were also focused on veneration of the bull, as most ancient cultures often associated their gods and goddesses with strong animals. Perhaps this gave rise to the legend of the Minotaur. Additionally, there was a widely enjoyed sport that involved the bull called **Bull Jumping**, an activity where a jumper would run toward a charging bull and spring over its back. A bit scarier than bull riding if you ask me.

Their paintings centralize around **fresco painting**, that is, painting on plaster. The Egyptians also did this, but in contrast, the Minoans used a type of painting called **Wet Painting**, where the paint is applied before it dries, further protecting the colors from fading. The Minoans left many frescos but very little sculpture survives from these periods except for the aforementioned figurines.

Links:

https://www.ancient.eu/Minoan_Art/

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/aegean-art1>

Religion

From what we are able to tell, most of their deities are **female**, which allowed Minoan women to enjoy a strong equality with the males. They were allowed to own land and sit on councils. There is some indication of **human sacrifice** in their religion but it wasn't widespread. Most associated with their deity by possession of a talisman or figurine that represented the goddess that they worshipped.

Link:

<https://www.historywiz.com/minoanreligion.htm>

Economy

The economy of the Minoans was dependent upon the export of Tin, which is used in the formation of Bronze and the spice, Saffron, used for its medicinal and flavoring qualities. However, their primary output was tin, and therefore, it is understandable that the collapse of the Bronze Age would aid in their fall.

The Minoan Disappearance

Sometime around the **collapse of the Bronze Age**, the Minoans seem to vanish into thin air. Some speculate that they fled to the mainland, although there is some indication that some of them may have made landfall in Ancient Palestine and are the roots of the Philistine civilization of the Bible. Scholars speculate that the cause of this mass migration very well could have been caused by an eruption of **Mt. Thera**, a volcanic island not far from Crete. Now referred to as Santorini, this massive eruption would have caused cataclysmic disruption to the Minoans, who would have, no doubt, been forced to mainland Greece and assimilated into the growing culture of the Mycenaeans.

Nonetheless, their disappearance still remains an area of speculation and study. Because of the tireless efforts of Arthur Evans and archeologists that followed, we have a pretty clear picture about how the Minoans lived and thrived on Crete.

Links:

<https://brewminate.com/the-impact-of-the-eruption-of-thera-on-ancient-minoan-decline/>

Mycenaeans

On mainland Greece a people grew that would eventually challenge some of the world powers of the time including Troy and the Minoans. This group of people was called the Myceaeans. Distinct from the Minoans, the **Mycenaeans** flourished during the Bronze Age as well and would lay the foundations that would later become what we know as Classical Greece. The Mycenaeans are where the rise of Greek Myth occurs, and many of the stories of Greek heroes are but echoes of the Mycenaeans, mighty in deed but doomed to fall at the collapse of the Bronze Age. The rise of Iron tools and weapons rendered bronze weaponry useless and led to the defeat of many formidable nations. This is also the setting for the Epics of Homer, the **Iliad and the Odyssey**, a poetic work describing the war on Troy and Odysseus' journey home.

There are three major cities that grow to distinction during this time, Athens, Pylos, and Thebes. Of these three the greatest of them would be Athens. The primary period of the flourishing of the Mycenaeans was from 1600BC to 1100BC on the mainland of Greece and some of the closer islands. Known for their military might, their swords and axes have been found as far away as Germany, England, Ireland, and Georgia of the Caucasus Mountains.

Since they were sea-faring people, their reach would have been great. I have often wondered how their interactions with the Germanic and Celtic people had gone in the Pre-Viking days.

The entire social system of the Mycenaeans was a class system that included:

1. **The King's Entourage**, a collection of Nobles and Society Elite
2. **Damos**, the common folk
3. **Slaves**

This class system was in direct contrast with the Minoans which had equality among the sexes and the very first hints at an attempt at democracy, yet still under king's rule.

Links:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/greek-art/beginners-guide-greece/a/ancient-greece-an-introduction>

https://www.ancient.eu/Mycenaean_Civilization/

Mycenaean Art

The bulk of the arts of this culture was in figurines, vessels such as pottery, and armaments. Their entire economy was based upon **Textiles**, that is, the creation of fabrics; which is itself an art form. Also, their economy was dependent upon Farming and Metallurgy, that is, the manipulation and creation of metal tools or weapons. They also used the wet painting technique of the Minoans.

Athens

In 508BC, the Athens that we are familiar with from classical Greece was founded and was the birthplace of majority democracy. The city had an established senate that worked as an advisor and consultant to the king of the City-State in matters of state and had the power to oppose the king. This was the first hint of what we know as the checks and balance system to prevent any one man from controlling the fate of an entire country. This system allowed for **legislative representation**, that is elected officials from the regional people and worked to voice their opinions and concerns; very much like our modern government is supposed to operate under. The council met on Ares hill and served to balance out the leaders, who were not referred to as kings but rather as Tyrants. Tyrant has become a term of negativity describing a power-hungry, self-centered person only interested in personal power.

The council would meet and debate subjects of state concern and provide opinions and advice for relations with other city states or world powers. Athens, which was named for **Athena**, goddess of war and wisdom, was built on coastal waters with an **Acropolis**, meaning "high city," which would serve as a siege retreat in time of war. Its high location made it ideal for

defense. Athens had been inhabited since Neolithic times, around 5000BC but was established as a major city only much later.

Links:

<https://www.ancient.eu/Athens/>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/ancient-medieval/classical-greece/a/the-greek-polis>

Philosophy

It was the center of **Philosophy**, defined as “a discipline comprising its core logic, aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology, a search for wisdom.”⁵ The great philosophers such as Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato spent their time in debate, reflection, and teaching to understand the concept of wisdom. Socrates was executed by the state for corruption of the youth of Athens and denying the gods of state, so there was cost to follow philosophy but their works have formed the basis in grasping for understanding.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Socrates>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Plato>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Aristotle>

Contributions to the Arts

Although they were skilled in music, poetry, and many other types of art, it is primarily their architecture and sculpture that gains much attention from scholars. Their temples were built with fluted columns in a **Post/Lintel construction**, “a system in which two upright members, the posts, hold up a third member, the lintel, laid horizontally across their top surfaces.”⁶ All of the Greek temples are based upon this particular construction.

Example:

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/post-and-lintel-system>

This system is still the basis of most construction even today. When you enter your house, you are walking through a door-frame that is post/lintel. However, the monumental temples constructed are breathtaking in beauty and classicism. For instance, the **Parthenon of**

⁵ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/philosophy>, accessed 5-3-2020

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/technology/post-and-lintel-system>, accessed 5-4-2020

Athens, built sometime around the 5th century BC still stands and is the pride and joy of Athens.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Parthenon>

Click through link:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Parthenon>

Because the columns are built in segments with copper poles extending through the columns, they are Earthquake resistant but not Earthquake proof. The copper allows the building to sway with the moving of the Earth.

Another example is the **Temple of Hephaestus**, god of the forge, it was so well made it stands mostly intact to this day.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Theseum>

The **Temple of Zeus** still stands but missing is the colossal statue of Zeus that once stood inside. A bit of the columns and lintel still stands but it is basically in ruins.

Link:

<https://www.ancient.eu/image/4005/the-temple-of-olympian-zeus-athens/>

The **Temple of Poseidon**, of course, overlooks the mighty Mediterranean Sea and is mostly in ruins but one can imagine its imposing structure in its glory.

Link:

Click on the image: <https://ancient-greece.org/architecture/temple-poseidon-sounio.html>

Lastly, consider the **Oracle at Delphi**, temple to Apollo, god of light and prophecy. Mostly in ruins, it remains a tourist attraction to this day for its ruinous beauty.

Link:

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-greece/delphi>

Click on the Photo: <https://ancient-greece.org/architecture/delphi-temple-of-apollo.html>

To understand the beauty and artistic nature of Greek architecture, one must understand the order of the columns, which are **Doric**, **Ionic**, and **Corinthian**.

Link: <https://smarthistory.org/greek-architectural-orders/>

Playwrights

Another great contribution to the Arts was in Drama. Greek plays are still performed today throughout the world and still captivate audiences with their stories inspired by Greek Mythology and the Legends of Homer. Among the great playwrights are: **Aeschylus**, who wrote the immortal **Prometheus Unbound**; **Aristophanes**, who wrote such plays as “**The Wasp**,” “**The Frogs**,” and “**The Clouds**,” which comedically poked fun at intellectual fashion; **Euripedes**, known for the dark and murderous play, “**The Medea**,” which completes the story of Jason and Argonauts from Greek Myth and lastly, **Sophocles**, writer of the **Antigone**, and the very unsettling, **Oedipus Rex**.

Military history of Athens

In the movie, 300, Athenians were portrayed as cowardly and weak in comparison to the Spartans. While the Spartans' life was warfare, the Athenians were as mighty as they and even defeated them in battle at one point. Their land forces were formidable but it was especially mighty in sea warfare. The real history was when Athens sent troops to aid in the Ionian revolt against Persian rule. This poked the bear, so to speak, of the mighty Persians and their king, Darius. This initiated the war between Greece and Persia. The first invasion by Persia ended in Darius' humiliation when they were defeated at the **Battle of Marathon** on September 12, 490BC. According to the story, a soldier named Pheidippides ran 25 miles from the battlefield at Marathon to Greece to deliver news of the victory. This is the origin of the modern Marathon run.

Later, in the 2nd invasion led by Xerxes to avenge his father's loss was stopped by Sparta and the prowess of the Athenian fleet in the Bay of Salamis. In the **Battle of Salamis**, **General Themistocles** drew the Persians into the shallow bay of Athens where they could not adequately maneuver and the Persian fleet was destroyed. This and the battle of Thermopylae would lay the path to Persian defeat in Greece.

The final battle that included Spartans, Ionians, Athenians, and thousands of other conscripts dealt the final blow to Xerxes' forces at the **Battle of Platea**. The bad blood between the Persians and the Grecians would remain until the final defeat of Darius IV by Alexander the Great at the Battle of Gaugamela in 331BC.

Sparta

The legendary **City-State of Sparta** arose after Dorians swept in from the North and established this military culture that would grow into one of the most formidable forces in the Ancient world. They were the military leadership in the Greco-Persian wars as far as the land battles were concerned and they were talented at the craft of death and war. Indeed, from childbirth, they were conditioned in toughness. At childbirth, a male child would be bathed in wine to see how strong he was and then turned over to the **Gerousia**, a council of Spartan men over sixty. They were the judicial arm of the Spartan government with the power to sentence to death or exile. They would evaluate the child and determine his worth. If he was a sickly child, they would toss the child into the **chasm of Taygetos**.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/gerousia>

At the **age of 7**, a male would be taken from his mother and placed into barracks with other male children to train. Their training included stealing without getting caught. If they were caught, they were beaten. They were encouraged to fight and even kill. They would train as Spartan warriors until their **official service began at age 20** and very often could last **until age 60**. At age 30, they would become full citizens with full rights to live at home with their wives and work their land. They were allowed to be married by age 20 but living with them was not allowed until they reached 30. The women seemed as tough as they were. When a warrior went off to war, the woman would hand them their shield and say, **With this, or upon it**, meaning come back dead or with your shield. A lost shield would end with the person being branded as a coward and could be executed as such.

Links:

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/sparta>

Military

The Spartan **Phalanx**, was a military legend in its time and was adopted into the techniques of Alexander the Great and later, the Romans. The Phalanx was a “formation was a close-rank, dense grouping of warriors armed with long spears and interlocking shields. The Greek Hoplite soldier provided his own weapon (a seven or eight foot spear known as a `doru') and shield as well as breast plate, helmet and greaves.”⁷ It was as if the soldiers never stopped. When one fell, another stepped up in the spot. The history of the phalanx can be traced back in usage all the way back to the Sumerians but the Greeks perfected it.

⁷ <https://www.ancient.eu/article/110/the-greek-phalanx/>, accessed 5-4-2020

Links:

<https://www.ancient.eu/article/110/the-greek-phalanx/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdNn5TZu6R8>

Sparta was the primary opponent to Athens in the **Peloponnesian war**, a 27 year war for dominance in the region, particularly Athen's control of the sea. Athens was defeated in this war. Eventually, they would combine their forces to face existential threats against them from Persia. It was the legendary so-called 300 Spartans that delayed the Persians at the "Hot Gates" an area dotted with hot sulfur springs known as the **Battle of Thermopylae**.

As romantic as 300 tough Spartan warriors is, it was likely as many as 5000 or more soldiers, but it doesn't diminish the feat, given the overwhelming forces of Persia that numbered in the hundreds of thousands. This delay allowed the Greeks to assemble for the final land battle at Platea where Xerxes met his defeat, but only after the burning and slaughter of many citizens of Athens. Sparta remained politically independent until **136BC** when the Romans invaded.

Spartan Art

Although they were known for their warfare, there were artists as well producing beautiful poetry, painting, sculpture, and music. There is not extensive information that we will go into but there is information in the link below.

Link:

<http://elysiumgates.com/~helena/Art.html>

<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/ancient-art/meehan---ancient-spartan-art>

Greek Mythology and Religion

For the Greek, all began with Chaos, which may or may not have been an entity itself but from it came light and the **Gaia**, that is Earth; and **Uranus**, the sky, and when two Greek gods love each other very much, they bring forth children, except in this case, they gave birth to the **Titans**, a race of super-gods that governed the forces of nature. See the link below for the Titans and their powers:

Link:

<https://www.theoi.com/Titan/Titanes.html>

In the Titan wars, **Kronos**, joined with his mother to avenge an assault on her by Uranus. All of the Titans, except for **Oceanus**, who remained neutral, joined in the attack. The

blood of Uranus formed monsters when it fell to the Earth. When Uranus was defeated, Kronos became the new head of the order of Titan gods. Kronos took Rhea, goddess of fertility and the wild mountains as wife and they produced the **Olympians**, the gods of classical Greece. See link below for a list of the Olympians:

Link:

<https://www.greek-gods.org/olympian-gods.php>

The entirety of Greek Mythology ascribes human attributes to the gods and goddesses, making them as fallible, petty, and depraved as mankind can be. Yet it was how the Greeks explained the natural world around them and the unexplainable events that took place such as Earthquakes or Volcanic eruptions. The stories are many in number. In Greek Myth Assignment 1A, you will choose a Greek mythology story and write a summary of the tale, including characters, the **protagonist**, (“the leading character, hero, or heroine of a drama or other literary work.”⁸) and the **antagonist**, (“the adversary of the hero or protagonist of a drama or other literary work: *Iago is the antagonist of Othello.*”⁹)

and the driving heart of the story in no less than three paragraphs consisting of no less than four complete academic level sentences. Short broken and sentence fragments will not be counted. Be complete so that anyone who reads your short essay will have a basic idea about what the story is about. Select from the links below:

Links to Greek Myth:

https://www.greekmythology.com/Other_Gods/The_Fates/the_fates.html

At the birth of the Olympians, Kronos swallowed the children whole to imprison the new gods in his stomach. All were consumed except Zeus, whom Rhea kept hidden and instead fed Kronos a rock. Later, Rhea gave Kronos a potion that caused him to vomit his children, who then rose up in opposition and the battle between the Olympians and the Titans began. The war lasted 10 years with Zeus gaining the Cyclops and Giants as allies, tipping the scale in his favor with Hades wielding the Helm of Darkness, Poseidon wielded the trident, and Zeus hurled his mighty thunderbolts defeating the Titans. They were imprisoned in Tartarus except for Atlas, to whom the job of holding up the sky was given. Thus began the classical Olympian gods and goddesses that we are more familiar with.

Fascinating Links to the Iliad and the Odyssey

:

<http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/iliad.html>

<http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.html>

⁸ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/protagonist>, accessed 5-5-2020

⁹ Ibid, accessed 5-5-2020

Chapter Four: Rome

One of the greatest civilizations of Antiquity is the civilization of Rome. Rome still stands today in Italy and is the center of power for the Catholic church with Vatican City nestled comfortably in the city of Rome. Like so many civilizations, there were proto-civilizations in the area in prehistory but the official organization and founding of Rome is traditionally dated at 782BC to 753BC on April 21st. The great literary work of the poet Virgil called the Aeneid tells the story of the mythical founding of Rome by **Aeneas**, the Trojan War Hero and his followers. However, nearly all scholars agree that Rome was founded exactly 438 years after the destruction of Troy, which makes this likely just a legend

Another story is about the twins **Romulus and Remus**. The daughter of the king, Rhea was ordered to be a **Vestal Virgin**, a sacred vow of never marrying or engaging in sensuality. Nevertheless, the god **Mars** fathered twins by her and her father ordered the twins drowned. Instead, they were placed in a small craft that floated on the river and ran aground where modern Rome is today. A **female wolf** found the boys and adopted them into her family until they were discovered by **Faustulus** and they were raised by the shepherd and his wife. Eventually, they avenged their exile by killing the king, establishing their father on the throne.

Romulus founded the city and then built a wall around it in which Remus leapt over and it enraged Romulus, who then murdered his brother. Shortly after consolidating his power after ascending the throne, he invited the neighboring Sabine people to a festival in which the women were abducted and married the Roman men. To make peace, Romulus made their king co-ruler but after his death, Romulus reigned as sole king for a long time until he mysteriously disappeared in a storm. The people believed he had transformed into a god called Quirinius and worshipped him. It is possible that is where the name Rome came from...Rom--u--lus.

Link:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Romulus-and-Remus>

People Groups of the Italian Peninsula

The earliest people group of Italy were called the **Latins** and were likely Germanic in origin but eventually they were overtaken by the **Etruscans**, a people identified by the Greeks as Tyrrhenians and subdued them. The Etruscans brought forth fascinating cultural markers including the much sought after **Etruscan Vases**, which are reminiscent of Greek style but distinctive in their color and richness. These were tribal people with a centralized government that oversaw the tribes in accordance with their religious beliefs. This kind of government is called a **Theocracy**, that is a government that rules by religious convictions.

Though there was a centralized government, most of the people were tribes under tribal chieftains that sat on council with the central government. The Etruscans dominated until they were eventually overrun and assimilated into the other Latin people and incorporated into the growing Roman Empire.

Geography

The first area to be populated in Antiquity was **Palatine Hill**, which became the meeting place of the Romans. The Latins, the first people group, chose the area because of the defensibility due to natural borders such as the Tiber river and the surrounding seven hills that Rome was founded upon. The **Italian Peninsula**, known for its boot shape, is 600 miles long and 150 miles wide. The country contains plains in the west and mountainous areas, however, they are easier crossed than the Greek mountains. Italy is encompassed by the **Adriatic, Ionian, and Mediterranean seas**. To the North is the Black sea and other river water-ways, some which reach all the way into Asia.

Link:

<http://www.historyshories.com/rome-geography.html>

Economy

90 percent of Ancient Roman citizens were farmers. Their location near water-ways led to ideal trade routes to other regions. Their main output was grapes, olives, wheat, barley, and rye. Additionally, during the Roman Empire, soldiers received wages for fighting for Rome.

The Seeds of Empire

When the Latins and Sabine won independence from the Etruscans, they formed a republic that serves as a launch point for the Empire. Nobly, they tried to form some semblance of a Democratic republic with elected judges and senators with an executive branch called the **Consul**, which was usually two individuals that reported to the judges and senate. We know this form of government today as a constitutional **checks and balances system**. This system continued down to the local municipal levels with governors, mayors, and other city officials.

As stated, there was a constitutional system with annually elected judges and senators, who campaigned actively for their positions. Usually these officials rose from the upper part of the society that were referred to as the **Patricians**. The common people of Rome were called the **Plebeians**, followed after by other subdued people groups and slaves. However, the entire concept of Rome seems to center on the idea of power. There was a never ending struggle to rise to the highest rank one could obtain in order to bring renown and distinction to the family.

It was, as most ancient civilizations were, **Patriarchal**, that is “male dominant” in nature with the father as the final word in the family. A father could disown or sell their own children into slavery if they so desired since they were considered part of his property. Unwanted children were often left out in the elements to perish, however, many were rescued, especially during the time of Roman persecution of people groups such as the Early Church.

Within the structure of the government the position of consul was referred to as the **Imperium**, which would be the position from which the line of Caesars would rise and would be the center of most conflicts in Ancient Rome for ultimate power in the Empire. These two

individuals were supposed to work with the Senate to govern Rome but usually ended up in a power struggle between the two consuls.

Later on, two consuls **Crassus** and **Pompey** were struggling to work together until they were reconciled by **Gaius Julius Caesar**, who formed the three men into the **First Triumvirate**, a coalition of three powerful men, which lasted from 60BC to 53BC. This action wrested control of the government from the Aristocratic senate and placed it into the hands of these three men, who had an insatiable thirst for power.

Link:

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/julius-caesar-the-first-triumvirate.html>

The first triumvirate began to fall apart after Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul which ended with the Senate standoff. Julius Caesar would not disband his army before returning to Rome, which the senate rightly perceived as a threat to their power. This standoff led to the Battle of Pharsalus between Julius Caesar and Pompey in which the greatly outnumbered Julius Caesar somehow managed to win. When his victory was complete he marched back to Rome and declared himself "dictator for life." He reigned only two years before he was assassinated by the Senate for his power grab and led to a civil war.

Julius Caesar was likely assassinated because of the absolute power required of his new position. This attitude flew in the face of the republic with elected representatives that represented the constituency and acted as a balance against a monarchy. The plot was successful and within two years of ascending at Caesar, he lay dead on the senate floor and factions were drawing up battle lines between the treacherous Marc Antony and Cleopatra VII and Octavius.

Link:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Julius-Caesar-Roman-ruler>

The Second Triumvirate was doomed from beginning with **Octavius, Marc Antony**, and **Leipidus** serving as the Imperium. Almost immediately, the leaders began posturing for a power grab in the vacuum of Julius' demise. Marc Antony and his lover **Cleopatra VII** of Egypt formed a coalition of power against Octavius with Lepidus basically stepping back and seeing who would emerge victorious. This civil war ended when Marc Antony's fleet was defeated by Octavius at the **Battle of Actium**, where Cleopatra VII, always the shifting allegiant, withdrew her fleet when it became evident that Marc Antony would be defeated.

Octavius emerged victorious after Marc Antony died in Cleopatra VII's arms. She committed suicide by drinking poison and Lepidus was stripped of all power except the title **Pontifex Maximus**, chief priest. Octavius took the title Augustus Caesar and instituted what he called the **Pax Romana**, Roman peace, although there was very little time where there wasn't warfare somewhere in the empire. It is during the reign of Augustus that the story of the birth of Christ takes place.

Links:

https://www.ancient.eu/Battle_of_Actium/

Octavius was wise enough to maintain some semblance of the Old Republic, utilizing the Senate to consolidate his power. This allowed him to have nearly absolute power but still placating the Patricians, who had just murdered the previous Caesar because of his power lust. The Roman Empire lasted for over 1200 years and was the strongest military powers of the Ancient world. This consolidation of his power established the line of Caesars that ranged from brilliant statesmen and philosophers to lunatics such as Nero, who would dress up in a beast uniform and slaughter slaves and Christians with razor sharp claws.

It is likely that the mental state of the Caesars led to instability to the government as mistrust from the public began to cause murmurs in the Empire. For instance, Nero once performed in public and after a small, innocent rebuke from his wife, he kicked his pregnant wife to death and then mourned her for two weeks, crying before her enthroned decomposing corpse. Shortly after, Nero decided that one of his slaves resembled his wife and had the man neutered and forced him to change his name to Pompea and to dress and act like a female.

Link:

https://www.ancient.eu/Julius_Caesar/

https://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/julius_caesar.html

<https://www.ancient.eu/article/677/visual-chronology-of-roman-emperors-augustus-to-co/>

https://www.ancient.eu/Roman_Emperor/

Roman Art

Nearly 100 percent of Roman art owes to the Greek tradition because Romans were assimilators, even initiating worship of Greek gods with Roman names. Their invention of concrete is possible one of the most important innovations, however, after the fall of Rome, the recipe for concrete was lost for generations. Their constructions using concrete are amazing, including the **Colosseum at Rome**. This venue of entertainment is bathed in the blood of a thousand warriors, prisoners, christians, and even naval battles. It was designed so that it could be flooded for portrayals of sea battles. Gladiatorial battles were fought by **Gladiators**, men trained to fight other men or wild animals in an arena. Roman spectators looked on as men slaughtered each other in this arena and people were torn to pieces and eaten by wild animals. The blood thirsty arena stands partially destroyed today as one of the wonders of the world.

Link:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Colosseum>

Additionally, one wonders at the **Aqueducts** that brought fresh running water, albeit, into lead pipes for Roman cities. Many still stand today. These brick and concrete structures provided water for fountains, the Roman baths, and for rest rooms. One Roman house even

used a custom made waterfall to create a central cooling system for the house. The use of the arch would continue to influence architecture for centuries and can be readily seen in the constructs of the Aqueducts. Wealthy families would help fund these constructions and would make sure their name was included for the honor.

Link:

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/aqueduct-engineering>

Sculpture and painted art, along with **mosaic**, a creation of a picture using colored stones pressed in plaster were widely used. All of the sculptures were copies of the style used by classical Greeks and assimilated into Rome. The vivid colors are still obvious today, sustained by the wet-painting technique that the Greeks used. Nonetheless, the classical nature of the art remains a testament to an advanced culture.

Link:

<https://www.ancient.eu/article/498/roman-mosaics/>

Apocalysis Romanum

It is not hard to figure out where the end of Rome began because it began in the highest ranks. The Caesars were being declared and worshipped as gods. Their word was absolute and as the old saying goes, absolute power corrupts absolutely. The depravity and arrogance in the Roman hierarchy led to intrigue, betrayal, and assassinations. As the Roman empire spread further and further out, it was harder to keep the outlying provinces in line. **Indigenous people** of Northern Africa began to overrun Roman outposts and win their freedom. Rome had neither the man-power nor the funds to continue expanding. This tendency of losing ground continued throughout the Middle East and Europe until Rome was a shell of her former self.

As corruption wreaked havoc at home and the Caesars seemed to grow more and more depraved, the ability to defend themselves from foreign invaders. Barbarians from the North began a series of invasions into Italy and Rome. The **Visigoths**, a germanic tribe who, with the **Ostrogoths** formed the people group of the Goths, sacked and burned Rome in 410AD. The continuously weakened empire found itself under constant threat from both of these people groups, and also the Huns from Asia. The **Vandals**, another germanic tribe sacked and burned Rome in 455AD.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Visigoth>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ostrogoth>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Vandal-Germanic-people>

Previously, the Roman Empire had been divided into the Eastern Empire and Western Empire. As the West began to fall, the focus turned Eastward. When **Constantine**, a Roman Caesar that converted to Christianity came to power, he was the last of the truly mighty leaders of Rome. After his rule, everything began to decline into chaos. The last Western Roman Emperor was named Romulus Augustulus and was more a puppet ruler and fairly inconsequential, so much so that when Rome was overthrown, the leader Odoacer who became the king of Italy, spared his life and gave him a pension to live on.

Not long after, Theodoric sacked Rome for the last time and effectively ended the Western Roman Empire that had survived for over a thousand years. This effectively ended Antiquity and ushered in the Middle Ages.

Another fascinating study is about the fall of Pompeii during the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, Click the link to learn more:

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/pompeii>

Chapter Five: The Rise of Islam

One of the most enigmatic cultures in the world is that of Muslim world. This worldview is one of the three great “**Abrahamic**” religions, that is, it draws from its story from the biblical Abraham. Regionally speaking, the ancient times of the Arabic worlds and that of North Africa are steeped in superstition and **animism**, worship of animals, rocks, trees, etc. in addition to adherence to pagan god traditions. Even today, in some parts of the world there is a strong mix of traditional animism and ancestor worship mixed with Muslim belief. **Islam**, the religion of **Muslims**, is one of the fastest growing religions in the world. This belief system considers themselves as the child of birthright to the region of Israel and the Jewish claim the same thing, which is the driving force of the conflict between the Jews and Islam.

The central tenet of the monotheistic (one god) religion teaches that there is only one god, **Allah**, and **Mohammed** is his prophet. Their system of belief claims that the **Quran**, the Muslim holy book, is the verbatim word of Allah, dictated to Mohammed by the Archangel Gabriel. There is a great amount of conflict over the word, “Islam,” which Muslims translate as the word “submission” but the actual noun translates, “Surrender.”

According to Islam, the seal of the prophets was **Mohammed (b. c.570-632)**, the sole author of the Quran. Any prophet after Mohammed is to be considered a false prophet and therefore an infidel. Mohammed stated that the Quran was delivered to him personally and dictated by the Archangel Gabriel. Thus, the Quran’s composition is revered as the very word of Allah delivered by the angel. Nearly every adult Muslim can recite the Quran from memory, all 6236 of them. In contrast, the average Bible verse count is 31102 verses. Many people compare the Quran and the Bible as holy books, however, remember that the Quran was written by 1 man and is a book, the word Bible comes from the Greek word Biblios, which means “Library,” therefore the Bible is comprised of 66 books with authors stretching over a period of over 3000 years.

Link:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Quran>

<https://www.biography.com/religious-figure/muhammad>

The Preaching of Mohammed

After the Quran, Mohammed began to preach to the people of **Mecca**, which is now the center of Muslim worship, to abandon the polytheism and worship the one god, Allah. His message was not well received and the authorities there at Mecca persecuted Mohammed and his followers, forcing them to emigrate to **Medina**. It was in Medina that Mohammed established a foothold. It was in Medina that the movement began to grow and Mohammed constructed the constitution of Islam which established Medina as a holy place of no violence or weapons, stating that there was religious freedom (as long as you paid the Islamic tax), stable tribal

relations in Medina, a judicial system, conflict tax in time of war, parameters of political alliances, and protection of community members.

Being a member of caravans from childhood, Mohammed had moved around a lot as a child and was a productive member of the caravans by age 12. Around 610 is when Mohammed states he received his first visit from Gabriel, who said, "Recite," and Mohammed began to write the words to the Quran. It wasn't long after this that Mohammed and his followers conquered Mecca and established a pagan stone called the Ka'ba, said to hold the spirit of a thousand genies, as a center of Muslim worship as a symbol given by Allah. It is the goal of every Muslim to make a pilgrimage to Mecca to see and touch the **Ka'aba**, a black stone thought to be an ancient meteorite.

Mohammed was poisoned by a rival, however this is denied in Islam, which states he died of a fever in the arms of his favored wife, **Aysha**, one of many wives, whom married when she was 6 years old. Arranged marriages still happen in the Middle East today between much older men and children as young as 6 or less. After his death Islam broke into factions over who would be the new leader of Islam

Faction one is called the **Shiites**, who believe that **Ali Bakr**, Mohammed's trusted aide, should be the leader of that caliphate. The **Sunnis**, on the other hand, believe the new leader should be **Ali**, Mohammed's nephew. These two factions genuinely hate one another and have been at war with each other since after Mohammed's death. We even observed factional violence between these two allegiant lines during the Iraq war. Ali eventually rose to power after a bloody civil war and a series of assassinations.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shii>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sunni>

Muslim Countries

Most of the Shi'a countries are Iraq, Iran, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, and Yemen with communities in India, Pakistan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Qatar, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. Sunnis are primarily in the majority in Southeast Asia, China, South China, and a majority of the Arab world. Sunnis are the majority in the world. The civil war still boils over in the region today and would be a source of continued conflict even if their common enemy, Israel were gone. They would continue to slaughter one another in the centuries old conflict.

Islamic Art

Muslims are **iconoclasts**, that is “a person who destroys religious images or opposes their veneration.”¹⁰ This, therefore, makes them favor geometric objects and design in their paintings and sculpture. Their mastery of Architecture, however, is what makes them distinct from other cultures.

A great example of their architecture is the **Masjid al-Haram**, the Great Mosque in Mecca.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Mosque_of_Mecca#/media/File:A_packed_house_-_Flickr_-_Al_Jazeera_English.jpg

There are many amazing architectural wonders by the Muslims. Follow the following links for a look at some of the most stunning.

Links:

https://madainproject.com/masjid_al_nabawi#gallery-1 (click through)

<http://nomadphotographer.com/2015/11/featured-photo-sheikh-zayed-grand-mosque/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kul_Sharif_Mosque#/media/File:Mosque_%22Kul_Sharif%22.jpg

<https://www.islamicity.org/11228/blue-mosque-the-jewel-of-istanbul/>

The Western Response to Islam

During the spread of Islam, the West viewed the new religion as the single greatest threat to the Roman Catholic church since the persecutions. Since most conversions in Islam was at the point of the sword, the Church felt it was the duty of the Church to meet the new threat, thus began a series of bloody **crusades** that saw not only atrocities on both sides but a permanent black eye to the Catholic Church regarding the actions of those involved with the crusades. The primary goal of the first **Crusade** was to recover the Holy Land from the grasp of the Islamist and to secure Christiandom’s rule over Israel.

Crusades were not always against Islam, however, and the first wholesale slaughter of Jews took place in Germany, terming them as Christ-killers. Additionally there were crusades against heresies or perceived heresies that might threaten the hold of the Catholic church.

¹⁰ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/iconoclast>, accessed 5-8-2020

Crusades against the **Albigenses and Waldenses**, a group that served as a precursor to the **Protestant reformation**, a time when new denominations appeared in challenge of the Catholic Church. These people were murdered and pillaged at the hands of brutish thugs acting under the guise of being God's messengers. The brutality carried out was as bad as anything that came out of the conversion stories from Islam. Burnings and stonings were common, as were beheadings and being drawn and quartered. A **heresy** is anything that is contrary to the teachings of the Bible that claims to be of the Bible. In this period, however, anything that stood against the Catholic Church was considered a heresy. Within a few hundred years, the rise of Presbyterians, Methodist, Lutherans, and others would settle these issues beyond bloodshed.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Crusades/The-First-Crusade-and-the-establishment-of-the-Latin-states>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIs5B2U7US0>

https://www.ancient.eu/Second_Crusade/

https://www.ancient.eu/Third_Crusade/

Many of the crusades were more steeped in superstition, mysticism, and radicalism than in true pure motives, and if you study the history of the crusades, these men were acting on their own impulses and not of any deity. For instance, one crusade saw knights following one **Peter the Hermit** into battle because he claimed to have received a letter from God bidding that he lead a crusade.

Links:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Peter-the-Hermit>

Although war seemed to rage on through the centuries of the Dark Ages, man desperately clawed their way toward a new civilization and in the midst of all the battles for land and treasure a new existential threat was looming on the horizon and it wasn't an army. It was a much more sinister, much more effective, and much more deadly enemy....The Black Plague

The Black Plague

The **Bubonic Plague**, also called the Black Death is caused by the bacteria, *Yersinia Pestis* and is highly contagious and ravaged the Earth on different occasions throughout history. At one point, as much as one fourth of the world's population died from this ravaging pandemic after it leapt from contact contagion to airborne in the form of the **Pneumonic Plague**. Our recent experience with Covid 19 is light compared to the ravages of the Pneumonic Plague and

we should be thankful that Covid 19 was not a hemorrhagic disease that was fast moving or the death toll would have been catastrophic.

One to seven days after exposure, the sick person experiences flu-like symptoms with a strong cough and fever with sweats. As the disease progresses, ulcers appear on the skin that form as something similar to black boils, hence the name Black death. These leaking, seeping sores coupled with the eventual jump from Septicemic Plague and Pneumonic plague killed as many as 25 million people in the first pandemic. The second pandemic, the most famous of the pandemics killed a third of mankind. A third outbreak happened in the 19th century and killed 80000 people including 2400 in Hong Kong within two months.

The first use of this plague as a biological weapon was by catapulting diseased corpses over walls of the enemy; a brutal manner of combat as much as it was foolhardy.

Links:

<https://www.history.com/topics/middle-ages/black-death>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Black-Death>

Graphic Warning: This has a disturbing picture on the site of a sufferer of the Bubonic Plague

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bubonic_plague

Where can you get this horrible disease you ask? Right here in the great state of Oklahoma by handling prairie dogs or by failing to examine wild game that you kill for signs of plague, especially in the Western portions of Oklahoma.

**Chapter Six:
An introduction to Art Appreciation
Part 2 of World Art and Culture**

It seems appropriate at this juncture that we begin now to grasp at artistic expression and the point of its expression. As always, when one wishes to understand something, one must acquire the correct vocabulary to describe the vision. We begin now to acquire this vocabulary in this chapter to equip you with the tools you will need to move on into the second half of this class. These skills will advance you in your knowledge of the arts with the correct vocabulary to adequately critique works of art.

Elements of Art.

“A **line** is an identifiable path created by a point moving in space. It is one-dimensional and can vary in width, direction, and length. Lines often define the edges of a form. Lines can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal, straight or curved, thick or thin. They lead your eye around the composition and can communicate information through their character and direction.”¹¹

Please examine and fill out the following worksheet. When completed, you may email it in photo or scan form.

Link: https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/introducing_line.pdf

“**Shape and form** define objects in space. Shapes have two dimensions—height and width—and are usually defined by lines. Forms exist in three dimensions, with height, width, and depth.”¹²

Please examine and fill out the following worksheet. When completed, you may email it in photo or scan form.

Link: https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/introducing_shape.pdf

“**Space** in a work of art refers to a feeling of depth or three dimensions. It can also refer to the artist's use of the area within the picture plane. The area around the primary objects in a work of art is known as negative space, while the space occupied by the primary objects is known as positive space”¹³

“**Color** has three main characteristics: **hue** (red, green, blue, etc.), **value** (how light or dark it is), and **intensity** (how bright or dull it is). Colors can be described as warm (red, yellow) or cool (blue, gray), depending on which end of the color spectrum they fall.”¹⁴ If the painting is limited in scope of color, it is called **Monochromatic**, meaning it leans more to a black and white, and

¹¹ https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/formal_analysis.html, accessed 5-12-2020

¹² Ibid, accessed 5-12-2020

¹³ Ibid, accessed 5-12-2020

¹⁴ Ibid, accessed 5-12-2020

gray presentation. **Polychromatic** is when there are several colors being used in the presentation.

“**Texture** gives a visual sense of how an object depicted would feel in real life if touched: hard, soft, rough, smooth, hairy, leathery, sharp, etc. In three-dimensional works, artists use actual texture to add a tactile quality to the work.”¹⁵

Balance is the organization of how the work is put together, in other words, is it **symmetrical**, that is balanced on one side or the other, or **asymmetrical**, unbalanced with more on one side than the other.

Let's analyze one together

For instance: Look the painting “[Descent from the Cross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Descent_from_the_Cross_(Rembrandt,_1634)#/media/File:Descent_from_the_Cross_(Rembrandt).jpg)” by Rembrandt van Rijn, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Descent_from_the_Cross_\(Rembrandt,_1634\)#/media/File:Descent_from_the_Cross_\(Rembrandt\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Descent_from_the_Cross_(Rembrandt,_1634)#/media/File:Descent_from_the_Cross_(Rembrandt).jpg)

My analysis: (Not complete.)

Line:

There are horizontal and vertical lines of the cross, accompanied by lines of the individuals depicted creating various forms of lines that cause us to be drawn to the main subjects, 1.) the Christ and 2.) the swooning mother, Mary on the right side of the painting.

Color:

The painting is mainly monochromatic, although color is used, it is disseminated by the dramatic shading that Rembrandt uses.

Form and Shape:

Of course, the organic shape of the people create the various depictions in the painting, however, tracing some of the line in the painting, one can see a faint demonstration of a dominant triangular shape formed by the people along both sides of their edges, finishing at the top of the cross.

Space:

Rembrandt's dramatic use of light and shadow create a three-dimensional presentation for the eye and any hint of two-dimensional portrayal gives way to a realistic presentation.

¹⁵ https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/formal_analysis.html, accessed 5-12-2020

Balance:

The painting favors the right side as one views it, drawing our eyes from the dead Christ to the response of his mother, Mary.

Texture:

Knowing what I do about Rembrandt and his tendency to create a raised surface using strong brush strokes, the painting seems fuzzy and rough but gives way to the tenderness of the descent from the cross. The people and their clothing are realistic enough to hint that they would be soft as one would expect from textiles.

Application:

Choose one of the following paintings, note its title and using the previous descriptors, begin to describe what you are seeing under each term.

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/ca/Georges_de_La_Tour_-_The_Dream_of_St_Joseph_-_WGA12344.jpg

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mona_Lisa#/media/File:Mona_Lisa_by_Leonardo_da_Vinci_from_C2RMF_retouched.jpg

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:El_jard%C3%ADn_de_las_Delicias_de_El_Bosco.jpg

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodora_\(6th_century\)#/media/File:Mosaic_of_Theodora_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna,_Italy\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodora_(6th_century)#/media/File:Mosaic_of_Theodora_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_(Ravenna,_Italy).jpg)

Understanding

The first semester is nation-building, that is understanding the rise from barbarian to civilized, if one could call many of the cultures we have studied thus far, a civilization. It seems that the nature of man doesn't change much. We are capable of the same barbarism as any culture but the expression of the arts suggests that there is something more noble about us to discover. That is what the rest of the year is about.

Chapter Seven: Gothic Art and Architecture

When one studies Gothic Art and Architecture, one must notice that there is a rich dichotomy that exists in that, in the visual arts, there was a tremendous issue with **perspective**, that is “to represent three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface (a piece of paper or canvas) in a way that looks natural and realistic.”¹⁶ The issue was, while their feats in architecture were advanced with a strong understanding in engineering, painting often looked cluttered and two dimensional instead of realistic portrayal of space. Our main attention will be given to architecture in this chapter. It is a tale of two styles, Gothic and Romanesque.

Romanesque

The Romanesque style is still employed today in construction but not so much in the way of the early middle ages. Constructs included rounded arches at the top with **Barrel Vaults**, “also known as a tunnel vault or a wagon vault, is an architectural element formed by the extrusion of a single curve (or pair of curves, in the case of a pointed barrel vault) along a given distance.”¹⁷ These constructs were usually very simplistic in the interior with fortified, thick walls with small windows near the ceiling.

One small example of this type of construct is St. Philbert de Tournus, a 10th century cathedral.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint-Philibert_de_Tournus#/media/File:Tournus-StPhilib.jpg

One can see from the picture there is a simplicity in the design with very little decor. The intent of the cathedral is to give mere mortal man a glimpse at the majesty of the heavenly realms here on Earth. No doubt, looking up at these giant structures would give man the impression of the smallness of his condition and the vastness of a heavenly realm.

Link: <https://www.idesign.wiki/romanesque/>

<http://www.spainthenandnow.com/spanish-architecture/romanesque-architecture-characteristics>.

With clickable links

The rising drama of the building would be imposing against the backdrop of the small houses and farms that dotted the countryside. It would be amazing to walk into this place with the dim, yet beaming light cast from above, as if God Himself were entering the building with you. That was the intention of these structures. The smallness of man versus an immortal God.

¹⁶ <https://www.liveabout.com/definition-of-perspective-2577690>, accessed 5-13-2020

¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrel_vault, accessed 5-13-2020

Gothic Cathedrals

In sharp contrast to the simplistic Romanesque church, the Gothic Cathedral is all about a feeling of busyness and decoration. Decorated in many cases that it borders on grotesque in its appearance, the intention, however, had never changed. It was still about the bigness of the church and the smallness of man. However, these cathedrals utilized, along with some Romanesque churches, other architectural devices to create an amazing structure with a full understanding of pressure plus time plus gravity. This called for innovation; one innovation is the **Flying Buttress**, a “masonry structure typically consisting of an inclined bar carried on a half arch that extends (“flies”) from the upper part of a wall to a pier some distance away and carries the thrust of a roof.”¹⁸ Usually this was counterweighted with something called a **pinnacle**, a cone-like or pyramid shaped top that added weight, stability, and aesthetic presentation.

Link:

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/flying-buttress>

What sets the constructs of Gothic architecture apart is the larger than life sculptures that decorate the outside, the **gargoyles**, hideous beast sculptures that had a double use; to frighten away evil spirits and to serve as a release for water to avoid decay. These structures were bigger and much more airy than the Romanesque counterpart and were much more ornate inside and out, with paintings, sculpture, and beautiful **stained-glass windows** that let the light flood in on the awestruck people.

This style, which started in France during the 12th century, is also distinct because it uses pointed arches instead of the rounded Romanesque arches. The entire presentation of the Gothic cathedral drives the eye skyward, to God, if you will, and imposes on the mind the sense of awe, if not the distant fear of damnation...lest you face a real gargoyle. The accomplishments of these structures cannot be understated. Many of them still stand today as a testament to their design.

One such structure that we can consider is the Prague Cathedral from the 13th Century. Note its rise into the sky and the ornateness of the external. The flying buttresses are very obvious.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture#/media/File:Prag._Prager_Burg._Veitsdom_--_2019_--_6662.jpg

It is a marvel of opulence and majesty. Note the pointed arches and the pinnacles that are so prominent one top of the flying buttresses. These massive structures are holding back the immense weight of the building, particularly, the roof, and driving the pressure into the ground rather than placing pressure on the wall.

¹⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/technology/flying-buttress>, accessed 5-13-2020

Another amazing structure from the Gothic era is the Chartres Cathedral. This is not as exotic from this view but make no mistake, as you get closer, you can see the ornateness of the building. Notice in the picture below the prominent **Rose Window**, a large, ornate, and stained glass circle that is so obvious to the eye.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture#/media/File:Chartres_Cathedral_000_sky.JPG

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartres_Cathedral#/media/File:Notre_Dame_de_Chartres.jpg

The name Notre Dame de Chartres means “Our Lady of Chartres.” The most famous of cathedrals is called Notre Dame de Paris.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Notre-Dame_de_Paris

Notre Dame de Paris suffered from a massive fire a few years ago and is in restoration right now. This monumental structure is, by far, the most famous of cathedrals and incorporates elements of both Gothic and Romanesque style. We would call such buildings a **Hybrid**. Our Mother of Notre Dame Paris is rising from the ashes of the fire, where most of the internal part of the sanctuary suffered some sort of damage with the loss of some priceless works of art.

Cathedrals are most often designed in a cross shape. If one looks from above, one can see the obvious design of the cross pattern. This allowed for unique acoustics that led to musical styles later on that took advantage of the acoustics. For more on Cathedral design, click the following link and read the article. You will be held responsible for the vocabulary associated with Cathedral design.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral_floorplan

Castles

It is also during this time that many of the fortified castles of Europe rise. Some lie in ruins while others still stand as a testament to their design and the sublime engineering that was used to create these miniature fortresses that were designed to withstand sieges and included mazes and various strategically located areas where opponents would be caught and slaughtered should they break past one of the barriers. This is the time of knights and chivalry and legendary deeds of great men.

There are six parts to a castle to remember and all of them have some sort of function for strategic superiority or for retreat. The first is the **gatehouse**, the main entrance to the castle, which very often led to some sort of foyer in enclosed walls that acted as some sort of trap for

invaders to be picked off from above. Additionally, the castle is surrounded by what is called the **curtain**, the thick walls that serve as the fortified position of the castle. In movies, this is usually the place that is assaulted to gain entrance to the castle, usually by siege towers and ladders. Somewhere on the wall, one would find one or more cylindrical areas called **turrets**, a strategic location to launch attacks inside and out. Inside, we find the **bailey**, a fortified area that precedes the final retreat called the **keep**.

More simplistic in design, castles were intended as a defense for the nobleman it housed and was designed to endure military onslaughts for extended periods. A good example of a medieval castle is Castle Chauvigny

Link:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chauvigny>

Perhaps a better example for a military ready castle would be the Castle Loarre.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castle_of_Loarre#/media/File:Castillo_de_Loarre,_Loarre,_Huesca,_Espa%C3%B1a,_2015-01-06,_DD_06.JPG

Imagine how difficult an attack on this castle would be. It definitely secures the high ground for the assaulted castle does it not? Another great example is the Castle Chateau de Gisors. This castle leaves little doubt what it was designed for.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ch%C3%A2teau_de_Gisors#/media/File:Chateau-de-Gisors.jpg

Gothic painting

In contrast to previous paintings, there was a shift from **fresco painting**, that is, painting on plaster. Most of the previous paintings were on walls, ceilings, etc. In the Gothic period this shifted to **altarpieces**, that is paintings ornamenting altar areas and usually were painted on **wood**. It was during this time that icon painting was taking root, that is, painting on wood and plaster....not quite fresco but still involving plaster. That altar was found in the apse of the church and consists of basically three parts, the **predella**, kind of a centerpiece, surrounded by **bodies**, supportive painted content.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predella#/media/File:Carlo_Crivelli_023.jpg

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Santa_Felicita,_Neri_di_Bicci,_Santa_Felicita_e_i_suo_i_sette_figli,_con_predella_\(1464\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Santa_Felicita,_Neri_di_Bicci,_Santa_Felicita_e_i_suo_i_sette_figli,_con_predella_(1464).JPG)

Notice that they are usually polychromatic, yet very rigid in presentation with a healthy dose of balance, indicating a desire for organization. The rigidity and placement of the individuals, along with their apparent two-dimensional presentation shows that artists were busy trying to figure out the best way to depict space in painting. This is a concept that they struggle with for several centuries. It does not detract from their beauty or value in history because it shows the artistic evolution going on in the arts.

Medium defines the devices, paints, and material used to create the paintings. At this time, painters used tempera and brought it together with egg or glue from animal bones to create the consistency but in the 15th century, they began using oils to bring out the color's vividness better. The four styles that dominate the Gothic style are the **Lineal Gothic style**, also called French Gothic; **Italo-Gothic**, also called Three Hundreds'; **International style** in the 14th century, and **Flemish style** in the 15th century.

The subject matter was predominantly religious in nature with a basic naturalism that made the paintings easy to understand. There was no pretense or high thought to them, they were storytellers for the visual. It is fair to say that you find the paintings presented on the wall, on wood, or in miniature, in particular with the Lineal style. There was a trend toward the effect of light on color and a general development in understanding the human body that would continue all the way through the High Renaissance. Nonetheless, the struggle with perspective still raged as the realism was infringed upon by the two-dimensional presentation.

A transitional figure in the Gothic period to a trend toward the Renaissance is the artist **Giotto** within the Italo-Gothic style. Nonetheless, one can see the struggle to break with the past and innovate as Giotto began to further develop the understanding of perspective and space in his paintings. Below we can see in the "Kiss of Judas" that, if compared to older paintings, Giotto was advancing in his grasp of the elements of art.

The International style is best described as a fusion of Lineal and Italo Gothic styles and appeared in Spanish courts which developed, rather than in the hands of specific individuals but rather in the development of schools of thought, which were: Valencia, Catalonia, Aragon, and Castile.

The Flemish school utilized oil to make the colors vivid and established as a style that would influence the Renaissance painters. The main painters were van Eyck (pronounced: "Ike"), and van der Weyden. Both artists were the leaders in the advancement of the Flemish school. In van Eyck, we see a move to naturalism and realism with vivid colors and a more complete mastery of space and organization in paintings. The click through below will give you a close up view of van Eyck's mastery:

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_van_Eyck#/media/File:Jan_van_Eyck_-_Portrait_of_Jan_de_Leeuw_-_WGA7609.jpg

In van der Weyden, naturalism isn't as vivid but there is progress toward space and Three-dimensionalism that gives rise to its mastery in the Renaissance by such masters as Verrocchio, Michelangelo, and da Vinc.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogier_van_der_Weyden#/media/File:Weyden_Deposition.jpg

Throughout the Early Middle Ages, Art progressed through an understanding of man's relationship with the arts as a vehicle of self-expression. As man clawed his way out of the Dark and Middle ages, the rising power of the middle class would bring for a rebirth in the arts called the Renaissance.

Chapter Eight: The Renaissance

The rise of the middle class in the Renaissance gave immense buying power to the populace and began to move the bulk of consumption away from the nobility into the hands of common businessmen, who grew rich and powerful, and certainly influential. Of all the influential families in the Renaissance, scholars would agree that the most influential would be the **de Medicis**, a powerful banking family in Florence, Italy. Their generous patronage of the arts helped support artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

The word **Renaissance** means “rebirth.” Indeed, the rebirth of mankind from the dark ages, the war-torn middle ages, and the Black plague eroded the power and hold of nobility over the common man. The increased buying power disseminated this into the general populace. In art and music, schools of thought were breaking out all over Europe and it was a great flowering of the arts and humanities as mankind celebrated the human form and all about humanity. It was during this time that struggles began to erode the hold that the church exercised over the world. Out of this sometimes dangerous backdrop, artists arose and created sublime works of art that are treasured beyond compare today.

One such artist is **Hieronymus Bosch**, born around 1450 and died in 1516. Bosch is an interesting study because his paintings tend to be very busy and certainly **surreal**, which means bizarre. His subject matter vacillates between humanism and religious devotion. Let’s take a look at one of his most famous works called “The Garden of Earthly Delights.”

Link: Click through

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:El_jard%C3%ADn_de_las_Delicias_de_El_Bosco.jpg

The entire **Triptych**, a three-paneled art-work connected by hinges that can be closed depicts creation, Adam and Eve, humanity and a hell-scape.

Panel One

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_-_The_exterior_\(shutters\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_-_The_exterior_(shutters).jpg)

Depicts Creation in its simplest form, a sphere of the Earth and primordial waters.

Panel two

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_-_The_Earthly_Paradise_\(Garden_of_Eden\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_-_The_Earthly_Paradise_(Garden_of_Eden).jpg)

Depicts a pre-incarnate Christ, called a **Christophany** in theology, presenting Eve to Adam. The animals and all creation is at peace and unity. There are surreal elements included, such as the strange pinkish fountain form in the background and the cartoonish mountains in the far distance.

Panel three

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_-_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_\(Ecclesia's_Paradise\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_-_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_(Ecclesia's_Paradise).jpg)

This depicts mankind in his depravity, seeking only pleasure and lustful fulfillment in the world. There is no limit to their depravity. There are symbols of pride, such as a peacock and cherries on the head of different figures. This is the perversion of creation.

Panel Four:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_Triptych_of_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_\(detail\)_-_WGA2526.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights#/media/File:Hieronymus_Bosch_-_Triptych_of_Garden_of_Earthly_Delights_(detail)_-_WGA2526.jpg)

Referred to as a hellscape, this is the punishment of the unjust as nightmarish creatures consume the sinful in never-ending torment with a burning city in the background. This is a place one would not want to go. Click through the images to observe the bizarre creations of Bosch to depict the demonic plague on the hellscape. You might look closely in one of the details and see that Bosch has placed himself in hell itself as a kind of centerpiece of the hellscape.

There are a few more paintings in the click-through. Please observe them and contemplate the bizarre pictures. You will not see this kind of surrealism again until the 20th century.

Leonardo da Vinci

One of the most iconic and famous of all the artists of the Renaissance is the enigmatic and genius, Leonardo da Vinci. His innovations, invention designs, and even scientific observations are still influential today in areas spanning from the medical sciences to engineering to art. He is the essence of what it means to be a **Renaissance man**, that is, a person who is well-rounded in areas of expertise and interest. Indeed, his fascination with the world around him led to his journey of self-discovery and aspirations that were far beyond the technology of his time. His iconic pictures are still looked upon in awe at the mastery in which he created them.

His name is translated **Leonardo of Vinci**, a small town in Italy where he grew up in 1452. That was his namesake. Born in Vinci of Tuscany to Caterina and Ser Piero, a local notary, which was a respectable office in this time. His birth was illegitimate and would cost him the ability of rising through the upper class system, so his father made sure that he, at the very least received schooling in Latin and Geometry. Even as a child, Leonardo was fascinated with the world around him. He tells the story from his earliest memory where he asserts that a falcon visited his window sill above his cradle and how the wing brushed his face. He was drawn to flight and to the natural sciences.

His life is a story of a thirst for knowledge and exploration. Even though he accomplished so much, even in his last words, he communicated that he expected so much more from himself saying something to the effect, "I am afraid I offended both God and man for not completing my

work to its proper excellence!” He was a musician, artist, engineer, forensic scientist, robot creator, scuba-diver, anatomist, and mathematician.

He stayed in Vinci until he was aged 14 years and his father was able to secure him an apprenticeship to the renowned **Andrea del Verrocchio**, a painter of some note himself as well as a sculptor and goldsmith. He assigned Leonardo first to paint mixing and assigned him small parts of paintings. He taught himself to paint in oils at this time. This apprenticeship would serve as the spring-board in which Leonardo would propel himself into the employ of some of the most wealthy and powerful families of the time. It was during this time that he painted an angel in Verrocchio’s work, “The Baptism of Christ.” He chose to do it in oil and the mastery in which he finished the angel affected Verrocchio immensely in that when he saw it, he vowed to never paint again, having been surpassed by one of his students.

His designs include war machines that could inflict horrendous damage on the enemy and it was how he was able to come into the employ of one of the most ruthless and powerful men of the time, **Cesare Borgia**. He was notorious and is often related more to being a gangster than an actual nobleman. He was quite brutal and there is even a rumor that his face is the model of Christ in Renaissance but it is now widely disputed that that is even true. Leonardo, briefly employed by the **de Medicis**, another powerful Italian banking family, found himself in this man’s employ as architect and military engineer. It was during this time that Leonardo was able to create the concept of what we understand as a tank and the first scuba suit.

He was not without enemies and engendered jealousy from others that aspired to reach his genius. This is perhaps one of the reasons for one of Leonardo’s peculiarities. He wrote everything backwards so that it would be more difficult to recreate his work. He also deliberately left parts of his creations out that would render a copy useless. I would imagine this would be kind of a 15th century copyright protection. Nonetheless, this jealousy that he engendered led to a scandalous accusation that he was involved with a male model named **Jacopo Saltarelli**, an offense punishable by death in this time. He was acquitted of all charges but nonetheless, it created a sense of constant self-protection and restlessness.

Leonardo’s first known work is called “Landscape Drawing for Santa Maria Della Nave,” and uses a technique that becomes foundational for artists called the “Perspective of Disappearance.”

Link:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rysunek_krajobrazu.jpg

His painting continued to progress, however, Leonardo was known for beginning work and yet never finishing them. For instance, he once promised Cesare Borgia an immense bronze horse and even completed the model in clay, called the “Gran Cavallo.” It was never completed. One can conjecture that the following link that is a study of the form of a horse would have served as a reference.

Link:

https://es.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archivo:Study_of_horse.jpg

Leonardo also developed a stylistic nuance referred to as **Sfumato**, meaning a ‘smoky’ look to a painting. One of his most famous paintings is the **Mona Lisa**, whose model has been a subject of great speculation ranging from it being a secret self portrait but in truth, it is likely **Lisa Gherardini**, the wife of a wealthy merchant from Florence, Italy.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lisa_del_Giocondo#/media/File:Mona_Lisa_by_Leonardo_da_Vinci_from_C2RMF_retouched.jpg

Among the things that makes this piece enigmatic is the smile on her face, as if she has a secret. Perhaps Leonardo was kidding her or deliberately making her restrain her smile. This is called the **Mona Lisa Smile**, an enigmatic smile of unknown origin. The background is fascinating because it is landscape, which seems out of place in a portrait, with its winding road and bridge in the right portion of the painting. She is relaxed and there is very little movement in the painting. However, the colors tinged by the use of sfumato gives the overall painting a mysterious feel. It is lightly polychromatic and is a perfect example of **Classicism**, an attempt to recapture the idealism of the Greco-Roman era. Put better perhaps, it is idealism that favors perfectionism rather than realism.

Consider that the organic shape of the Mona Lisa is offset by the non-organic landscape in the background. One might have a difficult time describing this painting as completely as one might another, which I think makes this painting even more fascinating.

Let’s take a look at another painting by Leonardo da Vinci: “The Madonna of the Rocks”

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_of_the_Rocks#/media/File:Leonardo_Da_Vinci_-_Vergine_delle_Rocce_\(Louvre\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virgin_of_the_Rocks#/media/File:Leonardo_Da_Vinci_-_Vergine_delle_Rocce_(Louvre).jpg)

The word “**Madonna**” is a title of honor bestowed upon the mother of Jesus of Nazareth by the church. It basically means Mary but can also mean an ideal, virtuous woman. This one, however, is polychromatic and features four characters, Mary, her cousin, Elizabeth, John the Baptist as an older toddler and the Christ child on the bottom right hand side of the painting. We can observe the shape by outlining a triangle around the subjects themselves. John the Baptist is kneeling in homage to the Christ child, who is returning the action with his blessing. There is tons of line in this painting in the rocks and surroundings as well as the subjects themselves. The faces are perfectly idealized as one would expect in subjects from the Renaissance.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benois_Madonna#/media/File:Madonna_benois_01.jpg

This particularly interesting depiction of the Madonna and Child is called the Benois Madonna and very well may be the first painting that Leonardo painted independently from his master Verrocchio. One of the things that makes this painting so fascinating is how youthful the figure of Mary appears in the painting, almost as youthful as the Baby in her lap. This was likely

Leonardo's attempt to capture purity as opposed to the sullen look of less moral women. When describing this, it would be logical to describe this as lightly polychromatic but presented with his developing sfumato look. Line is disseminated to favor a focus on the central subjects. We have not discussed the strange circular objects above their head. Those are left-overs from the Gothic period and are depictions of halos, to imply the holiness of the subjects. One might observe a cross inside the halo in other paintings of the Christ.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Supper_\(Leonardo\)#/media/File:The_Last_Supper_-_Leonardo_Da_Vinci_-_High_Resolution_32x16.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Supper_(Leonardo)#/media/File:The_Last_Supper_-_Leonardo_Da_Vinci_-_High_Resolution_32x16.jpg)

The other most famous work of Leonardo da Vinci is the "**The Last Supper**." Leonardo painted this while in the employ of Cesare Borgia and used an experimental technique that almost immediately began to fade forcing Leonardo to periodically update it. There will be a time in the future when this will fade into a distant memory. When looking at this polychromatic work, one is shaken by the moment where Christ reveals that he will be betrayed. The reaction is memorable from this painting as they all ask, "Is it I, Lord?" The perspective of this is perfect with all lines drawing the eye straight to the central figure, Jesus. Even the ceiling line draws directly to Jesus. This was intentional. It is also one way that one can detect a copy because it is almost always wrong in copies. Regardless, this is on a wall and does not exist in any other form, which makes its loss even more great when it happens.

The shapes of the organic forms of Jesus and his disciples are contrasted with the sharp edges and lines of the rectangles of the doors and windows. This dramatic painting is an amazing masterpiece of Renaissance work. The list could go on and on such as the anatomy drawing, the Vitruvian Man, maps, charts, diagrams.....a true man of many talents, he died on May 2nd, 1516 in France, the guest of a wealthy French nobleman that admired his work.

Michelangelo Buonarroti

On March 6th, 1475, **Michelangelo Buonarroti** was born to a Florentine government agent named Ludovico Buonarroti and Francesca di Neri del Miniato. It was during this early time that Ludovico moved his young family to Florence and the child was raised. However, his mother died when he was only 6 years old and Michelangelo moved in with a nanny and her husband, a stonecutter. It was this connection that Michelangelo drew his inspiration for sculpting from, claiming that he was nursed by the wife of a stonecutter. This had to be difficult for a young child to lose his mother so young and to be then shipped off to another family for upbringing. Additionally, his father owned a marble quarry there in the town of Settignano that they settled in after the death of his mother. Nonetheless, Michelangelo maintained his contact with his father throughout his life.

At a very young age, Michelangelo was interested in drawing, spending hours sketching whatever came into his mind or inspired him. However, he was sent to Florence to study grammar under a humanist named Francesco di Urbino. He was not interested in studies,

showing more interest in recreating the art he observed in churches. He would be found often seeking the company of other artists as the passion for art grew in him. By the age of 12, he was apprenticed to **Domenico Ghirlandaio** as a painter. It was during this apprenticeship that he was introduced to Lorenzo de Medici, who had asked Ghirlandaio for his best pupils. He was also apprenticed to **Donatello** the great sculptor.

Michelangelo was difficult to work with given over to a combative attitude. This got him into trouble over the course of his life. He was also found to be a **forgery** when he sold a statue of what he claimed to be an ancient Greek sculpture of a **Sleeping Cupid** to the powerful **Cardinal Riario**, who, instead of demanding money back was so impressed by the original Cupid, engaged Michelangelo to create another sculpture for his sculpture garden. Follow the link below to see a reproduction of the Sleeping Cupid by Michelangelo

Link:

<https://www.gettyimages.ae/detail/photo/michelangelo-exhibition-in-rome-royalty-free-image/523557240>

Stylistically, this is not ancient but rather modern for the time of Michelangelo, which was what gave him away as a forger. Using techniques such as bathing it in wine, covering it in organic material such as a mixture of urine and feces and then burying it for a period of time would reproduce an ancient look to the statue. It was also uncharacteristic of Greek depictions of the Sleeping Cupid. The sculpture is much too unsettled, as if the figure is in fitful sleep. It feels disturbed and not a peaceful sleep, which was unlike what one would see in an idealized classical depicting. This forgery did not result in fines or prison but instead led to the creation of the sculpture **Bacchus**.

Link:

<https://100swallows.wordpress.com/2008/04/18/michelangelos-statue-of-a-drunk/>

This sculpture was not very acceptable for the garden of Riario as it depicts Bacchus as a stumbling, awkward drunk, bereft of morality and certainly, an empty head. One critic describes the head and neck as if it had fallen off and then reconnected. I believe this is intentional because the position of the head is perhaps in the throes of a fall forward for this drunken god of reverie and wine. His nudity is stark and embarrassing as it has little to do with the exquisite form of the body, which was celebrated in the Renaissance, but rather it is a mash of flab and muscle, of godhood and fallible moral. I would describe this as an attempt to cause the viewer to avert the eyes because the condition was embarrassing. It is a small wonder that Riario did not like the sculpture and it still disturbs critics today. However, one cannot deny the genius behind the creation.

Perhaps one of Michelangelo's most well known works is the sculpture, David.

Link: This is a lovely click through exhibit of Michelangelo's work, by the way.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelangelo#/media/File:'David'_by_Michelangelo_JBU0001.JPG

“David was originally commissioned as one of a series of statues of prophets to be positioned along the roofline of the east end of Florence Cathedral, but was instead placed in a public square, outside the Palazzo Vecchio, the seat of civic government in Florence, in the Piazza della Signoria, where it was unveiled on 8 September 1504.” This display did not please Michelangelo, who had planned on it being inside. It is 17 ft tall and a marvel of sculpting masterwork. It is made from a single piece of marble.

As one looks at this sculpture, one will notice that Michelangelo invented a way of drilling out the pupils of the eyes, giving it a shading that seems to intensify the already intimidating glare of the face. This is David in the moments before he faced Goliath in the Bible story. All of the sculptures before this had depicted the aftermath of the battle. None of them have the intensity and drama that this one does. Compare the statue from the above link to the sculpture of the same subject by Michelangelo's old master, Donatello:

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_\(Donatello\)#/media/File:Florence_-_David_by_Donatello.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_(Donatello)#/media/File:Florence_-_David_by_Donatello.jpg)

In contrast to Michelangelo, Donatello's is more relaxed; almost nonchalant as he victoriously stands with one foot on the head of the giant. The mood is not somber, it is almost staged, whereas Michelangelo's is intensely staring down the monster he will soon face. There is resolve in his face and intensity in his furrowed brow as he prepares to dress for battle. There is no fear in his face; he is standing in the power of his God and no giant will triumph over him. The effect is magnificent. The statue is breathtaking.....literally a giant. When he finished, the sponsor, a man named Soderini, is rumored to have complained about his nose being too thick. According to the story, Michelangelo climbed up with a handful of dust and clinked the chisel, never touching the statue and dropping the dust into Soderini's face, who exclaimed, “PERFECT!” The statue now stands in the Galleria dell'Accademia Museum in Florence, Italy.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelangelo#/media/File:Michelangelo's_Pieta_5450_cut_out_black.jpg

One of the most magnificent of all the sculptures is the immortal **Pietà**.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelangelo#/media/File:Michelangelo's_Pieta_5450_cut_out_black.jpg

This is one of the most powerful and passionate sculptures of his work. The face of Mary, unsullied by her chastity is in contrast to the corpse of her crucified son. His lifeless body is draped over folds and folds of fabric as if Michelangelo had once again tried to swaddle the son for the mother. The masterful creation of emotion on Mary's face and the extended hand that seems to ask the question: Why? This masterpiece was so powerful that others had claimed that they were the actual creator but Michelangelo dealt with this in a way no other artist had dared to do before him. He signed his work.

Another trait of this sculpture is the size in proportion. Mary is fairly larger than the dead Christ in her lap. This is an attempt to capture her motherhood of her dead child. It is both chilling and overwhelming to look at. In 1972, Laszlo Toth, a Hungarian born Australian geologist, wielding a geologist hammer, charged at the statue crying, "I am Jesus Christ!" He struck it several times, breaking off part of Mary's elbow, part of her eyelid and some residual damage, which has been restored. He was never charged but spent a year in a mental institution.

If you look closely, you will notice that even the veins in the arms and hands look realistic. This is because during the Renaissance, some artists dissected cadavers to understand the mechanics of muscle and veins under the skin in order to bring more realism to their work. This amazing work is now in a glassed in and guarded area but still never fails to stun the observer that sees it.

Of all of the works that Michelangelo is known for, from some of the architecture of St. Peter's square in the Vatican to his sculptures, his most well-known work and his most hated personally is the **ceiling of the Sistine Chapel**. It is so odd that the one thing that cements Michelangelo in our minds as an immortal artist is the thing he despised the most. He claimed that he wasn't even a painter, nonetheless, the Pope commanded him to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He designed the scaffolding and set to work on the ceiling.

He spent the next two years painting in poor light reaching up, neck bent backwards, sometimes lying on his back, damaging his eyesight to create the awe that was desired for the ceiling. Initially he was commissioned only to paint the Gospels but true to form, Michelangelo instead painted over 300 distinct biblical characters spanning from Genesis to Revelation. It was hailed immediately as a masterpiece when it was finally completed. He was in agony after the work, alleging it crippled him. He even wrote an ode to agony in poetic form about it.

Link:

http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/poem/2010/01/labor_pains.html

When he first finished the hard to please Pope complained that it was poor looking...not enough gold. Michelangelo replied that it was the poor to which the message came. This did not set well with the Pope but Michelangelo revised some of the work with gold leaf but nonetheless, it was a marvel even in its time. He was paid well, even though he claimed that he was underpaid. A few years later, Michelangelo was paid to finish it with an altar painting titled the last judgment where again, true to his nature, he placed the Pope in hell with a proud set of donkey ears.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sistine_Chapel#/media/File:Sistina-interno.jpg

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/renaissance-reformation/high-ren-florence-rome/michelangelo/a/michelangelo-last-judgment>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Judgment_\(Michelangelo\)#/media/File:Michelangelo._Giudizio_Universale_29.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Judgment_(Michelangelo)#/media/File:Michelangelo._Giudizio_Universale_29.jpg)

Sandro Botticelli

Another influential painter, but not as well known as Leonardo or Michelangelo is Sandro Botticelli. His last name means “Little Barrel.” He was patronized by the de Medici and well known in his day. His devotion and obsession with one of the most beautiful women of the Renaissance turned out to be the muse of many of his paintings. The woman he obsessed over was Simonetta Vespucci, a noble woman from Genoa. She was the cousin of Amerigo Vespucci, from where the word “America” comes from.

One of the most famous paintings inspired by Simonetta is the Birth of Venus.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Birth_of_Venus#/media/File:Sandro_Botticelli_-_La_nascita_di_Venere_-_Google_Art_Project_-_edited.jpg

The Renaissance saw the first hints at protestant reformations forming within the body of the church with the authority of the Church of Rome being challenged by new ideas. The rebirth of humanity also meant a new way of thinking. This will eventually lead to a shift in style that will challenge everything that the Renaissance as idealism gave way to stark realism.

**Chapter Nine:
Section One:
Baroque Art**

As the winds of change were just beginning to blow across Europe and the Church of Rome's authority was constantly being challenged, a new type of **realism**, that is portrayal of what something genuinely looks like, began to storm through the arts. Accompanying this was a tendency to over-decorate to almost overload. In other words, everything was overly frilly, fancy, and extravagant to an almost grotesque proportion. The word used to describe this new movement is a French, **Baroque**, which means "Abnormal Pearl." There was still real power in the hands of nobility with a strong middle class that had grown during the Renaissance as the heart of consumerism.

We certainly do not wish to diminish the amazing and marvelous works of art that rise out of this period, rather, we are grasping at understanding the motivation behind this new realism that was challenging the thought processes of the waning Renaissance toward the end of the 16th century. We must ask ourselves, why the sudden shift away from Classicism? To understand it, think about fads. Perhaps you are familiar with a fad that was all the rage and then eventually it began to fade and now it is irrelevant because everything that could be expressed in that style seemed to have been expressed. This gives rise to experimentation and the founding of new fads. For instance, when this author was a child, bell-bottom jeans were all the rage. Now, they are looked at as archaic, with the exception of a few non-conformist. However, they rose back into prominence briefly in the 90s.

Shifting styles are normal, as well as patterns in the art. The two most common forms of artist expression for our case can be described as **Classicism**, a quest for perfection and the ideal and **Romanticism**, an attempt to elicit an emotional response with expression. The Baroque period is a prime example of Romanticism because it seeks the emotional response of the viewer or hearer. It is important to point out that styles do not disappear, rather, they overlap, which means some would be painting or writing music in a Classical style as new forms of Romantic style were just rising. It is at this point that this author chooses to mention a Renaissance painter that should be considered a transitional painter into the Baroque period, even though his birth and death dates would place him in the Renaissance. His name is Titian.

Tiziano Vecelli

Why bring up a Renaissance painter in the Baroque period. It is his role as a transitory painter that wins him this honor in my books. His style is leaning toward the Baroque period in its presentation. As a matter fact, Tiziano Vecelli or Vecello, known as Titian, depending on the scholar, has a specific and unique style within which those with a sharp eye will detect the germs of Rembrandt and Reubens. Born in 1490 and died in 1576, his style stands out from among others from the Venetian school and establishes him as one of the most important Venetian masters.

Titian as he is referred to by most, is obviously a realist in his presentation. He steps away from idealism and begins the traits of true portrayal. Consider the painting, *Portrait of a Man*:

Link:

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437825>

One can still see that the Renaissance is still in full tilt in his mind but there are dramatic changes in what the people look like on the **canvas**, the material on which paintings are often painted. Stylistically, his face is still idealized but one can also see a more realism in the softness of his expression and the advanced understanding of space within the painting. This painting, which comes around 1515, is a great example of what we shall call a hybrid of styles. The idealism that created such works as Mona Lisa and the Pieta is still present but the use of shading, individualized expression, and pose brings it toward the Baroque.

Eventually, he will begin to use the color amber as a base to construct his masterpieces from. This technique will have a long lasting effect on the arts, all the way into television and early film. As we consider his contribution, we are indebted to him as the vessel that a new style begins to form from. In some of his paintings, he explores **Mannerism**, “Slender, elongated limbs, splayed, twisting and turning bodies, contradicting all the traditional laws of proportion”¹⁹

One can tell in the click through link below, he struggled and vacillated between Classical and Romantic in his paintings.

Link: Click through

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titian#/media/File:Tizian_090.jpg

Titian was also not one to shy away from trying something experimental and even bizarre by flirting with surrealism. Later in life, he created a painting that is most decidedly designed to elicit an emotional response called *The Allegory of Age*.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titian#/media/File:Titian_-_Allegorie_der_Zeit.jpg

From left to right, he portrays Titian, his own son Orazio, and his nephew, Vecellio. Also from left to right, representing decay and repulsion, the Boar, the Lion of strength, and the Dog of intemperance. Rich symbolism is applied here in his later years to communicate his perception of the change that man makes as he grows older.

The base color is amber and the three-dimensional presentation gives us a straight view of the eyes of his son, locked with ours, as if to say, “This happens to you too!” It is man’s struggle with physical decay, a battle we all lose eventually and Titian is providing strong commentary that the viewer should pay attention to. I encourage the reader, go back to the link above and view the click through to better understand the transitory nature of the artist.

¹⁹ <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/mannerism.htm>, accessed 5-16-2020

Shifting Climates in Geo-politics

To properly understand what is going on in the arts is to begin to grasp at what was going on in the world. It is during the Baroque that the authority of the Church of Rome began to dramatically erode and the **Protestant Reformation**, that is the founding of denominations not associated with the Church of Rome, began to rage. Martin Luther, Puritans, and the further reach of biblical research had sufficiently shaken the connection to Rome enough that there were new sects of believers called Anabaptist, Lutherans, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc. that formed out of this period.

Persecution in England led the pilgrims to set out to colonize the New World and the settlements of Jamestown and Plymouth cropped up. It was a tumultuous time but the rise of class systems had brought a societal structure that, for some, was restrictive. It was no wonder, then, that they would seek a new definition of freedom in a land far from Europe. Thus began the great nation of the United States as people struck out to live in a land where they could worship in church in the way they so choose. This conflict in the world fueled some of the passions and expressions within the arts. Additionally, what is called the **Counter-Reformation**, a push-back from the Church of Rome, added even more drama in the mix. However, the rise of consumerism and the drive to rise through the class system would be the defining engine for the Baroque.

Rembrandt van Rijn

Rembrandt van Rijn (Rine), was a Baroque painter that rose to the level of being hailed as one of, if not the greatest artist of the time. Some call him the greatest of all time. One thing to know about Rembrandt was he knew what the people wanted and how to paint it and it led to success but not without tragedy, loss, scandal, and bankruptcy. He was born on July 15, 1606 and died in October 1669. He experienced some success in his youth as a painter of portraits. His career really gained respect when he was discovered by statesman, composer, and poet, **Constanijn Huygens**. His subject of early painting of portraits is self-portraits. Consider this cheerful painting on copper from 1638, depicting a happy young Rembrandt:

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-portraits_by_Rembrandt#/media/File:Rembrandt_laughing.jpg

There is a certain roughness to the texture of this painting but nonetheless, the realism is impeccable. He smiles into the mirror and then paints what he saw. One wonders how many glances and smiles he went through to arrive at this portrait. Perhaps this is one of the first "mirror selfies?" The rugged background with amber as a base harkens back to Titian but now looks full on to reality. This is exactly how Rembrandt looked at this age when he was laughing. There is no pretense here, it is as if he is saying, "here I am, like me or not!" The overall scheme of the painting has an almost soiled, dirty appearance but the vividness of the face and the use

of what is called **Source lighting**, an appearance of light and its effects from a visible or implied source.

Even though he is the subject, Rembrandt manages to lean back to give a slight asymmetrical bent to the painting to draw our eyes to him and nothing else. Another striking feature is shadows that will soon develop into a technique called **Tenebroso**, a type of dramatic shading; the word taken from the word Tenebrae, which means darkness. This will eventually develop into a struggle between light and dark; between Tenebroso and **Chiaroscuro**, a type of spot-lighting of a subject in a painting. This struggle between light and darkness in the paintings of Rembrandt will define this man and his contributions to painting for centuries.

Consider this painting called, "The Blinding of Samson."

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Blinding_of_Samson#/media/File:Rembrandt_-_The_Blinding_of_Samson_-_WGA19097.jpg

This dramatic portrayal of the blinding of the biblical character of Samson is filled with motion, violence, gore, and a type of subject that insists we look at it. In the upper portion of the painting, the vile betrayer Delilah flees with the hair locks and shears with which she has cut off the strongman. The Philistines, anachronistically dressed in full knight regalia, violently seize and without ceremony begin to gouge out his eyes. It is horrible yet compelling at the same moment. Though he is rendered as any other man, it still takes five men to restrain him.

Again, Rembrandt uses asymmetry to drive our eyes toward the action so much that if we are not careful, we will miss the fleeing Delilah. On the left of the viewer, gilded in gold is the god of the Philistines, Dagon, as if to suggest there is something supernatural about this situation. There is dark and light, source lighting and tenebroso. Motion is captured in the intensity of the soldiers' poses and the motion of Delilah fleeing. The line in this painting is primarily curves and S shapes that are often used by painters to indicate movement. The right side of the painting is asymmetrical because of the invisible triangle that the attack of the soldiers create with Samson as their target. The bulk of the struggling bodies is offset by vague emptiness on the left, filled only with a man on guard and the entrance to the cave.

As one continues to view Rembrandt's work, be careful to observe that ongoing struggle with light and dark, as if there is a struggle within Rembrandt. He was no stranger to tragedy, which often is a mechanism for artistic expression. Only one child, Titus, survived infancy and after the birth of the fourth child, Rembrandt's beloved wife Saskia died of tuberculosis. He loved her so very much and some of his paintings of her on her death bed are both heartbreaking and compelling.

Link:

https://arthistoriestroom.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/425-saskia_op_ziekbed.jpg

<https://833wordsaday.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/saskia-sleeping-closeup.jpg>

It is as if the artist is desperately trying to keep her alive by drawing her as she struggles for life. It seems so pitiful to think of this man pining away as his wife slowly fades away, leaving him with Titus. The drawings are some of the most emotional for this author, knowing what he must feel like watching helplessly as the one he loves is struggling. It is very revealing for the viewer. Her death was so destructive to him that he gave up painting for years. Consider now one of his more famous and larger works, "The Nightwatch."

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Night_Watch#/media/File:The_Night_Watch_-_HD.jpg

This enormous painting is almost life size as far as the people in the portrait are concerned. This is all about line, shadow, and light. The line throughout is straight and draws all eyes to the leaders in front. This is a moment before a battle it seems as men gather and load muskets. The little girl in the picture is a mascot for the Civil guard, carrying with her a clawed chicken and a pistol called a Klomer, both symbols of the Amsterdam Civil Guard, who commissioned this work. Near the left top, there is a barely there man behind a man in green. Many scholars feel that Rembrandt was placing himself in the painting as well.

Link:

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/64381/15-things-you-might-not-know-about-rembrandts-night-watch>

Even though he left a large body of work, his tendency to live beyond his means led to bankruptcy and brushes with the civil authorities. Yet one cannot deny the genius at work in the hands that create such magnificent works. Click through the link below and try to observe the struggle of light and dark, the vivid use of color and line to create a sense of where the eyes should look.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_paintings_by_Rembrandt

Michelangelo da Caravaggio

One of the most controversial painters of all time is Michelangelo da Caravaggio. His brilliance coupled with a near psychopathic pathology creates a larger than life character, who was able to create awe-inspiring artwork with a stark realism that is unparalleled in art. His use of shading is genius as is lighting, creating imagery that leaps out of the canvas at you. Despite his genius in painting, this man, whom many considered a ruffian and ill-tempered scoundrel, could not stay clear of the law and spent much of his adult life in and out of jail. Usually for brawling or insulting peace officers, his reputation as a hooligan nearly overshadowed his output to the point that he was forgotten for two centuries until he was rediscovered by art critic **Roberto Longhi** in the 1920s.

Caravaggio as he is more widely known, was an Italian artist of the Baroque period that was primarily active in Rome, Naples, Malta, and Sicily from 1592 to 1610. It is best to say that his novelty in his art was his use of **radical naturalism**, portraying many of his subjects with all their failings on full display. He often used individuals from his life and surroundings and that sometimes did not sit well with his commissions. For instance, his painting of “Death of a Virgin” was one that received a cold welcome. “The painting was commissioned by **Laerzio Cherubini**, a papal lawyer, for his chapel in the Carmelite church of Santa Maria della Scala in Trastevere, Rome.”²⁰

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_the_Virgin_\(Caravaggio\)#/media/File:Michelangelo_Caravaggio_069.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_the_Virgin_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:Michelangelo_Caravaggio_069.jpg)

One of the things that probably sat wrong with the commissioner is that they found out that Caravaggio had used a drowned prostitute as the model. This is an example of the radical naturalism we have discussed. This Mary, unlike many preceding paintings of the subject, is not depicted ascending to the throne room of God, rather, she is dead as a doornail. Her pale skin and bloated body shows no pretense of softening the blow that the disciples in the room are feeling. They have just lost the mother of their Messiah and are in mourning. There is no religious swooning or great epiphanies, she has died, her life ended and she is no different than any other human. Just another dead woman, not the exalted Virgin that the church had expected. They gave it back and refused to pay.

It is stark in its portrayal, her legs stiff from her difficult transition and her arm deadly hung off the bed, the other on her heart. The line in the painting forces you to look upon her. The crimson curtain pulled back to let all who will to look upon her. Perfect use of shading and lighting give this such realism as if we are in the room with them. Weeping for our loss, we join the disciples and friends as they weep. For the church, the stark hopelessness was probably too much for their understanding of the Virgin. As if, “No! This is Regina Coeli! Queen of Heaven, how dare you portray her as a drowned prostitute...or dead for that matter!” Compare the above painting with the one that the church chose to replace it with by Carl Saraceni:

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_the_Virgin_\(Caravaggio\)#/media/File:Carlo_Saraceni_-_Mort_de_la_Vierge.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_the_Virgin_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:Carlo_Saraceni_-_Mort_de_la_Vierge.jpg)

Caravaggio’s life had not been one that would seem to raise up this enigma of a genius. His father had been a decorator for the Marchese of Caravaggio. A **Marchese** is one rank above a Count in nobility and is achieved by heredity. His mother died the same year that Caravaggio became an apprentice in the workshop of Simon Peterzano, a student of Titian. We can make conjecture, therefore, that his stark naturalism may have been affected by the

²⁰ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_the_Virgin_\(Caravaggio\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_the_Virgin_(Caravaggio)), accessed 5-18-2020

techniques of his teacher's instruction as well. Nevertheless, the character will always out, they say and in his case, it was so.

Although he was at one time hailed as the **greatest painter alive in 1599**, he was a brawler and brushed with the law many times. "Caravaggio went to court for throwing a plate of artichokes in a waiter's face, carrying a sword and dagger without a permit and breaking a window shutter in the room he was renting. He also went to prison for throwing stones at policemen, cursing at an officer and offending a woman and her daughter. By late 1605, his landlady seized his furniture because he didn't pay rent for six months."²¹ In 1606 he is said to have murdered **Renuccio Tomassoni** over a bet and a rivalry for a young woman. He had to flee prosecution.

Caravaggio had taken to sleeping fully armed with a sword and dagger and spent hours practicing his dueling skills. He didn't sleep well and his love affairs were driving forces for many of his skirmishes. If he imagined an insult or really was insulted, he was ready with a fight and it might cost his opponent his life. This erratic behavior could very well have been caused by lead poisoning in the paint, the water, the wine....there were a lot of ways to be poisoned by lead in Europe for many centuries.

While he was on the run, he fled to **Malta** where he was accepted into the **Order of St. John in Malta** but by 1608 he was sentenced to prison for attacking one of his own order members. He escaped eventually and while attempting to catch up to his paintings that he was shipping to the Pope as a peace offering, he died at the age of 38 of a supposed fever, although, other reasons have been mentioned, such as syphilis, lead poisoning, or an infected knife wound. Nonetheless, his erratic behavior suggests a man dying of lead poisoning because such poisoning leads to madness, violence, and death.

His paintings seem to center around macabre and grotesque imagery at times. Consider the painting, "Judith beheading Holofernes." From the Book of Judith from the Latin Vulgate Bible, she beheads the drunken Holofernes before he can destroy her village.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judith_Beheading_Holofernes_\(Caravaggio\)#/media/File:Judith_Beheading_Holofernes_-_Caravaggio.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judith_Beheading_Holofernes_(Caravaggio)#/media/File:Judith_Beheading_Holofernes_-_Caravaggio.jpg)

This is a striking painting because the viewer sees both determination and repulsion in the face of Judith as she beheads her enemy. The arterial spray is compelling and the macabre hook-nosed crone that stands ready to receive the head is disturbing as well. Judith's face is idealized a bit more than we see in most Baroque works but the realism is true Caravaggio. Notice the stark blackness of shadow in the painting balanced by the crimson curtain pulled back. The symmetry of the piece is a little off and makes one lean to your right a bit with Judith, as if we are complicit in the action. It is polychromatic with a naturalistic line giving the atmosphere of simply being in someone's bed chamber and yet gore and violence is going on. It is very unsettling.

²¹ <https://www.biography.com/news/caravaggio-italian-painter-criminal-murderer>, accessed 5-18-2020

Another of Caravaggio's disturbing works is "David with the Head of Goliath."

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_with_the_Head_of_Goliath_\(Caravaggio,_Rome\)#/media/File:David_with_the_Head_of_Goliath-Caravaggio_\(1610\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_with_the_Head_of_Goliath_(Caravaggio,_Rome)#/media/File:David_with_the_Head_of_Goliath-Caravaggio_(1610).jpg)

This work was meant as a peace offering to the Pope. How could it be? Caravaggio is the subject of the beheaded Goliath. The monster's head is Caravaggio himself and is rather gory with its gaping mouth and half opened eyes. It is as if Caravaggio is saying, "Yes, I am a monster but here's my head...forgive me." The subjects are striking, a young boy no more than 15 years old holds the monster's head which is still dripping gore. It doesn't seem to fit does it? Neither did the idea that a teenager would triumph over a giant and that is what drives this painting. The victorious David looks on it, his trophy in an impossible battle.

Not much is going on in the way of line with the exceptions of the subjects themselves as the background is that stark blackness that Caravaggio is known for. The figures seem to jut out into the room as if the display of the head is right there for all to see. The lack of contrasting colors almost place this firmly in a monochromatic presentation. What a tragedy if his work had been lost to time and not discovered for us to try to grapple with this controversial man.

Link: Caravaggio self-portrait

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caravaggio#/media/File:Bild-Ottavio_Leoni,_Caravaggio.jpg

Link: A wonderful click through of Caravaggio's paintings

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_paintings_by_Caravaggio#/media/File:CARAVAGGIO,_A_boy_peeling_fruit_\(1593\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_paintings_by_Caravaggio#/media/File:CARAVAGGIO,_A_boy_peeling_fruit_(1593).jpg)

Peter Paul Rubens

In contrast to our hooligan Caravaggio, Mr. Rubens is a borderline aristocrat. Born in 1577 and died in 1640, he is one of the **Counter-reformation** artists. When the Church of Rome began to try to push back against the protestant reformation, they employed artists such as Rubens to try to capture the golden age of when Rome was the sole benefactor and steward of the arts. Rubens would have been a **contemporary**, meaning lived at the same time, as Rembrandt van Rijn. His chief output were altarpieces and landscapes, history pieces, portraits, and borderline classicism and idealization of the female form.

Compared to Caravaggio and Rembrandt, he lived a life of relative calm during the tumultuous years of the Counter-reformation. He was even commissioned by the Queen Mother Marie de Medici to paint an allegorical painting of her life. (Does her last name ring a bell or what?) She was married to Henry the IV of France. Eventually unrest and a ruling from parliament sent her into exile. When this happened, Rubens simply became a diplomat through his art and was even knighted twice by Philip IV of Spain.

He was internationally renowned and a much sought after painter. After the death of his wife, the 54 year old painter married Helen Fourmont. They had five children and were married for ten years until his death of heart failure in 1640. His style of art would define the next generations of painters in the Neoclassical period. One could say that the most striking part of Rubens was his consistency, never failing to put out good quality work.

Describing his paintings, he favored symmetry over an unbalanced painting. Observe this painting called the “Fall of Phaeton,” a Greek myth.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Paul_Rubens#/media/File:Peter_Paul_Rubens_-_The_Fall_of_Phaeton_\(National_Gallery_of_Art\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Paul_Rubens#/media/File:Peter_Paul_Rubens_-_The_Fall_of_Phaeton_(National_Gallery_of_Art).jpg)

When one looks at this, the movement in the painting is torrid and unceasing with all those curves and lines going every which way. There is trouble in the heavenlies and it hasn't turned out well for Phaeton. He wanted to drive his father Helios' chariot of fire but it didn't turn out well and he was undone. Rubens captures the drama of the moment when he falls. The rush of light, shadow, wind, and fear is everywhere. This is very Neo-Classical for a Baroque painting but stylistically it belongs in the Baroque because it is over-done in decoration and movement and it is successful in eliciting an emotional response. What was Phaeton thinking?

The shape is a centered, yet slanted rectangle of mangled organics offset by a partial ring in the top right. Looks like junior was not up for the job and dad has job security after this fall. It is polychromatic and very dramatic....like a stop action on a film, someone has hit pause...what will the outcome be?

Consider also the painting, “Daniel in the Lion's Den.”

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_in_the_Lions%27_Den_\(painting\)#/media/File:Daniel_in_the_Lion's_Den_c1615_Peter_Paul_Rubens.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_in_the_Lions%27_Den_(painting)#/media/File:Daniel_in_the_Lion's_Den_c1615_Peter_Paul_Rubens.jpg)

This is truly a work of biblical proportions as the prophet has been cast alive into the lions' den for execution but instead we see the pious prophet in prayer and the lions calmly lying among the bones of their past victims. It is all bathed in gold. The fleshiness of Daniel is contrasted with the gold skin of the Lions and their frightful roars. Again, motion is everywhere and that is one thing that Rubens did well; to capture movement at its best.

Like his contemporaries, he used dramatic shading but the lighting is much more natural with less drama than Rembrandt and certainly not as jarring as the works of Caravaggio. The lighting is realistic. His female models were always depicted as plump, which was stylistically considered the mark of a beautiful woman. His favor of symmetry may be connected to the relative calm in his life. Truly there is a connection between what is going on in the mind and what one expresses in art. Art is like a release for the mind

Consider the pure Ruben work, “Venus at the Mirror.”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Paul_Rubens#/media/File:Rubens_Venus_at_a_Mirror_c1615.jpg

This is a perfectly symmetrical work and pure naturalism. A close look at this work will see that Venus is portrayed as Helene Fourmont, his first wife. She is a Rubenesque beauty. She is plump and yet sensual. The African female is elevated to her level, adorned with jewels and dress, so there is something to be said in equality in the races. Both females are a beauty to behold.

Georges de la Tour

Georges de la Tour was born March 13, 1593 in the town of Vic-sur-Seille. He was a French painter that should be widely considered the master of source lighting in painting. His paintings are relatively few in number and his educational background is somewhat unclear, but it is assumed that he had travelled to Italy and perhaps the Netherlands early in his career. This would bring him into contact with both Rembrandt/Rubens and Caravaggio's influences. He is another example of a painter that was able to live a quiet and calm life in contrast to the many stories of struggling artists.

He married into a minor noble family, marrying Diane le Nerf and settled with his studio in his wife's quiet provincial town of Luneville in 1620. He was involved in a Franciscan led religious revival in Lorraine, but it doesn't necessarily qualify him as a Counter-reformationist. Still, being in the country-side and far from the bustle of a busy city, he was able to produce beautiful, calming works that are amazing studies in nocturnal light effects. Using tenebroso and chiaroscuro, he created simplified painting forms with careful geometrical compositions. He often painted several variations on the same subjects.

After his death at Lunevill in 1652, his work was relatively forgotten until it was rediscovered by German scholar, Hermann Voss in 1915. Since then, the works discovered show a highly influential form of painting with near photographic quality and stunning light use. For instance, consider the painting, "Magdalen of Night Light."

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magdalene_with_the_Smoking_Flame#/media/File:Georges_de_La_Tour_-_Magdalen_of_Night_Light_-_WGA12337.jpg

In this work, Mary Magdalena stares at a smoking candle, her hand rests on a human skull as she considers her past, her eyes locked on a book, perhaps the Latin Vulgate Bible and a cross on the table. It is magnificent and contemplative as she gazes at the flame. Note the careful geometry of her seated lower left area forming a square, the line from her right to the upper corner creating a triangle, offset by the table and the triangular light cast on the wall as if to say, "look up!" The amber base, that harkens back to Titian, gives the painting a realism and

the contrast between her lily skin and the red skirt she is wearing as it fades into shadow is remarkable. Note how natural the light is as it is cast by the untrimmed candle and large flame, a trait that appears in many of de la Tour's works. Now compare this painting with its variation, what is the same and what is different?

Link:

https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q3210251#/media/File:The_Penitent_Magdalen_MET_DT7252.jpg

This one is called "The Penitent Magdalene," a variation of the previous. The clothes are the same, the skull is present but now the light is deflected by a mirror image. This imagery is thematic as we see more shadow than light and the dress is no longer seductively draped but more modest in presentation, hence the penitence. In the previous, the skull is turned toward the viewer and in this one, she has forced it to look away, a symbol of her turning away from her past, it is behind her and there is a new resolve in her folded hands versus an almost macabre petting of the first skull. Now, compare it with this same subject from de la Tour.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georges_de_La_Tour#/media/File:Georges_de_La_Tour_-_The_Repentant_Magdalen_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Stunning isn't it? Perhaps in this case, the last one should be placed first because in this one, she is more personal with the skull and the skull is reflected in the mirror. The biblical character is dead inside but soon her repentance will renew her. Perhaps it is her reflection in the mirror and not the skull at all. It is for the viewer to decide.

Another thematic series involves a child. Consider this painting called Joseph the Carpenter.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/12/La_Tour.jpg

The exquisite beauty of the child's face is illuminated once again by superior light effects from a candle. What strikes the viewer is the child seems to be looking off behind Joseph or off to some distant image that is unseen by the viewer. There is still a careful geometry throughout the painting. See if you can detect the geometry of the painting. It is well-balanced though and is a study in light and dark.

Below is a click through of de la Tour's works

Link;

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georges_de_La_Tour#/media/File:La_Tour.jpg

Section Two: Baroque Music

One thing we have not discussed yet in our studies is the art of music. It is in the Baroque period that music hits its stride with composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Georg Friedrich Handel, and Domenico Scarlatti, who we will only mention in this section because of his noted birth year that he shares with the other two we will discuss at length. The musical forms of Renaissance gave way to musical experimentation coupled with the over-decoration of the Baroque style led to a new musical form called Baroque Music. One of its most important composers is J.S. Bach. J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel, and Domenico Scarlatti were all born in 1685.

Bach was born in **Eisenach, Germany** in **1685**, the same birthplace as great protestant leader, **Martin Luther**. Bach himself was brought up Lutheran and spent his life working within that vein of theology. Bach's family supplied the city with musicians. His father, Johann Ambrosius Bach was a renowned violinist and court trumpeter and music director for the town of Eisenach. It is likely that he was Bach's very first teacher. The Bach family brought forth musicians and composers from the 16th century all the way to the 19th century making the family one of the farthest reaching and influential musical families over three centuries.

When both parents died when he was 10, Bach and his younger brother were forced to walk a few days to their older brother's house, who was a town organist. He was one of Bach's music teachers in a condition normally referred to as **Family Apprenticeship**, where a family member is the master and the younger, the student. He showed an exceptional talent at a very young age, excelling at the keyboard and violin.

Bach's output is enormous, literally writing over 1000 distinct works in every genre except Opera and the symphony, which is a form that had not yet fully developed. Bach had to deal with complaints from the public that his music was much too ornate or from the musicians complaining that his music was too difficult to play. Indeed, it is very challenging to play! One of his earliest works is **Cantata No. 4, Christ Lay in Todesbanden** (Christ lay in the Bonds of Death).

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ffg4mU7FNE>

This magnificent piece was performed in the church of Duke Wilhelm Ernst on Easter 1704 to a mild reception. The advanced nature of the music seems to indicate that this is not earliest Bach, rather, we have lost to time some of his early works. It would be interesting to see what his development might have sounded like as he continued to grow. The piece is in multiple movements and is filled with ornate writing and the normal engine-like straight rhythm of what is called a **Basso-Continuo**, usually a Harpsichord and Cello as the bass section. It is sensitive and dynamic and mirrors perfectly what was going on in the visual arts with its ornamentation and real attempts to draw an emotional response as only music can seem to excel above all other arts in.

As is the situation, Bach held a position that would not only put him in charge of the music but even perhaps some other household duties. He was a member of the household staff of Wilhelm Ernst, with which, it seems Bach had a stormy relationship. This relationship seemed to trudge on until he was at least given leave to take another position, but not without enduring imprisonment and being on the receiving end of gossip and distaste. His music, however, is pure genius. Consider his famous work Toccata and Fugue in d minor.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nnuq9PXbywA>

The technicality to play this piece is quite amazing and for many, it conjures up images of the Phantom of the Opera or Dracula but it is really just a piece to show off the abilities of the player. It is complex and transcendent at the same time....filled with drama and power. Moments of exceptional light and deep darkness, like a fine Caravaggio in the world of music. It remains a mainstay for advanced **repertoire**, a professional's list of works they are able to perform. **Toccata** literally is a "show off" piece, designed to show the talent of the musician. A **Fugue** is a complex work requiring amazing technical skill and in this case, turns out to be more of the Toccata than the fugue.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spMI7mjKN4g>

In this piece, which this author would be surprised if you survived the entire work without clicking off it, is a technical nightmare because of how quickly the notes happen. It is an example of why musicians complained that his music was too difficult. It was....but that was the point! To arrive at a point to perform it means you have achieved another level of ability. This one in particular has a history with the author, in which, trust me, Bach won that match. Nonetheless, it is a fascinating work. Not all of his works, however, are so difficult.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9F7trThuwMU>

The simplicity of this is still Baroque but it is more of a student piece but it is from a collection written in honor of Bach's 2nd Wife, Anna Magdalena called Notebook for Anna Magdalena. It was simple enough that it even survived into the 1960s to appear as the backdrop for a song called "Love's Concerto," by The Toys.

Link;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmJ1AqtTuyo> (totally hippy, no?)

His output was impressive from student works such as his "Inventions" for piano---

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4IzqJtD4dM>

The simplicity is deceiving, it is not simple at all, rather, after one learns the technique it becomes more simple but the form itself is complex in many fashions.

Also known for his massive choral works such as St. Matthew Passion:

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P21qIB0K-Bs> (almost 3 hrs of music...long church service!)

Miraculous in his creativity, he was rather pious and humble in person to person interaction and has become one of the most widely performed and important composers of the Baroque era, creating rules and then smashing them in defiance in the name of creativity.

Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zO8i5D2uz84>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6OgZCCoXWc>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mfAp7Xf2L_o Totally Metal, dude.

George Frideric Handel

As far as the Baroque period, it is safe to say that these two are the really big ones but certainly not the only ones. No more than to say that the painters thus far studied are the only ones of their particular style. We concentrate on some of the well-known or style definers to complete our survey of a period. If we are to consider Bach, we must also consider his contemporary, George Frideric Handel, born on **February 23, 1685**. Widely considered one of the most important composers of the Baroque period and the pre-eminent writer of Italian style Baroque Opera.

His father was a respected Barber-Surgeon in the district of **Halle, Germany**. His education is unclear but what is clear is that he was enough of a keyboardist and organist to gain the attention of a nobleman and to secure education of a composer/musician named **Friderich Zachow** and was to be the only teacher that Handel ever had. Many of Handel's traits can be traced back to Zachow and his style of "old school" counterpoint. Part of his instruction was also to hand copy from the extensive libraries of Zachow, which taught the young budding composer structure and form.

His taste for Italian Opera was fostered by an invitation from Fernando de Medici to come and tour Italy. It wasn't long after his return that he began composing in that style and within 15 years had established Italian operas as a form in Germany. When his benefactor, in whose employ he was, **Prince Georg of Hanover** was elevated to the position of King of

England by birthright, he joined in the move to England and began to establish himself there as one of the preeminent English composers. His death in 1757 saw him interred with honors in Westminster Abbey, where kings and queens lie in state.

It was there that Mr. Handel achieved celebrity status and gave the world some of the most beautiful works in music. One of his most famous compositions is the Royal Fireworks Music Suite:

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuG1t2smdCQ>

This music was literally composed to accompany a fireworks program put on by the crown but it has outlasted the power of the absolute monarchy in England and remains a steady piece in repertoire all over the world. Ornamented in the Grand Baroque style it is elegant and royal, befitting a king! Another of his famous works is from an **Oratorio**, a kind of costumed concert performance similar to an Opera but without the acting. **Israel in Egypt** is one of Handel's great Oratorios

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMGSdynQrak>

Another, perhaps his most famous is "The Messiah," an immense choral and orchestral work that Handel completed in an astonishing speed of 27 days. This work covers the prophecies, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and second coming of Jesus from the Bible. It is an astonishing work. Perhaps the most famous movement of The Messiah is the Hallelujah Chorus that most people are very aware of. Below are a few links that are taken from The Messiah.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=usfiAsWR4qU> Hallelujah Chorus

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3o_djBIF6-o Since by Man came Death

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owcn6fgYwpw> For Unto Us a Child is Born

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3V_ZZ6ENu-E For Behold, Darkness shall cover the Earth

After a series of strokes, Handel's health began to deteriorate and he died on April 14, 1759. He cemented his place in the masters of the Baroque period with an enormous output of wonderful music

Chapter 10:
Section One
Neoclassicism Art

As the Baroque style began to wane, a new style arose that began to transition the art world back to the classical roots of antiquity called **Rococo/Neoclassicism**. This was a trend trying to recapture the transcendence of **idealism**, that is, trying to portray perfection and the divinity within man. This led to a style that, while it was more developed and more refined, it shares some common traits with some of the art from the Renaissance. It is as if the world is on a pendulum that swings back and forth between the ideal and realism, between Classical and Romantic. The Rococo, which is sometimes called the **High Baroque**, still overly-ornamented but was giving way to the idealism of the art style that would soon follow after. It was a transitory style to Neo-Classicism.

One such transitory artist is **Jean-Antoine Watteau**, when we are discussing High Baroque/Early Classical. Born on October 10, 1684, he is the epitome of the High Baroque with its waning styling giving way to the classical ideal. He was a French painter whose brief career caused a revival in the concepts of movement and color that one would observe in the style of Caravaggio and Rubens. He was able to revitalize the waning Baroque style yet was able to create a more naturalistic portrayal rather than over-doing the ornamentation.

Watteau invented the style called **fetes-galantes**, a depiction of rural or outdoor festivals or activities. He created a sense of the pleasantness and pastoral charm of the countryside with a degree of theatricality. Some of his heaviest influences came from the world of Italian ballet and comedy. This combination of theatrical and pastoral themes gives Watteau his charm in his paintings.

He had shown an early interest in painting as a boy and was apprenticed to local painter, **Jacques-Alber Gerin**. However, his fast growth as a painter demanded that he seek further instruction and experience, so in 1702 he left for Paris and found employment in the workshop of Pont Notre-Dame making copies of Dutch and Flemish themed genre paintings. He developed a sketch-like technique and was able to capture aristocratic elegance in his paintings that would be copied by others such as Nicolas Lancret and Jean-Baptiste Pater who borrowed his themes but could not surpass the master.

One of his most famous works is "Pilgrimage to Cythera"

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Embarkation_for_Cythera#/media/File:L'Embarquement_pour_Cythere_by_Antoine_Watteau_from_C2RMF_retouched.jpg

What makes this painting so magnificent is the brushstrokes, which we have not talked about very much in this book. They are the foundations of a style that will come later called Impressionism. The vivid polychromatic presentation with mastery of depth but a general lack of shadow moves us away from the power of Rembrandt or Caravaggio but creates its own power in elegance and sophistication. This is a view of pre-revolution Europe. The elegance with

classical themes are the precursor to classicism while still holding the banner of the decor of the Baroque. The line is everywhere with motion and movement all over the painting. Note the brushstrokes that create the leaves of the trees. You will see this style again and again in paintings as Watteau was single-handedly creating technique. The painting is slightly asymmetrical to our right but the blend and naturalistic shadow gives us a hint of realism.

Another of his great paintings is “Fetes Venitiennes” which is powerfully affected by theatrical arts yet presented with Venetian and Turkish style.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%AAtes_V%C3%A9nitiennes#/media/File:Jean-Antoine_Watteau_-_F%C3%AAtes_Venitiennes_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/renaissance-reformation/rococo-neoclassicism/rococo/v/watteau-cythera>

One of the greatest contributions to Art by Watteau is in that of the decorative arts, especially in theater with his influence reaching all the way into the 20th century in film. He is, by far, the most influential painter in the decorative arts than any other painter from the 18th century. Consider his painting, “Love in the French Theater.”

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/66/Jean-Antoine_Watteau%2C_Love_in_the_French_Theatre.JPG

This shows strong influence from predecessors from the disappearing effect of Leonardo da Vinci to the tenebroso from Titian and Rembrandt. From the radiant polychromatic nature of the painting to the symmetry shown to give the painting balance, the French theater is depicted in elegance with the flair of classicism that is soon to develop further in painters to come. The line is indicative of movement and offset with the inanimate objects providing what we will call a supportive line to the imagery. It is pure classicism at its finest.

Now, compare and contrast the above painting with the painting called, “Love in the Italian Theater.”

Link:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/renaissance-reformation/rococo-neoclassicism/rococo/v/watteau-cythera>

Note that the depiction is somewhat different. I do not know if Watteau was making commentary but it certainly seems that the French theater is more developed than the Italian theater. Perhaps just a bit of nationalism there being French, but Watteau still captures elegance in such a pastoral theme. It is like he is saying, “here they are, the best they can do to keep up with us frenchmen!” Perhaps I am reading too much into it, but it seems so. The line is disseminated as organic line dominates the picture. The source lighting, hearkening back to de

la Tour, still casts a degree of drama on the set as they perform. He was a master at capturing the moment, wasn't he?

Jean-François Boucher

Further along in the development of the classical style, one finds Jean-François Boucher, another proponent of Rococo tastes that begin to lean into the idealism of the Classical style. He was born on **September 29, 1703 and died in 1770**. His style includes pastoral themes as well as the arts and captures a true aristocratic style in the visual arts. He is, with Watteau, considered one of the most celebrated decorative artists of his time. Boucher's work is a perfect reflection of the **Rococo style**, which is a transition to Classicism.

By the time he had completed his apprenticeship, he had won the elite "Prix de Rome," an award on par with today's Pulitzer or an Oscar. It was a very distinctive honor given to preeminent artists of the time. That fact that it was presented to him while he was younger shows the power and complexity of the painter. His work was directly influenced by Watteau and Rubens and embraces the aristocratic ideal of perfection, shown in his portraits. He often used his family as models to paint the **idyllic and pastoral scenes** that are a hallmark of his style.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher#/media/File:Marie-Jeanne_Buzeau_by_Alexandre_Roslin.jpg Boucher's wife

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher#/media/File:Boucher_par_Gustav_Lundberg_1741.jpg Portrait of Boucher

As was aforementioned, he was influenced by Watteau, in particular in conjunction with his scene and theatrical designs that he produced. He was also involved in the production of tapestries, which were a much sought after artwork in this time. His association with the **Beuvais Tapestry workshop**, which lasted for over 20 years, produced six different series of tapestries by Boucher. One of his patrons was **Madame de Pompadour** who was chief mistress to Louis XV, a name synonymous with the Rococo style.

Let's look at some of Boucher's work. Consider the work "**The Secret Message.**"

Links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher#/media/File:The_secret_message_by_Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher.jpg

This work is full of emotion which does not fit into a Classical depiction but the face and surroundings are perfect idealization, which lends it to the Classical style. The light shading in areas of the painting shows a realistic understanding of the interplay between light and shadow. This work is fraught with symbolisms, from the chubby cherubs of love in bas relief in the

background to the blushing cheeks and the pure white dove implying piety and purity. It makes one wonder what the message says! Is it scandalous or just an expression of devotion and love that makes the young girl blush? Geometrically it is interesting with implied circles and the square within the square of the rock pillar, the roundness of the blooms and the basket to the arching of the trees that are so influenced by Watteau that one would be excused from mistaking it for a Watteau. The vivid color and the seemingly pausing effect in a moment of life is quite intriguing.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher#/media/File:Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher_-_Putti_with_Birds'.jpg

Consider the painting “**Putti with Birds.**” Putti is the plural of Putto, which is another word for “Cherub.” They are almost always male and usually depicted with wings. This is so dripping with Classicism that it seems almost too sugary to be a Rococo. One can still see Watteau shining through in the treatment of the leaves of the trees and the organic line is everywhere. These Classical themes include such visions but also a more pastoral look from time to time such as Boucher’s work “The Bridge.”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher#/media/File:Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher_007.jpg

This is a purely pastoral themed painting and depicts, no doubt, his wife, along with his child in some daily routine, although it is doubtful that they did such things; being the wife of a prominent artist. The Roman arch of the bridge is a wink at the Classicism in the painting but it is calming and pastoral for the viewer. One striking thing is the realism of the outdoors. The trees look real and the sky, in its cyclic unpredictability, is starting to look overcast. It looks like a day that any might see many times in a lifetime. When we consider this pastoral presentation, we must not forget that he was also a portrait painter.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Boucher#/media/File:Boucher_Marquise_de_Pompadour_1756.jpg

The jarring color of her dress brings out the lily white color of her skin. She is elegant, refined, and quite beautiful, albeit, the definition of beauty shifts over time. Her face is idealized and she is seated in opulence, suitable for a consort to the king. The interplay between light and shadow are Baroque influences that add drama to the gold....gold everywhere...from the curtains to the column to the background. She is rich, and Boucher wants you to know it; and intelligent, “she can read...can you?” he seems to ask. All in all a perfect depiction of aristocratic refinement.

Jacques-Louis David

David was born in **August 1748 and died in 1825** and was the most important painter of the **French school** in the Neoclassical style. He can be termed as a **transitory artist** in that his style of history paintings by the 1780s showed a shift in taste that some would call a bee-line toward Romanticism. Indeed, this author would consider him a transitory figure into Romanticism because of the drama of his painting and based on the personality of the man himself. His style moved away from Rococo and toward a more refined classical style that began to flirt with Romanticism and the power of eliciting an emotional response.

David later became an active supporter of the **French revolution**. This was a volatile time to be alive and in France. One moment you could be in the streets of Paris and the next minute heads would roll. **Jean-Paul Marat**, one of the leaders of the revolution was partially the instigator of the streets of Paris running red with the guillotines that took place. It was his assassination that is one of Jacques-Louis David's most profound works. See the link below for this powerful and emotionally charged painting.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Death_of_Marat#/media/File:Death_of_Marat_by_David.jpg

This exquisite piece is both gory and powerful. The names of the targets and soon to be guillotined still clutched in his death grip, Marat has been murdered in his bath...where he spent most of his time due to a painful skin condition. The death blow still seeping and the pool of water stained red, The murder weapon cast on the floor, blood stained. There is a distant glow on Marat's face, almost saintly, and believe me, it is deliberate. He was yet another martyr in the French Revolution, murdered by a royalist. The influence of Titian and the shadings of Rembrandt add to the presentation. The geometry of the painting is two rectangles offset by an angle cast by the shadows on the wall. The asymmetry of the work seems to insist that we look upon the man. Forget how bloody his hands are figuratively speaking! "We have lost another one!" the painting seems to say. Revolutions are a bloody thing and David portrays it unflinchingly.

By aligning himself with the political regime of **Napoleon I**, David becomes the "**dictator of the arts**" in a manner of speaking. At least, that was what they called him. People didn't like David, though they loved his work and it was undeniably genius, his personality stung them and many hated him for it. His many pupils, making him the most influential painter of the 19th Century, were probably no exception to that fact.

David had been wounded in a duel and left with an **permanent facial tumor** that not only detracted from his appearance but also impeded his speech, David tried to win the illustrious **Prix de Rome**, an art scholarship to the French academy five times, and when they did not award it to him, he tried to starve himself to death in protest. Finally, he was awarded the prize in 1774. While in Rome, he toured the ruins and observed the Italian masterpieces, which, no doubt, were an influence. The fellow students at the academy found him difficult to get along with but they admired the genius he was. He was praised by famous contemporaries for his

work. Even so, the Royal Academy was hostile to the young genius. He left an impressive body of work including many portraits.

Consider the work “**Oath of the Horatti.**”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques-Louis_David#/media/File:Jacques-Louis_David,_Le_Serment_des_Horaces.jpg

This powerful work is from Roman legend where two warring cities choose three warriors to settle the battle. Only one of the three brothers will survive, but will slay the other three in strategy. They are willing to die for their country. Sound familiar? It should considering this is the time of revolution. They will give all if they have to as they uplift hands in oath to the implements of war. See that girl crying in the bottom right hand corner? She is not necessarily weeping for her brothers. You see, she is in love with one of the fighters from the other city. Either way, she will lose greatly in this battle. The Romanesque arches in the back and the stark shading remind us of Caravaggio and the balance is Rubenesque in this polychromatic work. It is balanced and yet powerful at the same time.

Consider also this painting, “**The Death of Socrates.**”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques-Louis_David#/media/File:David_-_The_Death_of_Socrates.jpg

This is the death of reason as Socrates preaches his last words to his students, reaching for the hemlock that will end his life...a death sentence for corrupting the minds of the youth. That was something that Royalist accused revolutionaries of doing. Contrary to popular belief, Socrates' last words were not, “I drank what?” He knew the end was coming. A student asked him if he thought there was an afterlife, to which Socrates uttered his final words, “I hope so!” This polychromatic work still contains classical elements but is leaning Romantic in the movement and motion of the work. His students grieve, his shackles cast aside, he goes to his death.

Lastly, consider this sketch by David called “**The Tennis Court Oath.**”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques-Louis_David#/media/File:Le_Serment_du_Jeu_de_paume.jpg

The incendiary speaker in the center is **Maximilien Robespierre** and the revolution has begun as he declares the intention and will of the people. The curtains billow and all men are reaching, ecstatic at their willingness to die for the cause of French nationalism. The time has come. It is just a sketch but an important one...this moment lit the fires of the powderkeg of the revolution in France. Soon Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette would be beheaded and the flames of war would be fanned throughout Europe.

This author is fond of referring to Jacques-Louis David as the Beethoven of painting.

Section Two: Neo-Classical Music

One of the most influential composers of the Neoclassical period is Franz Joseph Haydn, an Austrian composer that is fondly referred to as the **Father of the Symphony** and the **Father of the String Quartet**. He was born **March 31, 1732** and died **May 31 1809**. Haydn is the composer that refined the compositional style of the Neoclassical period. As he stated once, due to living on the extremely remote estate of his patron, the **Esterhazys**, he was forced to be innovative. Stylistically, Haydn, no doubt, had a direct influence upon his contemporary, Mozart and his former student **Ludwig van Beethoven**.

When one listens to Haydn, especially his early works, there is still just the distant wink at the Baroque period but that is soon left behind in the all of 30 years that he worked for the Esterhazys. He rarely left the estate except for one period where he was invited to London for a concert series because Haydn was wildly popular to the English audiences and he was well received by the Londoners. This lucrative opportunity provided him with income and to vaunt his fame in the wider world than the Esterhazys that he had worked for for so long. Consider this composition by Haydn, "**The Surprise Symphony**," that he composed for the English audiences.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbf1LVE4UKM>

You are encouraged to experience the full symphony, it is good for the old brain, but the opening is genius. It draws you in with its simplistic harmony and melody that lulls you to a quiet, calm mindset, only to smack you in the head with a loud bang. The effect was amazing on the audience and it was an immensely popular performance. Consider also the "**Clock Symphony**."

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjcJkpWeRcE>

There is the tick tock in the symphony that one would expect in such a symphony. This is just the beginning of a style called **Programmatic Music**, "a type of instrumental **art music** that attempts to render an extra-musical **narrative** musically."²² This isn't officially programmatic but it is leaning that way, because it paints a picture in the mind. Programmatic music goes on to an important innovation in the 19th century among the Romantic Composer. Consider the "**Drum Roll Symphony**."

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cXFXLjWVFw>

²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Program_music, accessed 6-4-2020

Did you find the drum roll? You might have to listen for a bit but it is there and it delighted the audiences of the time. This was entertainment at its best....a top 5 piece, had they had a top 100 in Haydn's day. The audience adored him and all his work did was solidify his reputation as one of the greatest composers in history.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

One of the most significant and important composers of the Neoclassical Period is W.A. Mozart. His brief life left a monumental contribution in the world of the Enlightenment. His style and flair for the dramatic would have been a pivotal moment toward Romanticism had his life not fell tragically short. Born in 1756 to the imminent composer, **Leopold Mozart**, the young boy showed his ability at a remarkable age. He was a prodigy, that is "a person, especially a young one, endowed with exceptional qualities or abilities."²³ He wrote his **first composition** at the age of four and his **first symphony** by the age of 7. He wrote his **first opera** at the age of 12. His father would be a dominant personality in his life, being his first teacher and technically, his first talent agent. Leopold whisked the young genius on a whirlwind tour of Europe as he wowed audiences with not only his ability to play but the uncanny ability at **improvisation**, that is when you simply make up cohesive music or performance as you go along.

As the young musician grew, he soon found himself in the mutual employ of his father's patron, the **ArchBishop Colloredo** in Salzburg. This would be a stormy relationship with the young musician constantly pushing the envelope of acceptable behavior both in the present of the Archbishop and when he was away as a representative. This stormy relationship would boil over when Mozart finally was released from his employ and he set out to make his fortune in the wild world, and more specifically, Vienna, known as the **City of Musicians**. His talent continued to grow as he put out more and more compositions, sometimes flaunting his refusal to follow the rules of music in order to achieve his musical intent. His output is more than 600 compositions ranging from Symphonies and Operas to Piano Concertos, Sonatas, and **Singspiel**, a kind of entertainment for the common people with spoken and musical dialogue.

Mozart is, by far, one of the most prolific composers of the Neoclassical period. Sadly, he lived a short life and one can only speculate what might have happened had he lived another decade or two. He very well may have ushered in the Romantic period for composers. Still, his style is unmatched in its seeming perfection.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4lXXpTHjok> Written at age 7

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oD6Av5Kyt4>

The above two symphonies are some of his earlier works. As he progressed, the power of his music began to punctuate his genius. Consider his Symphony No. 40 in g minor

²³ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/prodigy?s=t>, accessed 6-4-2020

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTc1mDieQI8> Symphony no. 40

The simplicity of the music is its power. Not simple to play but almost transparent in its presentation, the drama of the minor key seems to exist in a question and answer presentation. He presents the question and then answers with a sequential down melody. Then another question, and then the same answer. This is among some of his most well known symphonies. Among other styles that Mozart wrote in, he was fond of piano works, creating some fantastic keyboard pieces for the delight of audiences.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KHvNDn-o0s> Piano concerto in d minor for piano and Orchestra

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87j4_IYRKAI Piano Concerto in D Major for piano and Orchestra

Additionally, he was a large contributor to the artform of Opera, some of the most magnificent pieces by Mozart are from his operas. For instance, the **Papageno aria** from “The Magic Flute,” When the Papageno finally finds his love.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qF0lidudY74> Papageno’s Aria

And the “Queen of the Night” Aria that has been used in popular culture.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0jdh5rlvx-M> Volvo commercial

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuBeBjqKSGQ> Queen of the Night

As you can tell, if you follow the last length, this is not a feel good piece. This lady is ticked off and letting the other know it. Mozart dabbled in darker themes more than many of his predecessors. This is where we begin to see the Romantic coming out of the young man. In his 30s, he began to struggle with health and some darker tones are applied in his compositions. His last and darkest Opera is **Don Giovanni**, in which the rogue Giovanni is dragged to the flames of hell by demons. Please watch this clip from an opera house that explores the darker themes.

In this scene the ghost of the murdered **Commendatore** arrives for a mocking invitation that Don Giovanni had offered to his statue. The arrogant and stubborn character refuses to repent and is swallowed by demons.

Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY_bQpmEBc0 Commendatore scene. I encourage you to watch the whole scene....it is worth the wait. So many nightmarish figures must have

assaulted the refined Neo-Classical mind. Dark and foreboding, it is hard to convince this author that this is not the beginning of the Romantic period.

In his final years, he was approached by a mysterious man that commissioned a “**Requiem mass**,” that is, a Mass for the Dead. He set to work on it, pausing only once to write a short instrumental work for clarinet. It was the Requiem that he was writing on his deathbed. He was actually giving dictation to his student, Sussmyer in his last moments. He finished 12 measures from the end but his student completed it based on an outline Mozart had made. In the motion picture, Amadeus, which is a partially fictional account of his life, they ascribe one of Mozart’s actual friends as his enemy that is trying to steal his music. The premise is ridiculous because they had tremendous respect for one another. Here is the scene that shows what the dictation might have looked like.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USe-wZ0AOQQ>, Confutatis and Lacrimosa movement from “Amadeus.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPlhKP0nZII>, The complete Requiem Mass in d minor

In popular culture, one movement of the Requiem is often used in action sequences as in this scene from XMen 2.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s9zFTLSC0Mw> NightCrawler attacks the White House Mozart’s Requiem: Dies Irae movement.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKJur8wpfYM> Dies Irae

At the age of 35, Mozart died in Salzburg and because of his penniless state, he was buried in a **pauper’s grave** along with dozens of other bodies. Thus ended a brilliant but very troubled life of one of the greatest composers who ever lived.

Ludwig van Beethoven

Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany in the Electorate of Cologne in the Holy Roman Empire in 1770. He is a **crucial figure** in the transition of classical Music to Romantic styles. Beethoven was one and eldest of three brothers. Beethoven’s first teacher was his father, **Johann van Beethoven**, a modestly talented musician that had delusions of his son being a cash cow like Mozart was for his family. His constant pressure was an unhealthy influence on the young composer and eventually led to a rather abusive relationship.

Often the father would come home drunk and drag the sleeping child from the bed and demand that he practice his scales. Sometimes he would demand that Ludwig play for his drunken guests, boxing the young boy’s ears if he made a mistake and cursing at him. Many

times it devolved into a beating. The young boy would then practice all night until the sound of the morning bells meant that he could return to bed. It was not a happy time but Beethoven's father. Somewhere around 1779, Beethoven began to study with **Christian Gottlob Neefe**. It was Neefe that assisted Beethoven in publishing some of his first compositions. He also studied with **Antonio Salieri**, Court composer to the King of Austria.

Beethoven had to get a court order to force Johann to support his family so that Beethoven could study with Haydn in Vienna. It wasn't long before his mother and then later, his father died and was again forced into a supportive role. Nevertheless, he also sought to study with **Mozart** in 1787 but was unable to secure the position. His illustrious career Beethoven also became involved in piano improvisation contests in the wealthy salons of the nobility. No one could best Beethoven and his fame spread. He became a rather stylish guest to have at one's parties.

During his life, Beethoven wrote **nine symphonies**, numerous concertos, an **opera** and many string quartets and other instrumental and choral works. His fiery character and temper solidified him as the typical moody artist personality. He was restless, moving 77 times in his life, sometimes staying as little as a week or two in one residence. He was fond of long walks in the wood especially during thunderstorms. His music is stormy and passionate and heavily influenced by **Haydn, Mozart, and Salieri**. His first symphony premiered on April 2, 1800 to critical acclaim and his music was already in high demand from publishers and patrons.

Around **1796**, Beethoven began describing a ringing in his ears among other signs that there was a hearing problem developing. By **1801**, his deafness was intensifying and he began to describe them to friends and visiting doctors. As Beethoven began to lose his hearing, feelings of anguish began to close in and thoughts of suicide began to creep in from both his health and the constant pressure of caring for his roguish nephew **Karl van Beethoven**. Beethoven settled in a small country town called Heiligenstadt and it is there that he penned his famous **Heiligenstadt Testament**, a document that started out as a suicide letter and ended up punctuating Beethoven's defiance of his fate. It was this moment that led to Beethoven triumphing over his handicap to become, perhaps, one of the greatest composers who ever lived.

If one listens to Beethoven's Symphonies, you can almost tell the struggle that goes on in the man, from elation to the depths of despair. His first symphony, Movement one, for instance:

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1rA68yF4tM> Symphony no. 1

This symphony subtly hints at the greatness that Beethoven will achieve. He is still heavily influenced by the Classical style but there is that distant indication that this man will go beyond Mozart and Haydn. Indeed he does, but in this are all the influences of those great composers and his teachers such as Antonio Salieri and Haydn. It is remarkable....and about one or two minutes, there is a hint of Mozart and maybe even a wink at the Symphony No. 41 by Mozart!

The 2nd symphony fully embraces the late Classical/Early Romantic style called **Sturm und Drang**, a style of storm and stress, literally what the words in German mean. Still classical in style, the composer's ability is developing and the organization and cohesiveness of the composition is remarkable to listen to. It is optimistic, the moody, passionate, and defiant. Truly, this is Beethoven as the budding Romanticist.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZyeEeXhYs4> Symphony no. 2

His third symphony was, at first, dedicated to a political hero who would go on to disappoint the composer and thereby, Beethoven changed the name from "Bonaparte" to the **Eroica Symphony**, meaning "heroic." It is Beethoven's third symphony and by this time, Beethoven was falling more and more into the struggle against his growing deafness. He was falling into desperation about his condition. He even stayed in the city when French forces were shelling it because he could hear the booms. He became rather fond of walking in thunderstorms for the same reason, shouting at the thunder when it rumbled. This third symphony is one that begins a turn into the second style of Beethoven, that of the Romantic.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTbesxdLwo8> Symphony no. 3 "Eroica"

His fourth symphony though begins with a very introspective and thoughtful introduction. Almost a wail of anguish or the drone of the struggle of the soul against the loss of the once sense that should have been perfect in him, his hearing. Listen to the anguish in the opening lines of Symphony No. 4. He is contemplating his fate.....do I go on? Do I end it all? "Why me?" he seems to ask. The opening strains are pure anguish...a void in the soul, darkness creeping in and shaking a threatening fist at him.....does he relent or just shake his fist right back?

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQm6Xu4vYWo> Symphony no. 4

Symphony no. 5 and 6 are his answers. Symphony no. 5 is a defiant one that refuses to give in and pounds its 4 note motif over and over again, like a hand beating on the door of opportunity. It appears several times in the symphony and remains one of the most well known classical compositions in history....but make no mistake, this is Beethoven shaking his fist into the face of fate and saying, "I will not relent!" The sixth, however, takes us on a tour of the countryside, a place Beethoven was fond of walking, and we pass through valleys and even a storm and finally the storm passes and the promise of a new day is offered.

Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKI4T5BnhOA> Symphony no. 5

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4CCU2-AFZE> Symphony no. 6 "The Pastoral Symphony"

Five years would pass before he would write another and its second movement is one that deals with the turmoil of the aging composer, now quite deaf, and it is filled with despair. But true to form, Beethoven never stays in one place very long and eventually we find him frolicking again in positivity and optimism, whether it was put on or not.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKXFdT14DIE> Symphony No. 7 2nd movement

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMrm9jEo_Pk Symphony No. 7 entire

The 8th Symphony sees the composer transitioning beyond Romantic to what scholars call the “Beethoven” period....a time in which it is hard to place the period that the music belongs and is likely a direct result of his loss of hearing. By the time the 8th rolled around, he was quite deaf but still able to manage the sound of an orchestra. It is both joyful and defiant...all the things we love about Beethoven.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fa6DRoxpOwg> Symphony No. 8 Entire

The last symphony and what this author considers his Magnum Opus is the monumental 9th symphony that is the first among many things. It was the first that featured a full choir, it was the first that featured soloist quartet singers, it was the first to use the new “keyed” French Horns and it was the first ever written by a man that was, by this time, profoundly deaf. The premiere was a smash success but Beethoven, not knowing how it had come off for the audience, would not turn to face them, instead, a soprano and the first violinist gently turned him around to receive the thunderous applause and standing ovation.

Link: This symphony is auto-biographical, as if Beethoven is taking us to his birth in what he called “void music” and from it emerges a defiant, fist shaking hero that makes up the legend Beethoven.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsn4ORNLTJc> Symphony No. 9 1st movement. It is as if each movement is a microcosmos of its own.

The 2nd movement is a flirtatious, bouncing fugue that crescendos into a powerful whirlwind, nearly dance-like but far too powerful to be a dance!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tn4lk8fRskA> Symphony No. 9 2nd movement. It is flirtatious, vigorous, defiant, relentless, passionate and features another first, solo timpani.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7AuziEe3Fw> Symphony No. 9 3rd movement. It is a tremendously thankful composition with its “Appassionata” feel to it that makes even the listener feel grateful for the life we have been given.

The 4th movement is otherworldly as the low strings represent the narrative voice of Beethoven as the orchestra quotes the different sections of the symphony’s movements, as if to say this is my life, and I have brought you here, and this is where I am going. Eventually, it leads to the choral parts that are Schiller’s “Ode to Joy.” It is fantastic. Among the moving words are these, which this author considers the composers “Goodbye” to the world, as he will soon pass from this world.

“Be embraced, Millions!
This kiss to all the world!
Brothers, above the starry canopy
There must dwell a loving Father.
Are you collapsing, millions?
Do you sense the creator, world?
Seek him above the starry canopy!
Above stars must He dwell.”²⁴

He would last only 3 more years and there would be no more symphonies, however a sketch was left for a 10th that was later completed in the 20th century by an arranger.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChygZLpJDNE> Symphony No. 9 4th movement entire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kcOpyM9cBg>, at 6:54 is the Choral entrance. Enjoy!

Not to be left out is the Beethoven’s Piano concertos and sonatas. I will provide a link to each one. Each one is deeply personal to Beethoven and highlights his Pathetique, Appassionata, and Beethoven styles.

Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Tr0otuiQuU> Moonlight Sonata

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erD1Yy-4F5M> Hammerklavier Sonata

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QImFm4Y_QPM Appassionata Sonata

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqvBJc9lovI> Pathetique Sonata

²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ode_to_Joy, accessed 6-12-2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mVW8tgGY_w Für Elise

Beethoven's transition to Romanticist to experimentalist begins a whole new school of thought which seems to create rules only to destroy them by experimentation. Such as Beethoven's experimental Gross Fugue. It is so close that we can almost categorize it as "pre-jazz" with its near swing feel.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XAgdd2VqLVc>

At its premiere, the Arch-Duke stated to Beethoven, "My God, you are deafer than I thought!"

Chapter Eleven
Section One
Romanticism Art

A **contemporary of Beethoven** begins our study of Romanticism in the visual arts with **William Blake**, a painter of considerable talent and reputation. He was **born November 28, 1757 and died August 12, 1827**, the same year as Beethoven. Like Beethoven, Blake is a rule maker and breaker. His avant garde approach to painting was quite a shock to even the enlightened senses of the Romantics but in spirit, he is completely full in his expression and unafraid to let it show, both in his paintings and his poetry. His poetry truly belongs to the vein of Byron, Yeats, and Coolidge. He produced a diverse and symbolically rich body of work.

Considered mad by his contemporaries, Blake simply walked to the beat of his own drum, if you will, and that makes him all the more interesting to study. His views were filled with idiosyncratic views and a thick cynicism to the world as a whole. His body of work belongs in the “Pre-Romantic” and “Romantic” styles. In that way, he is a Beethoven of the visual arts, much like our old friend Jacques Louis David, although Blake is much more graphic and free in his paintings.

His ideals were directly affected by the **French and American revolutions** and the whole idea of revolutionary thought. Blake considered himself **devoutly given to God** but was **hostile to all forms of organized religion** with his **reverence for the Bible intact**. He was critical of the way organized religion worked and like so many artists, forged out his own version of theology, which is usually something that ends poorly for the founder. He was influenced by the Bible while still young with the hostilities coming later toward the church, as a whole. He was the **third of seven children**, two of whom died in infancy.

His father would purchase copies of engravings of Greek antiquities and Blake would hand copy them. His engravings themselves are considered masterpieces. The prints and paintings, however, are nearly surreal in many aspects. Consider “**Oberian, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing**”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake#/media/File:Oberon,_Titania_and_Puck_with_Fairies_Dancing,_William_Blake,_c.1786.jpg

This is unlike anything seen in the previous period and there is a wink at mannerism with the elongation of features. There is a general absence of realism because William Blake compels it to be so, following his own rules of painting. The colors are light enough to not be polychromatic but diverse enough not to be monochromatic. **Motion** is everywhere with the curved limbs and wispy dress. One thing that defines Blake is his use of **geometry**. Can you detect the shapes in this piece? There is a circle, a square, and many others that we can detect if we look carefully. It is fanciful but yet foreign even to our eyes.

Another remarkable work is a piece from his printmaking, **Jerusalem Plate 51**, where he ascribes one John Skofeld to torment by his own making. This same John Skofeld once was thrown out of Blake's residence by Blake himself and retaliated by accusing Blake of speaking against the British crown and His Majesty's army which resulted in Blake being brought up on charges of sedition, of which he was acquitted. His retaliation is to bind Skofeld in the "**manacles of his own making**" in the Jerusalem plate 51 of the London collection.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake#/media/File:William_Blake_-_Jerusalem_Plate_51_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

This is a water color that is part of his **Magnum Opus entitled, "Jerusalem,"** and is a bit disturbing to view. I can find no way better to comment on it than the Tate Exhibit speaking here:

"The picture shows (from left to right) Vala, Goddess of Nature, Hyle, one of the giant Sons of Albion, and 'Skofeld'. The last of these three is the most interesting, since we can see how Blake took his revenge on people who had crossed him by inserting them into his private mythology. 'Skofeld' is, in fact, Private John Schofield, the soldier who, after being expelled by Blake from his Sussex garden, claimed that Blake had made disparaging remarks about the King and the British army, causing him to be tried for sedition in 1804. The scholar Morton D. Paley points out that Schofield, burning in hell-fire, is also weighed down by 'mind-forg'd manacles' of the kind we saw in *London*, in the *Songs of Experience*, while his posture resembles that of the personification of Despair in *The House of Death*."²⁵ An interesting way to wreak revenge upon those who have crossed you...no?

Another fascinating picture by Blake is "**Nebuchadnezzar,**" created in 1795 that depicts the Biblical Babylonian king when he was humbled by the Hebrew God in **Daniel Chapter 4**. The prophecy states that madness would strike the king and he would dwell among animals, grow hair and claws and have the mind of a dumb animal. He is depicted here in his full humility.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_\(Blake\)#/media/File:William_Blake_-_Nebuchadnezzar_\(Tate_Britain\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebuchadnezzar_(Blake)#/media/File:William_Blake_-_Nebuchadnezzar_(Tate_Britain).jpg)

The madness in his face is quite striking as is the otherworldly colors and the suspension of realism in favor of the madness of **surrealism**. He is on all fours like an animal as if he were caught in the flash of a game camera and the madness remains. Blake is able to capture this perfectly for the viewer and draws us into the madness by our repulsion. This initiates an **emotional response** in the viewer, which is the intention of Romanticism, therefore, it is a successful painting.

²⁵ <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/william-blake-39/blakes-jerusalem>. Accessed 6-12-2020

In his work, “**Ancient of Days**,” Blake portrays the creation simply. God just is....and then He creates. Note the use of strong geometry and symmetry in this work as well as the balance and the jarring differences in color. Magnificent isn't it?

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_of_Days#/media/File:Europe_a_Prophecy_copy_D_object_1_\(Bentley_1,_Erdman_i,_Keynes_i\)_British_Museum.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_of_Days#/media/File:Europe_a_Prophecy_copy_D_object_1_(Bentley_1,_Erdman_i,_Keynes_i)_British_Museum.jpg)

A thematic work about Revelations brings us some disturbing imagery in the Red Dragon works he created. This work inspired the novel “**Red Dragon**” antagonist to murder indiscriminantly and to tattoo his body with its markings. The first in the series is titled the “**Great Red Dragon and the Woman clothed with the Sun**” from **Revelation 12** in the Bible.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Red_Dragon_Paintings#/media/File:William_Blake_003.jpg

Note the opposing forces, the woman of **light** and the darkness of the Dragon. What is Blake trying to say? What is the message of the work? It is powerful but unless you read the story in Revelation 12, it will make little sense. The one that inspired the book follows, called “The Great Red Dragon.”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Red_Dragon_Paintings#/media/File:The_Great_Red_Dragon_and_the_Woman_Clothed_with_the_Sun.jpg

Quite disturbing isn't it. Not the kind of painting one would necessarily take a date to for a fine arts experience. It makes the eye blink and flinch at the grotesque twisted mass of muscle, sinewy wings, and perversely twisted horns. His style is definitely successful with emotions but not so much with beauty. What is this art? One must understand the idea of art from a modern perspective. The artist creates the world that you must recognize and exist in and follow their rules instead of the established rules. Through art, they try to become masters of their own universe and therefore in control of thought, perception, action, and control.

Francisco José de Goya

Goya, a **Spanish painter** is widely regarded as the **last of the Old Masters** and the **Beginning of the Moderns**, was born on **March 30, 1746** and died **April 16, 1828**. His tendency to stretch and even break the accepted rules of painting is what cemented him as this transitory figure into modernity. Often, true to the Romanticist, he sought only for **emotional impact** for his paintings and was unflinching in his depictions of gore and nightmarish visions.

He was the **painter to the Spanish crown** but was under constant barrage of criticisms for his refusal to submit to the stylistic rules.

Stylistically, Goya is, to this author, the **embodiment of romanticism**. At the age of 14, he was apprenticed to an eminent painter named **Jose Luzán**. He would eventually become a model for later painters such as **Manet, Francis Bacon, and Pablo Picasso**. He would eventually move Madrid to study with **Anton Mengs**, a painter with whom the Spanish Crown was favorably disposed to have as their painter. This position would eventually become Goya's appointment. His road to fame was not without rocky points. In 1763 and 1766, he submitted entries for the **Royal Academy of Art** but was denied entrance.

His relocation to Rome saw some attention for the young painter when he won 2nd prize in an art contest. Eventually, as his style began to mature, his appointment to the post of painter to the royal court would cement his fame and his contribution to the visual arts. However, his idiosyncrasies would get in the way from time to time. For instance, he often ran afoul of the Church in Spain, being accused of blasphemy and other accusations but he endured. He also had a habit of depicting people that he disliked in painting as homely. In other words, if he didn't like you, he would paint you ugly. If you were likable, your portrait would shine. One of his most transcendent is the painting titled, "**Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuniga**," depicting the son of the Count of Altamira, who commissioned several paintings from Goya.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2f/WLA_metmuseum_Manuel_Osorio_Manrique_de_Zuniga_by_Francisco_Goya.jpg

When we look at the painting, we are struck by the sharp color of red. This beautiful work is also called "**The Red Boy**." It is transcendent because just look at that face and its porcelain perfection. The child is beautiful and his striking features are carefully depicted. His dark eyes and hair offset by his pale skin. Any self-respecting royal would be pale...not like the tanned peasantry. This child, however, is depicted so because the artist willed to paint him in exquisite perfection. The line is pretty basic with organic like in the circular shape of the cat crouched, ready to pounce on the pet nightingale. It is backdropped by a careful amber base that hearkens back to **Titian**. An exquisite work that leans more classical than romantic but only because the artist wills it so....this child was something else. He must have cared for him.

Now, contrast this painting with the following one called "**Courtyard with Lunatics**." It is disturbing and reminiscent of a time when the general public could pay a fee to go in and ridicule and observe the people there and in their subhuman conditions, being beaten by the helmeted watchmen with their clubs. Wallowing in their own excrement, their delusions were entertainment for the masses. Thank God for regulation and human rights eh?

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Goya#/media/File:Courtyard_with_Lunatics_by_Goya_1794.jpg

The dismal depiction is heartbreaking. They are just splayed across the canvas for all to see in their delusions and anguish. Violence is there along with just plain madness. There is a haze from **source lighting** and the **basic amber base** that was highly favored by Goya. With close analysis, one can see the triangle near the top and the sequence of rectangles that form the walls. This is not a medical place, this is a prison for all your darkest nightmares and only got worse if you were what they called them then....inmates.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Goya#/media/File:La_familia_de_Carlos_IV_por_Francisco_de_Goya.jpg

This portrait of the Royal family is a great example of how he felt about the different individuals in the royal family. Some of them are stunning in their beauty or handsome and brave, others, not so much. Goya had much to say in this painting. The queen is center as if Goya was saying, "This is where the real power is!" She isn't very lovely is she? Age has caught up with the lady and her husband, the king is remanded to her left. Goya sneaks himself into the portrait in the top left. I wonder if the young princess couldn't stand still and that is why we are denied a look at her face. But it is realistic, isn't it. How many pictures have you seen where there is one person looking off in the distance. It is rather humorous though....what could she be doing? At the same time, they are depicted in opulence and riches as if to say, "This is power!"

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Goya#/media/File:Maja_vestida_\(Prado\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Goya#/media/File:Maja_vestida_(Prado).jpg)

This painting seems copied in popular culture for over a century. This painting is repeated in film over the top of bar room scenes of the old west and there is even a little wink at it in the movie, "Titanic." Not this one precisely...this is the one he presented when he got in trouble with the original which depicts her totally nude. Scandalous!

Some of his paintings are disturbing. Like "**The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters,**" which is nightmarish in quality.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Goya#/media/File:Museo_del_Prado_-_Goya_-_Caprichos_-_No._43_-_El_sue%C3%B1o_de_la_razon_produce_monstruos.jpg

The nightmarish wisdom of owls surrounds the sleeping philosopher. The mind is left to run wild with no restraint if reason is suspended. At least that is what he was trying to say. The name of the painting is on the desk. It is disturbing but not as disturbing as the next one, called "**Saturn Devouring his Children.**"

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/82/Francisco_de_Goya%2C_Saturno_devorando_a_su_hijo_%281819-1823%29.jpg

As you can see, he wasn't afraid of gore, was he? Saturn's wild eyes jutting out of his head in the insanity of the moment. He is literally, bite by bite, eating one of his sons. A fuzzy, yet black background is offset by the fleshtones of this mad monster as he dispatches one of the threats to his throne. Did it really need to be that gory? Well, the story is that Saturn consumed his children, the Olympians, to protect his power. It doesn't look like this one will recover. The gore is shocking as the headless body is held limp in the hands of a monstrosity. Literally, the only brightness from the painting comes from the pale flesh and the white knuckles of Saturn as he digs his fingers into the back of the body. Gross....no?

John Constable

On the 11th of June, **John Constable** was born to Golding and Ann Constable in **Suffolk, England**. His father was a **wealthy corn merchant** whom he persuaded to allow him to pursue a career in art in 1799. The man's approval also allowed a generous allowance for the young man to continue his studies. He found love in his childhood sweetheart **Mary Bicknell** but they never married because Constable's grandfather disapproved of the union because "she was beneath him." They continued their love affair for years. Some of his biggest influences were **Peter Paul Rubens** and **Thomas Gainsborough** who is primarily known for "The Blue Boy" painting.

Gainsborough's painting Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b6/The_Blue_Boy.jpg

If you study Gainsborough and then Constable, you will see the influence. Constable was better known for his landscape depictions of **Dedham Vale**, near his home. His works are wonderful and known for their ability to draw the viewer into the painting. Is it possible to elicit an emotional response from a landscape. You can answer this question if you have ever had your breath taken away by the Grand Canyon or the mighty Pike's Peak.

He often embarked on sketching trips through Suffolk and neighboring Essex. Consider this portrayal of Dedham Vale and all its golden glory.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b3/Constable_DedhamVale.jpg

One can look at this painting and nearly see influences from a great many of the masters. The trees are treated much like **Francois Boucher** or **Watteau** might have depicted them. The golden amber that leaps off the page takes us to **Titian** and the point of disappearance reaches all the way back to **da Vinci**. It is exciting to see so much contribution from the old masters in this one man. The gentle arches in the tree give the painting a **rhythm** that permeates the painting with movement. As if we have stopped atop a hill and looked down into the vale itself. It is a masterpiece.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Constable#/media/File:John_Constable_-_Wivenhoe_Park,_Essex_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Here in this piece, Constable gives us a view of **Wivenhoe Park** and all its pastoral beauty. This could easily be any place in Oklahoma as well. The wide open spaces and the feasting cattle settle the viewer, complemented with the perfect reflection of the trees in the distance. This is just shy of a photograph. He cries from the canvas, "This is life in the country" and it makes us want to be there with him.

This is one of his few portraits that follows here. It is of **Mary Bicknell**, the love of his life. She is an exquisite beauty and Constable captures it perfectly. Cast upon an amber based background, she has an elegance that is a testimony against the disapproving grandfather. It is like Constable is saying, "This is what you say no to!" This elegant beauty is depicted in a Romantic way, with the drama of her eyes and the intensity of her gaze. He was in love.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/85/John_Constable_022.jpg

Another pastoral theme is one of his most famous paintings. One thing that one can say about Constable is that he favored consistency. There is nearly an animal in all of his paintings of landscapes, usually a dog, so keep a watchful eye out for repetition by this master. "**The Haywain**," is probably the one that he is most noted for.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5e/John_Constable_-_The_Hay_Wain_%281821%29.jpg

The colors explode from the canvas and there is that dog of his, dead center. This is normal pastoral life for the country folk with all their daily toil. Constable captures it perfectly. We again see the Watteau trees and the treatment of light perfectly, especially in reflection on the water. Now compare this painting with this one, "**The Cornfield**."

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Constable#/media/File:John_Constable_008.jpg

There is the dog again, and the shepherd boy lies down to drink from the stream. Thematically they are the same but the focus is different. Perhaps this is another vantage point before we reach the area of the Haywain.

Lastly, consider this work, which this author considers a wink at modernism with the treatment of the rain in the distance. It isn't something one is used to seeing in this period but Constable does it. It is marvelous. It is called "**Seascape study with Rain Cloud.**"

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Constable#/media/File:Constable_-_Seascape_Study_with_Rain_Cloud.jpg

The streaks of rain are dramatic strokes of the brush but we have seen it, haven't we, when gazing at a distant storm, the streaks of rain falling to the ground. In some of his paintings, he leans closer to Impressionism. Such as a familiar site to us all, "**Stonehenge.**"

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Constable#/media/File:John_Constable_-_Stonehenge_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

Please enjoy the gallery and click through his paintings. Look for thematic elements and recall where you saw them earlier.

Links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Constable#/media/File:John_Constable_by_Daniel_Gardner,_1796.JPG

Eugene Delacroix

One of the most influential artists of the **Romantic era** is **Eugene Delacroix**, a painter who directly influenced the period of "Impressionism." Born in 1798, he was a French painter that is elevated to the level of master with his powerful brushstrokes and his ability to capture the optical effect of color. It profoundly affected later artists such as Monet and Renoir. His struggle began nearly at birth. He was the illegitimate son of his mother's paramour. Nevertheless, he triumphed by becoming a great artist.

He emphasized color and movement rather than clarity of line. This is the distinctive quality of his work. For instance, his work, "**Horse Frightened by a Storm,**" there is a dissemination of line in favor of the jolt and panic of the horse.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Eugene_Delacroix_-_Horse_Frightened_by_Lightning_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

One of the profound things about this painting is that it is watercolor, a medium that becomes widely used in the Impressionist movement. Watercolor is extremely difficult to master but Delacroix has done it. The panic has ensued as the horse rears back unnaturally, almost bent to breaking...and that is just what he is going to do...bolt! He will tear across the countryside, desperate to escape but there is no escape from the storm.

One of his most well known works is “**Liberty leading the people.**” Look closely at the face, she is a familiar one if you have ever sailed the route around the Statue of Liberty.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix_-_La_libert%C3%A9_guidant_le_peuple.jpg

Her nudity isn’t perverse, it is torn by the struggle with tyranny. She hoists the flag of France high so that the people may be drawn to the struggle. It is as if she says, “Onward!” The common people trample upon their defeated foe but the war is not over! The struggle for liberty continues. The drama of the flag unfurled in her outstretched arm is a call to arms! Onward to victory!

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix_-_Christ_on_the_Sea_of_Galilee_-_Google_Art_Project_\(27796212\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix_-_Christ_on_the_Sea_of_Galilee_-_Google_Art_Project_(27796212).jpg)

One of his religious works comes from the story in **Mark 4**, where the disciples are caught in a storm and Jesus is asleep in the front on a pillow. Christ on the Sea of Galilee, it is called. The situation is desperate but Jesus peacefully sleeps. The dramatic moment is caught where the desperation overflows and they call out to Jesus, “Master, don’t you care that we are perishing.” When the master awakens and calms the storm, he asks, “Where is your faith?” The pitch of the waves and the darkness of the skies are like storms in the heart of the disciples where only the master can calm.

Another of his famous works is “The Barque of Dante,” depicting Dante’s descent into hell, guided by the poet Virgil. This unsettling work occurs in the work, “Inferno, Canto VIII,” where souls rise from the slime and water and harass the poets. It is unsettling, look at the man in the front of the boat as he hangs on for dear life, digging his teeth into the boat to stay afloat before he is dragged down once again in want for air. Even the air of hell is better than the eternal suffocation of the waters and slime.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Delacroix_barque_of_dante_1822_louvre_189cmx246cm_950px.jpg

Consider “**Young Tiger playing with his Mother**”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Young_tiger_playing_with_its_mother.jpg

The beauty of this is striking and the face of the mother has a feminine quality about it, although, it would be unlikely to look at a tiger and know its gender...but Delacroix gives it a feminine quality about it. It is a beautiful animal and the use of dramatic shading gives this painting a bit of mystery to it. Although it is just two lions, it is a masterwork of organic lines and the optical effects of light on color.

Lastly, consider “**The Duke of Morny’s Apartment.**” This work is advanced for Romanticism. You will see things like this again but not for another century. This is something one might ascribe to Gauguin or van Gogh, not Delacroix! There is too much line to it, but then again, artists make the rules to break the rules and we are left with this strikingly comic book style presentation.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix_%22Appartement_du_comte_d

You are encouraged to click through the Gallery and view more of Delacroix’s works. Apply what you have observed before and look for consistency and how the painter treats color, line, and light.

Link Gallery:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix#/media/File:Eug%C3%A8ne_Delacroix_-_Le_Massacre_de_Scio.jpg

Théodore Géricault

One of the most profoundly influential painters of the Romantic period is **Théodore Géricault**. Born **September 26, 1791 –January 26, 1824**, he is truly one of the great contributors of the Romantic period. Though he died at the age of 33, he is considered a pioneer of the Romantic movement, along with his musical contemporary, Beethoven. His stark use of realism elicits the desired emotional response that goes hand in hand with Romanticism.

His teachers disapproved of his treatment of subject matter because it broke with classical tradition, which was what he was being trained in. He left the studio and began to copy the works of Rubens, Titian, and Rembrandt and many others at the Louvre in France. He developed a powerful technique that portrayed his subjects as they were and brought stark realism into his works, evoking feelings of pleasure, remorse, anguish, pain, and many other emotions by simply portraying it accurately in the painting. Consider his greatest and most influential work, “**The Raft of the Medusa.**”

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/15/JEAN_LOUIS_TH%C3%89ODORE_G%C3%89RICAULT_-_La_Balsa_de_la_Medusa_%28Museo_del_Louvre%2C_1818-19%29.jpg

Think of the desperation felt by the people that are survivors of a shipwreck. Some are dead or dying, others have simply given up hope, waiting to die. Yet there is great action in the top portion as they desperately wave at a distant ship sail, barely detectable to the eye. Their actions cause us to search as desperately as they have for any sign of hope. This is successful because we feel the desperation felt by the survivors. “Come save us!” they seem to shout. It is a moment of hope in a seemingly hopeless situation. Will the ship see them? Will they be rescued? That is up to you to decide but here is no denying the power of the moment.

Geometry is strong with this if you keep a keen eye out for it, the triangles of the sail and the out shape of the people offset by the square of the raft and the shape of the entire sail. It is all in there, along with the dramatic shading that he would have learned by studying the old masters.

Consider the painting, “**Horse’s Head.**”

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Th%C3%A9odore_G%C3%A9ricault#/media/File:Gericault_tete.jpg

A purely organic shape but the contrast between the red and the white is striking. You can see the muscle tone of the horse’s face and realism is just as entrancing. Not necessarily considered a great work but it is powerful nonetheless because it shows a tendency to paint what you see, and that is a trait that you see in the Impressionist, and to a smaller extent, the Moderns.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Th%C3%A9odore_G%C3%A9ricault#/media/File:Laure-bro-de-comeres.jpg

This portrait of **Laure Bro** completely smacks of Rembrandt or Caravaggio because of the shifts between light and dark. She is a beauty and Géricault wished to do her justice and he was successful. His ability to capture the realism of the interplay between light and darkness is one of the things that makes him one of the greats.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Th%C3%A9odore_G%C3%A9ricault#/media/File:A_Madwoman_and_Compulsive_Gambler_1822_Theodore_Gericault.jpg

Not fearful of portraying the darker side of life, Gericault did a series of paintings of people from the local mental hospital, which, in comparison to modern mental health facilities, would be considered more like a concentration camp where the inmates were routinely beaten and put on display for the paying public. Her crooked stare and careworn face shows a woman who has a compulsive problem and it has led to her madness. She is in poverty and approaching the end quickly but Gericault catches her in a half smile and holds in there for us. Notice the stark blackish tint over the amber background...all these years later and Titian is still influencing painters.

In his brief life, he gave the world some compelling and even some disturbing paintings, such as his depiction of victims of the guillotine; not appropriate for hanging over the old dining room table, would you say?

Asher Brown Durand

At last we make our way to the United States and look at some of the influential painters of the era. Durand is truly a remarkable painter of the Hudson River School. Born August 21, 1796 and died September 1886, Durand is firmly in the heart of the post-revolutionary war America and his influence is still felt today in modern America. He was born, raised, and died in Maplewood, N.J., the 8th of 11 children. He showed interest in sketch art and eventually engraving as he grew up.

He was apprenticed from 1812 to 1817 with an engraver and became skilled in it, enough so that our next artist, John Trumbull requested he engrave his work, "The Declaration of Independence," one of the most famous American paintings and can be viewed today on the back of the two dollar bill. That picture is Brown's engraving of Trumbull's painting. His interest shifted from this art to oil painting and went on to make his own mark in the world of oil and canvas.

The thing he is most remembered for is his portrayals of trees, rocks, and foliage that hearkens back to the contributions of Watteau. This sprung from his belief that nature was the undeniable manifestation of God. He religiously devoted himself to distinct and detailed paintings of natural subjects. He is most noted for his painting, "Kindred Spirits."

Link:

https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q12406964#/media/File:Asher_Durand_Kindred_Spirits.jpg

It "was commissioned by the merchant-collector Jonathan Sturges as a gift for William Cullen Bryant in gratitude for the nature poet's eulogy to Thomas Cole, who had died suddenly during early 1848. It shows Cole, who had been Jonathan Sturges mentor, standing in a gorge

in Catskills in the company of mutual friend William Cullen Bryant.”²⁶ It is a magnificent painting and if you recall Watteau’s treatment of leaves and trees, one can certainly see the influence, or at the very least, the similarities. This is a natural realism that can only be bested by photography. The pristine valley and the rocks call to the mind the work of Ansel Adams, the imminent black and white photographer that died in 1984.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asher_Brown_Durand#/media/File:Brooklyn_Museum_-_The_First_Harvest_in_the_Wilderness_-_Asher_B._Durand_-_overall.jpg

This painting is magnificent! The light in the picture is about as natural as one can imagine if, if you were working hard in the valley like the subjects in this picture. The natural hand is at work as he surrounds the viewer with nature, the manifestation of God Himself in Durand opinion as the first harvest in the wilderness is underway. Gorgeous isn’t it? The trees and leaves and natural way the trees bend. It looks as if someone has pushed pause on a video and the action has stopped for the viewer to just take it all in. It says, “Behold Nature! The Manifestation of a Creator!” At least, that is what Durand would say to us through this painting.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asher_Brown_Durand#/media/File:HRSOA_AsherDurand-GatheringStorm.jpg

It is highly likely that you have seen this painting in real life, at least what it represents...the gathering storm. The cattle feast quietly on the pastoral plain but in the distance, storm clouds are gathering, soon an abundance of rain will be heralded by the echo of thunder down the valley. The cattle will gather under a tree, fruitlessly trying to shield against the wind. We might see such a thing right here where we are located if we were to go on a drive on a Spring afternoon.

Lastly, to refresh your memory, or perhaps you have never seen a two dollar bill, the following link is the engraving of John Trumbull’s “Declaration of Independence,” engraved by Durand.

Link:

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1d/Declaration.JPG>

Links to Durands Work click through:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asher_Brown_Durand#/media/File:Asher_Brown_Durand_by_A._B._ogardus.jpg

²⁶ - https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q12406964#/media/File:Asher_Durand_Kindred_Spirits.jpg, accessed 7-2-2020

John Trumbull

The artist previously mentioned, John Trumbull is another important artist of the Hudson River School. Born June 6, 1746 and died 1843, he is considered an important artist during the American Revolutionary war. As was mentioned, his work, "Declaration of Independence" is featured in engraved form on the two dollar bill. He was influenced by classical and romantic influences.

He is most known for portraits and dramatic historical paintings from the period. After the Revolutionary War, of which Trumbull fought bravely, he returned to England to study and one of his works was accepted and displayed in the Royal Academy of Art. In his service to the Colonies, he was the 2nd aide to General Washington and some of his works are full length portraits of Washington and Hamilton. He was an amazing intellect, joining the junior class at Harvard at the age of 15 in 1771 and graduated in 1773. This intellect is most certainly portrayed in the exquisite blend of classicism and romanticism in his work.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Trumbull#/media/File:General_George_Washington_at_Trenton_by_John_Trumbull.jpeg

This portrait of "General George Washington at Trenton" hangs in the Yale Gallery of Art and is more classical in nature, showing some influence of Boucher and David but still distinctly American. He is portrayed with noble grandeur, almost like a king. Rumor had it that George Washington wished to be called "Your Excellency" but the continental congress disagreed and settled for President.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Trumbull#/media/File:The_Death_of_General_Warren_at_the_Battle_of_Bunker's_Hill.jpg

Look at the drama in this particular painting. The fevered pitch of battle has felled a great commander and the troops won't give up. Bunker Hill didn't start the colonies off very well in the war with a resounding defeat from the dauntless marching British. It was a bloodbath for the Americans. It would be touch and go for a while until the tide turned. Is it storm clouds or smoke that we see...perhaps both. War was here and the bloodbath would spill into both sides.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Trumbull#/media/File:Declaration_of_Independence_\(1819\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Trumbull#/media/File:Declaration_of_Independence_(1819).jpg)

What more needs to be said about this, it is the original work of John Trumbull. The tenets set forth in the constitution seem to be ignored more and more today. It makes one wonder what the founding fathers would think of what we have done with the nation they fought

for doesn't it? Nonetheless, Trumbull hopefully, excitedly portrayed the defining moment in our nation's history. See if you can identify any of our founding fathers.

Link for click through Gallery:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Trumbull#/media/File:John_Trumbull_Gilbert_Stuart_1818.jpg

J.M.W. Turner

The last Romantic artist will be appropriately a trend-setter, a transitional artist and as far as Turner is concerned, he is a man before his time. His style of painting will actually re-emerge later in the 19th century under a new title called "Impressionism." Although scores of scholars would disagree, this author considers Turner as a pre-impressionist. He was born May 15, 1775 and died December 19, 1851 and is among the most prominent among English painters and elevates the painting of landscapes to an equal plane of value with historical paintings.

Turner was a printmaker and watercolorist that was a very controversial figure in his time. He never married but fathered two children with his housekeeper, Sarah Danby, a much older widow. He was reclusive and as he grew older, he became more and more pessimistic. His ill temper stood only to make him more and more isolated. His gallery fell into disrepair and when his father, his only real friend, passed away, he grew even more dark in attitude. Yet, his paintings are transcendent in quality, giving him the title, "Painter of Light."

He had associates, at patron, Walter Ramsden Fawkes of Parliament (yes, he is related to Guy Fawkes, although, Guy Fawkes isn't the hero everyone makes him to be: see footnote)²⁷ He was also the frequent guest of George O'Brien Wyndham, 3rd Earl of Egremont. Turner travelled often and studied in the Louvre. His style of painting is hard to place in the Romantic period except for the response to the viewer and any emotional experience they may enjoy.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Joseph_Mallord_William_Turner_\(British_-_Modern_Rome-Campo_Vaccino_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Joseph_Mallord_William_Turner_(British_-_Modern_Rome-Campo_Vaccino_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

This work, "Modern Rome" is a study in dissemination of line and the familiar haziness of Impressionism. It is filled with radiant light but as one will observe later, the style of Turner transforms into something that is distinctive to him and is a trail-blazing style that isn't repeated in the Romantic period at his level. It isn't really realism is it? Still, we can still conceive the sight in our mind and there are familiar things in the painting that insist that this is Rome as Turner saw it.

²⁷ Guy Fawkes tried to blow up parliament as a part of a larger plot to assassinate King George, but more so to reassert control of the Catholic Church in England and destruction of the Anglican and other protestant churches.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Joseph_Mallord_William_Turner_-_Fishermen_at_Sea_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

This painting is more Romantic in nature but so dramatic in its presentation of a restless sea in a moonlit night. The contrasts of light and darks are both striking and natural. Look at that glowing orb of a moon in this painting. A mastery of light effects, Turner draws us into the boat itself as they struggle to control the boat and exercise their vocation. Marvelous isn't it? It is natural but dramatic, dark but filled with light.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Joseph_Mallord_William_Turner_081.jpg

Now onward to the germs of Impressionism. We look and see the goings on here, Hannibal Barca is crossing the alps and it is not going well at all! They face the onslaught of a snowstorm but it is more like a deep, dark tidal wave of defeat isn't it? But he was successful, it was long and treacherous but the flood is Hannibal bypassing Roman land garrisons to lead his Carthaginian warriors over the Alps and taking the war to Rome. It is one of the most important military events in history....nearly impossible...but he did it. Look closely at it...it seems as if all nature is a battle on behalf of Rome. It truly looks like waves spilling over the distant mountains. Just look at that Sun....a smudge of yellow and orange being drowned out by storm clouds...very dramatic and leaning impressionism we see.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:'Sea_View'_by_J._M._W._Turner,_Scottish_National_Gallery.jpg

At last, the transformation begins and Turner starts the hard march toward the Impressionists. This is almost pure impressionism as you will see in a later chapter. This is called "Sea View." Is it though, sure the sea is there but just the impression of sailboats, and are those masts on the left? That is the impression we are given, and now you can begin to understand Impressionism before we arrive there. It is lovely, the blue sky, the gold-tinged white clouds are plain enough but this watercolor disseminates the line until it is all but lost.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Turner-Brennendes_Schiff-1830.jpg

This one is called, "Burning Ship," but it almost makes us say, "where?" It is there....the impression of it any way. Turner was truly a man before his time and he is trailblazing...the color is nearly absent making it almost monochromatic...or is it? Turner says, "You decide!"

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Joseph_Mallord_William_Turner_-_Norham_Castle_Sunrise_-_WGA23182.jpg

Link: Click through gallery

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner#/media/File:Joseph_Mallord_William_Turner_Self_Portrait_1799.jpg

Our last study here is “Norham Castle, Sunrise.” Another wink at the later 19th century and how far we have come from people like Trumbull and Durand. Just look at that sunrise, the artist says to us...a smudge of light on a canvas ALIVE with light. He is the painter or light. It is no wonder that his last words on his deathbed was, “The Sun is God!”

Section Two Romantic Composers

Franz Schubert

Franz Schubert was an Austrian Composer of the Classical/Romantic period whose contributions advanced the art song as a widely popular form. His contributions can be felt in the careers of Singer/Songwriters of today. Born **January 31, 1797 and died November 19, 1828**, he was a contemporary of Beethoven but wrote in an entirely different style that would have been modern in the ears of the classical listener. He studied with the great composer **Salieri** and was widely exposed to Haydn and Beethoven, immensely popular composers in his formative years. He was given the nickname **Schwammmerl**, a word that means “little mushroom,” a poke at his short stature of only 5’1” and plump body.

His music enjoyed limited admiration among a circle of friends that included prominent musical minds and he was championed into fame by composers like Brahms, Schumann, Liszt, and Felix Mendelssohn. His song cycles are commonly performed in concert halls today. **Song cycles** are a series of songs that follow a theme such as life, death, and love.

His personal life was tumultuous with an inferior esteem that led to poor choices such as visiting brothels frequently. He contracted Syphilis and though his cause of death is listed as Typhoid, most agree he died from the STD.

Link: **An Sylvia?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1m4-tTMdg4>

Translation:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/50684/song-who-is-silvia-what-is-she>

This is an example of Schubert **lieder**, the German word for “song.” Titled “An Sylvia?” it is taken from Shakespeare. It is light hearted but complex in chords. Featured for the tenor voice, it is a staple of tenors worldwide.

Link: **Das Erlkönig**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JS91p-vmSf0>

This is perfect in eliciting an emotional response. It is filled with mystery and horror. The Erl King is a malevolent creature that steals the souls of children. The Father is trying to reach home and safety. The singer must change character throughout the song because he plays all three roles. It is intensely dark and marvelous. The opening of the piano sounds like the gallop of the horse and never relents.

Link: **Gretchen Am Spinnrade**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MY0eeotSDi8>

The rolling, dark accompaniment follows a flowing and beautiful aria for the female voice. It embodies the Romantic period with its emotional presentation.

Link: **The Miller and the Brook**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgkDhlhwrME>

An intensely beautiful composition, it is filled with longing and unfulfillment. One simply sits and listens to the languishing sounds of this song and can connect with it. It is so beautiful.

Link: **Unfinished Symphony**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mnrHf7p0jM>

So called because it has only two movements with two others outlined for piano or sketched on paper. It is lyrical and beautiful and is his 8th symphony, sometimes called the “**Romantic Symphony.**”

His output is enormous with over 600 compositions in his young life. He died at age 31.

Robert Schumann

One of the most enigmatic and certainly the most bizarre composers of the Romantic period is **Robert Schumann**. Originally, he was just a normal composer but in his later years,

he fell into insanity and died in a mental institution, locked in a struggle with two personalities. He is considered one of the greatest composers of the 19th Century and an amazing talent at the piano. His works are complex and he did as much for **Leider** as Schubert did. He was also a renowned music critic. **Born June 8, 1810 and died July 29, 1856**, he is a German composer of the Romantic period.

His life was not without intrigue. When he fell in love with **Clara**, his wife, Clara's father would not allow her to marry him. Schumann sued the father to marry Clara and was successful, as she was of the age to consent. The two were happy together and both were talented composers. He was diagnosed with manic/depressive disorder and was admitted to mental hospital at his request after a failed suicide attempt. He died two years afterward of pneumonia.

One of the really bizarre things about Schumann was his obsession with his piano abilities. He would take sewing shears and click the webs of his fingers to improve his reach, stuffing the wounds at night with raw meat to prevent them from healing or growing dry. Additionally, to improve finger strength, he designed a weight system to help him in this and ended up paralyzing two fingers. That very well may have contributed to his madness.

The following article is an excellent article on Schumann's machine (Required reading)

Link:

<https://www.wqxr.org/story/weird-classical-when-schumann-ruined-his-fingers-and-his-concert-career/>

One of Schumann's great works is his concertos for piano and orchestra. It is pure romanticism at its finest.

Link:**Piano Concerto in a minor, Op. 54** (Op stands for an opus, a numbering system for chronological dating of works.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ynky7qoPnUU>

The exquisite luxury of the notes securely removes us from the Classical style and shifts us solidly into Romanticism. The shifts between darkness and light, the intentional chord clashes demand our attention.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abrie8X9seU>

His symphonies are no different. They aren't like the Schubert works but lean to a Beethovenian style but securely Romantic. It is a joy to listen to and filled with triumph, tragedy, and profundity.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0pFd-UQ99c>

This is the Liederkreis, Opus 39. If anything, it is as close as the visual arts and musical arts get, as Schumann paints musically a pastoral landscape and we pass through as we are wayfaring to a distant land. It is beautiful

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwlpqxJS5HM>

A profound offering from Schumann, translated, "The Love and Life of Woman," that follows a woman from first meeting, marriage, life, and death of the husband. It is no doubt a devotion to his beloved Clara.

Johannes Brahms

Johannes Brahms, born May 7, 1833 and died April 3, 1897 is solidly placed in the Romantic period with very little Neoclassical style making its way into his compositional style. Brahms was the son of a couple where the mother was much older than the father and this imprinted on Brahms to a greater extent when he was older when he became infatuated with **Robert Schumann's wife Clara**. He even moved in and took care of head of household duties for a time after Robert's commitment to a mental asylum. Nonetheless, his love was unrequited and she viewed him more as what he truly was, an infatuated romantic and brilliant genius.

Brahms was a **virtuoso pianist**, that is a musician capable of nearly impossible feats of playing and improvisation. "Brahms composed for symphony orchestra, chamber ensembles, piano, organ, and voice and chorus."²⁸ His compositional style was filled with altered notes and seemed almost to reflect what kind of mood he was in at the time of the music. It is often said, when a piece by Brahms is particularly complex that he was in a foul mood when he wrote it, but there is no substantive evidence to prove this beyond apocryphal stories.

Though he was baptized and confirmed as Lutheran, Brahms was a humanist. He lent his talents to the expression of the human concept rather than struggle with the complexities of religion, as he often said, "I am a human and a humanist!"

His first symphony is as dramatic as one would expect from the Romantic period, it is still widely performed today.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGRqI GOAPcE>

One should notice the emotional complexities of this work. It is interesting that Brahms kept most of his symphonies a secret and limited himself to four symphonies but numerous piano and voice compositions.

²⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Brahms, accessed 7-13-2020

He is also known for his work in German Lieder. His beautiful work for solo voice is still standard repertoire for young and old singers.

Links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPRPnHPL7wM> Wiegenlied, Op. 49 "Cradle Song"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8ibaNlrYk> Wie Melodien Zieht es mir

Compositionally, Brahms maintained a high standard for musical complexity. His choral compositions deserve as much attention as his work in solo songs. Of particular note is his "German Requiem," rumored to be written for Robert Schumann at his passing.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-1SishN_bc German Requiem

One of his most well known compositions has been featured in film and cartoons for generations. Hungarian dances

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3X9LvC9WkkQ> Hungarian Dance No. 5

Hector Berlioz

Certainly one of the more interesting of the composers is Hector Berlioz, **born December 11, 1803 and died March 8 1869**, the son of a prominent physician, he chose composition as his vocation, much to the dismay of his father. He fell obsessively in love with Shakespearean actress **Henrietta Smithson** whom he pursued relentlessly for 7 years until she finally relented and married him. Theirs was a happy marriage at first but it eventually foundered and fell apart. She was the inspiration for his greatest success, **Symphonie Fantastique**, a **programmatic** symphony, that is, it tells a definite story within the movements of the music. It is filled with love, heartbreak, vengeance, damnation, and redemption.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjri6MyXKRI> Symphonie Fantastique mvt 1
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npg11G8ZkAY> Symphonie Fantastique mvt 2
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtzCUJRgiFc> Symphonie Fantastique mvt 3
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roX70PAu3oA> Symphonie Fantastique mvt 4 March
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cao6WyF-61s> Symphonie Fantastique mvt 5

Berlioz was often called an **arch-romanticist**, that is, someone who has reached the height of the style. His super-charged emotional compositions and dark themes fit perfectly in the expressive Romantic period. One of his most powerful works is his Requiem Mass.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk8AyJBoi4I> Dies Irae "Day of Wrath" (Particularly at 5:30)

Frederic Chopin

The great pianist and composer **Frederic Chopin**, born in **Warsaw, Poland** in **March 10, 1810 and died in 1849** is regarded as one of the greats in piano composition. He was a genius yet suffered from ill health for most of his life. He was obsessed with the idea of avoiding being buried alive, requesting that his heart be removed to make sure he was dead. They obliged. His contributions are nocturnes, preludes, and various piano compositions. They are pyrotechnique and complex.

His life was fast lived and too soon over. He is an **arch-romanticist** of the piano composition style and rivaled only by Franz Liszt.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_Tm8-HzuxM Impromptu
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75x6DncZDgI> Fantasie Impromptu
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5qeuVOIbHk> Nocturne in c# minor
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeX4X_1_lo0 Prelude in c minor, No. 20
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgQmSVE60XE> Prelude in e minor, No. 4

Franz Liszt

One of the greatest composers of the 19th century is **Franz Liszt**. Born **October 22, 1811 and died July 31, 1886**. This author considers him one of the first superstar musicians with females falling at a dead faint before him. He turned the piano sideways so the fans could see his profile. He was a known womanizer until later in life when wisdom and age caught up and he grew concerned for his eternal soul and joined the church as a lay minister.

His compositional style was so complex that there were few in his time that could play his compositions. The technique did not exist yet. Liszt was able to play them, relentlessly practicing until he perfected them. He wrote for piano and symphony orchestra.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9S2CfDwNAg> Hungarian Rhapsody no. 2 piano
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goeOUTRy2es> Hungarian Rhapsody no. 2 orchestra
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1O4h0AapdbQ> Transcendental Etude S. 139 (Complex!)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KpOtuoHL45Y> Liebestraum (love dream)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nVmFISV1ok> Totentanz (Death dance)

Richard Wagner

Richard Wagner, (pronounced Rick'-ard Vahg-ner), is one of the most controversial of the composers that one can study. He was **born May 22, 1813 and died February 13, 1883**. He was a firm believer in German superiority and it permeates his music that exalts and glorifies Norse legend. Wagner was the personal favorite of Adolf Hitler and the two men had similar opinions about the Jewish people. It is a shame that hate can infiltrate even the mind of great composers. His contributions are undeniable though, with his concept of a **LeitMotif**, a certain musical theme that surrounds a specific character is utilized today in cinematic composition.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGU1P6IBW6Q> Ride of the Valkyries

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jDcWAWRRHo&list=PLm-B0JuNTfhgOMKpj568s8GxcuUSckWGu> Even Bugs Bunny Got in on the act with Wagner

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uam8Xj5anIU> Tannhauser leitmotif

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kq39cz8lc0> Siegfried leitmotif

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-28d3PfoGM0> Brunnhilde leitmotif

Modern Use of LeitMotif: John Williams Star Wars

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52Pfq19L5JU>

Gustav Mahler

Gustav Mahler, one of the greats of the late 19th century and this author's favorite composer did much to inspire modern cinematic styles as well. He was born **July 7, 1860 and died May 18, 1911**. His symphonies are among the greatest ever written in complexity. He was conductor of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra for a time and was widely known for his expressive conducting style.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypClfhEwwCw> Mahler 1st
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2KcsjA_PEQ Mahler 2nd. This one is amazing!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRhQhUtOpPI> Mahler 3rd
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fLqGSyu31yU> Mahler 4th
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nO0nytFsumo> Mahler 5th
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oep5Rude4mQ> Mahler 6th
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSNu5Zh8wOE> Mahler 7th
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7WgXhUBrps> Mahler 8th
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Mahler+9 Mahler 9th

Rachmaninoff

The last of the true Romanticists was **Sergei Rachmaninoff**, born **April 1, 1873** and died **March 28, 1943**, this Russian composer represents the waning style of the late 19th century. His powerful piano and orchestral compositions still inspire today. His musical style is similar in many respects to Liszt but overall, there is a greater amount of organized thought in his composition. He is widely performed today in concert halls all over the world.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbbtmskCRUY> Isle of the Dead
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCtixplWBto> Prelude in c# minor
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJpJ8REjvqo> Piano Concerto no. 2
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hj84l05xWg0> 10 preludes

Chapter Twelve Impressionism

As the late Romantic waned on through the middle part of the 20th century, a new style emerged in France that has come to be known as the Impressionist movement. **Impressionism** is a style in which the painter tries to evoke imagery without the strong impression of line in favor of perception. Thin brushstrokes and dissemination of line are the strongest traits of Impressionism. **J.M.W. Turner** toyed with the concept and inspirations for Impressionists can be traced back to the traditions of **Watteau** and **Boucher**. It was a brief period in the late 19th, early 20th century, primarily in France, although such painting can be found in other parts of the world inspired by the movement.

The movement's founder is widely attributed to **Claude Monet**. Monet was born November 14, 1840 and December 5, died 1926. He was the most consistent and prolific of the movement's philosophy and even the name itself derives from his painting titled, "**Impression, Sunrise.**" Often in stories of the greats of any area, it seems that they break from family tradition and Monet is no exception. His father wanted him to go into the family business of being a **grocer** but the young Monet was passionate for art and on April 1, 1851, he entered the Le Havre Secondary School of the Arts.

His initial influence was to take lessons in drawing from one of **Jacque-Louis David's** students. However, somewhere around 1856 or 1857, he met **Eugène Boudin** on the beaches of Normandy and the man became his mentor. Boudin taught him a technique that became Monet's guiding light called "**Ein Plein Air,**" which is an outdoor painting technique with rapid brushstrokes and line dissemination. Even though on one of his trips to the Louvre, he observed other students copying old masters, he went home and painted what he saw out of his window using this technique.

In 1861, the young man, perhaps struggling in his artistic attempts, joined the **French Foreign Legion** for a seven year commitment. Two years later, suffering from Typhoid Fever, he left the Legion after his aunt intervened and was able to secure his release. He was one of the most prolific of the Impressionist painters. He was married but after his wife's death of tuberculosis, he chose to remain a bachelor for many years, heartbroken over her loss.

During World War 1, he painted a series of Willows in honor of fallen French soldiers. Let's take a look at some of his work.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Monet_-_Impression%2C_Sunrise.jpg

This is the painting that started it all. One would have to be blind to not see the tremendous influence of J.M.W. Turner in this work. The smudge and orb-like orange sun rising through the fog is very Turner-esque and the line is almost absent with the exception of the impression of boats and masts and sails. The canvas explodes with colors like sunlight through mist on a foggy morning. One can be forgiven for wincing and saying, "What is that?" to various objects in the picture but just allow the picture to tell you what they are and make your own conjecture. You will find that you are more perceptive than you imagine.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Monet#/media/File:Monet_Poppies.jpg

Here is a lovely painting of his wife, Camille in a poppy field with his child. The color is vibrant and warm. It is pastoral in theme and you can peer into the painting and see the quick brushstrokes that the artist used to create the imagery. It is ironic that the line is so disseminated but you know what the painting is about. It paints itself in your mind when you look at it.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Monet#/media/File:Claude_Monet,_1873,_Camille_Monet_on_a_Bench,_oil_on_canvas,_60.6_x_80.3_cm,_The_Metropolitan_Museum_of_Art,_New_York.jpg

Now, not all of his works are so disseminated in line. This one of his wife, for instance, still has a strong line and subject matter but look at the objects in the distance. It looks like cinematic camera work with the background blurry and the foreground clear. It is as if the artist says, "Look here! Not there!" The colorful background is the accompaniment of the subject matter, his lovely wife.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Monet#/media/File:Monet_-_Vetheuil_im_Nebel.jpg

This lovely work is called **Vetheuil Im Nebel**, a picture of the commune through fog. It looks like a photo through a fogged up lens. It is a feast for the eyes. It is hard to stop looking at it because it is captivating. One can make out the form of the commune but line is still cast aside in favor of the impression of objects in fog. Just like in real life.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Monet#/media/File:Claude_Monet_-_Flowering_Arches_Giverny.JPG

Look at this beauty called "**Flowering Arches.**" It explodes with color and vibrancy without engaging defined line too much. There is balance in the rhythm of the painting and the geometry is very naturalistic and vivid. Monet was a master of capturing nature in its beauty.

Link:

https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_Footbridge#/media/File:Japanese_Footbridge-Claude_Monet.jpg

This one is called "**Japanese Footbridge,**" and is likely one of his more well known paintings. What makes this painting so interesting is that it isn't the last of his renderings of the same subject. In this one, there is a strong sense of line without becoming too detailed so as to remain in the impressionism style. Again, colors are vivid and the details are fuzzy yet satisfying to the eye. Now, compare the above painting with this one painted between 1920 and 1922.

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Claude_Monet_-_The_Japanese_Footbridge.jpg

Compare and contrast the two and what makes them so strikingly different? Obvious differences are here but the subject matter is the same. Both belong to Impressionism but one is

strikingly more impressionistic than the other. Consider the explosion of color in the second one. This one is leaning closer to a movement called “Expressionism.” Yet lovely in its presentation, the second one literally destroys nearly all sense of line in favor of the impression of the bridge.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir

Renoir, born 1841 and died 1919, is considered one of the leading painters in the French style of Impressionism. He is considered one of the celebrators of feminine beauty and sensuality in a tradition that is culminated in him through the influences of **Peter Paul Rubens** and **Watteau**. Born to a working class family, his painting skills were evident while he was young. He started in a fine china shop where his amazing drawing talent led to him being chosen for designs for the company. He often visited the Louvre throughout his youth.

Times got tough for the artist at times to where he didn't even have enough money to purchase paint. Even then, a lost friendship also denied him one of his favorite painting spots which led to a style change in his output. Most of his output is still life, landscapes, and female models. His favorite model, **Suzanne Valadon** became one of leading painters herself in the era after spending so much time in the studios.

He married model **Aline Victorine Charigot** and had three sons, one named **Jean Renoir** became a movie director in the early days of cinema. His life was not without struggle, as he developed **Rheumatoid Arthritis**. He continued to paint even though R.A. severely limited his movement to the point that an assistant was required to place the brush in his hand because his hand had become so deformed. In 1919, the aging Renoir was taken to the Louvre to see his paintings hanging with the Old Masters, much to his joy. He died December 3rd, 1919.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Auguste_Renoir#/media/File:Pierre-Auguste_Renoir_023.jpg

One of Renoir's markers is the beautiful eyes he created in his feminine subjects. To have Renoir eyes is to have lovely doe shaped ovals with shining light effects. This one, called “The Theater Box,” shows those shining eyes. Unlike Monet, there is more line in Renoir's paintings involving people. That is not to say that Monet had none, but there is something distinct about a Renoir. It pulls you into the painting and it seems to be in the midst of action with implied movement.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Auguste_Renoir#/media/File:Pierre_Auguste_Renoir_Jeanne_Durand_Ruel.jpg

This is another example of those effects around the eyes. The details are fuzzy enough for impressionism but those eyes stand out in the picture. She is comfortably posed in this picture and a pleasant look is upon her face. However, gone are the portrait habits of the Romantics and the idealism of Classicists. This is Impressionism, a whole new style.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Auguste_Renoir#/media/File:Pierre-Auguste_Renoir_096.jpg

This lovely girl is slightly inebriated but still a vision of youthful beauty. Those eyes engaging yours in a staring contest that you cannot win, yet it is hard to break the stare. She is lovely and available, it seems, as she sits alone and seems flirty with her delicate face supported by her arm. It is a Portrait of Jeanne Samary, a comedic actress of France and one of Renoir's models.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Auguste_Renoir#/media/File:Berthe_Morisot_and_her_daughter_Julie_Manet_1894.jpg

Always remember, with Renoir, it is all about femininity, sensuality, and those gorgeous eyes.

Click through Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre-Auguste_Renoir#/media/File:Pierre_Auguste_Renoir_uncropped_image.jpg

Edouard Manet

Manet was born in 1832 and died in 1883. He was one of the first of the artists to use modern life subject matter. Unlike some of his contemporaries, he was born into a family of status and political connections. His mother was the daughter of a French diplomat and goddaughter of the crown prince of Sweden. Nonetheless, he heartily rejected the upper station future envisioned for him and instead chose the pathway of an artist. This was encouraged by his **uncle, Edmond Fornier**, who often took the young Manet to the Louvre. His main influences were **da la Croix and Goya**.

Stylistically, he is known for **loose brushstrokes** and **dissemination of line** but with a penchant for **realism**. **Realism** is the depiction of subjects as is, almost in Romanticism

tendencies but still holding to the period style. He rarely painted mythological or religious themes, favoring life and its depiction in what he called reality. One of his first paintings in the style of realism is the **Absinthe Drinker**, which we will discuss later. He became friends with the Impressionists, such as **Monet** and **Degas**, but resisted the title of **Impressionist**. His resistance was due to his insistence that artists should exhibit in the Paris Salon and not in their own independent shows. He is sometimes called the Beethoven of **modernism**, a style that leads into Expressionism and Modernity. He was, however, heavily influenced by the Impressionist use and treatment of color and line.

He died in his 50s from Rheumatism and untreated syphilis, which he contracted in his 40s. His decline and death began with a foot amputation that turned gangrenous, followed by another surgery and then his death.

Link:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Absinthe_Drinker_\(Manet\)#/media/File:Edouard_Manet_-_The_Absinthe_Drinker_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Absinthe_Drinker_(Manet)#/media/File:Edouard_Manet_-_The_Absinthe_Drinker_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

One of his most well known works is “**The Absinthe Drinker**,” depicting a heavily intoxicated man drinking one of the strongest of Alcoholic drinks of the time, Absinthe, which was illegal to possess in the United States but now is available in a much watered down version and is highly recommended to avoid. Side effects include vivid hallucinations, mania, and other psychotropic events including violence. There is one case where a man drank Absinthe and promptly murdered his entire family and then tried to kill himself. It is known to cause seizures and even death.

The man is heavily intoxicated, as if at any moment, he could fall face down on the table. The style is lightly impressionistic, with the feminine qualities seen in a Renoir but almost a fuzzy, photographic quality of a real life subject, which makes this distinctly a Manet.

Link: **The Races at Longchamp**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89douard_Manet#/media/File:Edouard_Manet_053.jpg

I enjoy this painting because it appears that the artist got into the action, placing himself in harm’s way to get the perspective. We, of course, don’t know that but it is a realistic picture of charging racehorses in action. The fury of the moment and intensity is captured in his dissemination of line and the use of strong color contrasts. The rest of the world is caught up in Impressionism but the charging horses are Expressionistic. One wishes to say, “Get out of the way, dummy!” Very dramatic!

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89douard_Manet#/media/File:Manet,_Edouard_-_The_Execution_of_Emperor_Maximilian,_1867.jpg

The “**Execution of Emperor Maximilian**” is from a series of paintings of the same subject by Manet depicting the execution of Maximilian by Mexican Nationals on the 19th of

June, 1867. It is reminiscent of a painting by Goya called, “**The Fifth of May.**” Compare and contrast the two:

Link: **Fifth of May, Goya**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Third_of_May_1808#/media/File:El_Tres_de_Mayo_by_Francisco_de_Goya_from_Prado_thin_black_margin.jpg

Manet drew inspiration from this earlier master and used stylistic traits found in Goya’s works.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89douard_Manet#/media/File:Edouard_Manet._A_Bar_at_the_Folies-Berg%C3%A8re.jpg

Lastly, consider this blushing barmaid in his painting, “A Bar at the Folies-Berg.” She is maintaining her etiquette while exercising her vocation but there is a street-wise look on her face, as if she is saying, “what are you staring at?” Or is she staring away, dreaming of a better way of life....you decide.

Click through Gallery:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%89douard_Manet#/media/File:%C3%89douard_Manet_en_buste_de_face_-_Nadar.jpg

Section Two:Music

Claude Debussy

On August 22, 1862, **Claude Debussy**, one of few composers that fell into the Impressionistic Music category was born in Paris, France. He was one of the most prominent among composers of this genre but detested the label of Impressionist. There is no other way to describe his music....it is vivid in its aural portrayals of visual scapes. His style is known for not maintaining around one certain key but instead suspending harmonic concepts in favor of **whole tone compositions**, a style that uses only Major intervals, **Quartal Harmonies**, harmonies based on 4th and 5th intervals, and **Pentatonic**, five note scales best conceptualized as the black keys of the keyboard.

His education began early with piano lessons by age 7 and entrance into the Paris conservatory at age 10, where he would spend the next 11 years. He became friends with noted pianist **Isidor Philipp**. Debussy was described as experimental in music and argumentative in demeanor. He favored dissonances in the piano that were frowned upon by musicians of the day. He is considered a crucial figure in the transition into modern music. Many of his pieces are considered “pre-jazz” in that they employed chords that are more often used in jazz music.

His personal life was often turbulent. He engaged in numerous affairs with married and unmarried women and was briefly engaged to a singer but left her for her friend, **Rosalie Textier**, a fashion model whom he married in 1899. By 1909, Debussy had begun hemorrhaging and was found to be with lung cancer. He died in Paris on March 25, 1918

Link: Prelude to the afternoon of a Faun.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rpw4-J49auQ&list=PLmFrgiyxSAIjOOAgIH-Fyx0PGg3H4oca6&index=2>

This composition is a great demonstration of a mixing of traditional and the non-traditional harmonies of Debussy. It opens with a flute playing a mix of whole tone and semitone melodies. The sound is otherworldly, giving it a mysterious atmosphere. One can almost see vines and greenery hanging about in a mist covered rainforest.

Link: Sunken Cathedral

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAVyKDDsM3s>

This is a great example of pentatonic notation usage by Debussy. This paints a vivid picture of an underwater cathedral. It embodies all the mysteries one might see in the dark and light of an underwater environment. One cannot deny it is impressionism at its finest.

Link: Clair de Lune

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvFH_6DNRCY

By far, one of Debussy’s most famous works is “Clair de Lune” or “Light of Moon.” It is truly a marvelous piece of impressionism and embodies the nocturnal elements that one might hear as influences of Chopin in the music of Debussy.

Chapter Thirteen: Modernity and beyond

One of the most well known of modernists and expressionist painters is **Vincent van Gogh**, (pronounced, Van- Goh') . One would be easily forgiven to view him as the tortured artist because that is exactly what he was in the later part of his life. Early on, he wished to become a minister in the church. However, his struggle with mental health issues began to increase his isolation. The simplicity of his style is deceiving, revealing a person of remarkable perception and ability to recreate reality. Perhaps this was a marker of his mental health.

His earliest work at The Hague, working for an art dealer was some of his happiest times. His personal life was turbulent as he was rejected by the woman he had fallen love with

and his isolation increased. His only friend was **Paul Gauguin**, another fellow painter with whom he had a stormy friendship with and resulted in a fight that cost van Gogh one of his ears. (no, he did not cut off his ear and give it to a woman). There are many apocryphal stories of his life that are simply not true. His art, however, speaks volumes about his personality. Let's look at one of his most famous works of art, "**Starry Night**"

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Van_Gogh_-_Starry_Night_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

The magnificent wonder of this painting is from the exaggeration of stars in the sky. It seems almost child-like, but go ahead, try and paint it yourself. Even if you can, it isn't a van Gogh and it was he who conceptualized it and is therefore the creator, all after is just imitators. That is what art turns out to be, a personal expression...it isn't necessarily about whether it is good or bad, it is about the artist creating his own cosmos and bringing you into it and seeing things from a different perspective. He is successful in this in Starry Night

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Red_vineyards.jpg

There are still hints of Impressionism left over but the colors are broken, chalky, almost disturbed but one can still see what the painting is about, the gathering of the fruit of the vine. Line dissemination seems to be that thing in the last part of the 19th and early part of the 20th century for some artists.

Link

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Vincent_van_Gogh_-_De_slaapkamer_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

This painting of his bedroom in Arles is a challenge to us to understand perspective. Is it skewed? Is it cartoonish...yes and just maybe that is one of the influences that these modernists contribute. It isn't long after that the comic book arises. This is insinuation on my part but it could be. There is a stronger line in this but it is still within the perspective of this mad genius as he brings into our eyes his view of his world.

Link:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Caf%C3%A9tafel_met_absint_-_s0186V1962_-_Van_Gogh_Museum.jpg

Still life of Absinthe and Carafe is so simplistic at first sight but just look at the interplay between the surface of the carafe and the glint of light. That is the art in the picture. The intoxicant seems to have been popular with artists of the time. Perhaps it contributed to their madness? However, it is still realistic to an extent, while still suspending perspective in favor of expression.

Link:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Vincent_van_Gogh_-_Head_of_a_skeleton_with_a_burning_cigarette_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg

“**Head of a skeleton with a burning Cigarette,**” seems an anti-smoking picture but it is just simply a skeleton with a Cigarette but one has to wonder what the artist was trying to say? Was he the dead man? The message is unclear but jarring nonetheless. The background is a combination of amber and black contrasting with the stark white bones.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Van-willem-vincent-gogh-die-kartoffeesser-03850.jpg

“**The Potato Eaters**” is a combination of the buffoonish caricatures and realism of a family in poverty, eating what they can only harvest or afford. It is a scene of quiet desperation in the midst of a familial setting. The cartoonish presentation is still there but it isn’t too far from reality.

Please enjoy a click through of the paintings and records of van Gogh:

Link

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Vincent_van_Gogh_-_Self-Portrait_-_Google_Art_Project_\(454045\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vincent_van_Gogh#/media/File:Vincent_van_Gogh_-_Self-Portrait_-_Google_Art_Project_(454045).jpg)

Paul Gauguin

Another great painter of the Expressionist movement is Paul Gauguin born June 7, 1848 and died May 8, 1903. He is considered a post-impressionist/expressionist. His paintings are close to the style of Impressionism but distinct in his color usage and stronger use of geometry and line. He spent that later part of his life in French Polynesia and is known for his depictions of the people of the region in his paintings.

Link

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Gauguin#/media/File:Paul_Gauguin_064.jpg

In this painting of The Market Gardens of Vaugirard, one can see the influences of the Romantics of the painter, including that sky that smacks of Turner and the treatment of line that is similar to Renoir. It was later in life that he would develop a penchant for defined lines.

Link

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Gauguin#/media/File:Gauguin,_Paul_-_Sacred_Spring,_Sweet_Dreams_\(Nave_nave_moe\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Gauguin#/media/File:Gauguin,_Paul_-_Sacred_Spring,_Sweet_Dreams_(Nave_nave_moe).jpg)

In this one, you can see the outline of the people...and this reminds one of van Gogh, his friend. This is not a natural rendering, more cartoonish than anything. However, it is a record of his life in the later part of his life and speaks of a quieter pace. This one is called Sacred Spring, Sweet Dreams

Please enjoy the Click through of Gaugin:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Gauguin#/media/File:Paul_Gauguin_1891.png

Salvadore Dali

One of the most bizarre and iconic people of the modern art movement was **Salvadore Dali**. He was born May 11, 1904 and died January 23, 1989. He is referred to as a **Surrealist**, that is one who creates paintings that suspend reality in favor of otherworldly or bizarre dreamscapes. Together, he and his wife Gaia also participated in some performance art. For instance, consider his visual video work, "The Birth of Dali." I caution you, it is bizarre and you may think you are tripping out but you are not!

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIFsdVPXMnE>

Here is an interview that includes the bizarre video you just watched so you can forward through it to get to the interview portions

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WixEvXAkZo>

Link: Commentary on Surrealism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtPBOwE0Qn0>

Link:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/d/dd/The_Persistence_of_Memory.jpg

Gallery

<https://www.dali-gallery.com/galleries/paintings.html>

Section Two: Expressionism in Music

Igor Stravinsky, an early 20th century to modern times composer is the embodiment of Musical expressionism. He transformed through many different styles. In this final section of the book, please listen to the examples of **Igor Stravinsky, Bela Bartok, and Arnold Schoenberg** that fully express the art movement in music.

Stravinsky: Born June 5, 1882 and died April 6, 1971

Igor Stravinsky: Rite of the Spring

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rP42C-4zL3w>

Note especially the ritualistic beat patterns that appear in this work. It is music for an expressionist ballet. At its premiere it was met with hisses and insults. A riot nearly ensued because the sounds were so foreign to their ears. One can hear the influence this music had on motion picture music

Igor Stravinsky: Finale: Firebird

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erOEatu5aH8>

There is such elegance and ethereal beauty in the opening of this work as it explodes into unparalleled joy and an ending that one simply MUSTN'T miss because of its power and drama.

Igor Stravinsky: Symphony of Psalms

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erOEatu5aH8>

This is modernity and many of its influences are still felt in modern cinema music composition,

Arnold Schoenberg September 13, 1874- July 13, 1951

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-pVz2LTakM>

Transfigured Night is about a tumultuous conversation between two lovers from the pen of Shoenberg. It is certainly one of his more tonal works.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEY9lmCZblc>

Here is one of his tone row compositions. It is certainly experimental. Total suspension of central key. This is called **Atonalism**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L85XTLr5eBE>

It is sometimes difficult to enjoy his works. But remember, this is expressing as no one had expressed before...and believe me, it isn't easy!

Bela Bartok

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvP_VvQ

Another of the great composers of this period is Bela Bartok, who revived String Quartets in the 20th century. His music wavers between tonality and atonality.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pa9xK86gsqQ>

This disturbing work is a fairytale with a dark storyline. It is called Cantata Profana.

Chapter 14: Cinema

The entire march of the arts headed toward expression that moved into the visual arts of cinema. The idea of creating storylines that could only be shown in panels of paintings of a moment of time could now find full expression in a mix of music, art, theater, and dance. The first motion pictures were called **Silent films**, as they had no audible dialogue and music was usually played live by a musician or orchestra in the theater. This created entire works of **incidental music**, that is music designed to punctuate what is happening in the visual. It really is a perfect marriage of art form allowing full expression to occur.

Incidental Music was nothing new, it had been utilized in live theater for many years but when it was applied to cinema, the entire concept underwent a change. Some films simply did

not have music during the scenes until further development allowed it to be printed on the tape itself or for a record to be synced to the visual through a visual cue. The power of incidental music had already made its mark. Consider the **Peer Gynt Suite by Edvard Grieg**. The two links supplied will show you the power of music punctuating the action. The first one is called “In the Hall of the Mountain King,” as the hero of the play attempts to escape the mountain king’s cavernous home.

Link: You may turn it up slightly to catch the opening but you might watch the volume, it gets louder.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLp_Hh6DKWc

Link:Asa’s Death, Peer Gynt, Edvard Grieg

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aKxf1h5r4g>

As film makers branched out into this brave new world, they were free to experiment with mediums never before attempted. How does one successfully tell a story with characters on a screen. What they found was an audience hungry for something new and Cinema has become one of the largest consumer driven art forms in world history. With the new creation, experimentations began, especially with the darker side of man. In one of the earliest talking pictures, the German-made horror film, “**M**” explores the search for a child serial killer and the inworkings of his mind.

Played by famous film noir actor Peter Lorre in his first movie as a central character, he plays the ominous serial killer, who hums “In the Hall of the Mountain King” when he is preparing to select and kill his target.

Link: The Movie “M”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pptm7xnanaM>

The earliest of all movies is the “**Great Train Robbery**” which lasts about 15 minutes but is full of action and the first onscreen murder. Its tremendous success led to an outbreak of demand for longer movies. One of the most controversial of all time, “**Birth of a Nation**,” is banned in the United States for its severely racist themes. It has the distinction of being the very first full length over 2 hours long cinema presentation.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuto7qWrplc>

Horror found its place among early movies too with “**Nosferatu**,” the first vampire movie ever made.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FC6jFoYm3xs>

The “Jazz Singer” starring **Al Jolson** set the world aflame with the first talking picture. It was the moment that sound was fully integrated into the film and it wasn’t an easy transition for some but it has never left. The next revolution will be virtual reality interactive movies that you and I can appear in at our home. We are almost there!

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZpX1B6n5Fc&list=PLZeSE7yauOLvSS7-ejBpON636gaRLMjr3&index=2>

The comic arts were not to be left out with the rise of famous comedians, **Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton**.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clcvUjbpZqk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XS5ST2bqiRI>

The first color film was a race between two movies, “**Gone with the Wind**” and “**The Wizard of Oz**.” Gone with the Wind won the race to be the first full length color film but Oz had the distinction of being the first in both black and white and color. (Side note: A munchkin DID NOT kill themselves during the Tin Woodsman scene. Urban Legend. The thing you see is actually a bird stretching its wing.

Link: Gone with the wind (Listen to the music!)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnEZrV_WT44

Link: Wizard of Oz

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSZxmZmBfnU>

Groundbreaking development appeared in the mid to late thirties that brought about the concepts that Oz and Gone with the Wind explored. **Technicolor** had fully developed the concept of the full color film. The first film that began experimentation with color was in 1916 and development continued over the decades with better improvements until it culminated in the two aforementioned films. This revolutionary breakthrough led to life portrayed as the human eye sees. This allowed for more exploration into realism and a more developed concept in animation through the rise of **Max Fleischer Cartoons, Warner Brothers, and Disney**.

As the film industry further developed, at last, we see the blending of all the arts that have been developing over the centuries into a full expression of music, visual, dramatic, and symbolic artwork. One sees the rise of famous film composers, such as Erich von Korngold who wrote a number of film scores for many of the swashbuckling pirate movies and high action

period pieces that enjoyed popularity in that time. One of his most famous works is the music from “**Captain Blood**” starring **Errol Flynn**.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMJBFXvCkvc>

Link: Adventures of Robin Hood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uT6dLPfSCL8>

The Biblical film era saw the rise of masterpieces in not only set design and visual effects but monumental soundtracks that borrowed from nearly every period of musical history to create the musical support for the visual, such as, “**The Ten Commandments**,” Directed by **Cecil B. Demille** and the works of such notables as Miklos Rosza, Elmer Berstein, Victor Young, and Max Steiner

Link: The Ten Commandments --Elmer Berstein

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynkAVi4SfG0>

Link: Ben Hur-- Miklos Rosza

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmoWJ4R8c-E&t=3s>

Link: The Quiet Man-- Victor Young

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWLJJpmMrm4>

Link: Casablanca-- Max Steiner

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsjPVNJlk_I

The next century is yours to create, invent, and manufacture the stories that will enchant a new generation. I wish you will in your endeavors and may you always find a way to express yourself in some form of art!

