

Introduction to Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance Art



Classical Period	Medieval Period	Renaissance
<p>The Classical Period covered the height of the Greek culture and the Roman Empire, from its rise to its fall, about 500 BC to AD 500. The people of these ancient societies developed many of the ideas that, today, make up our mathematics, science, literature, and art.</p> <p>Forms of Art: sculpture, painted pottery, murals, mosaics</p> <p>Purposes: to show the importance of people and leaders, as well as gods and goddesses</p> <p>Characteristics of Classical Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ figures look idealized, perfect ▪ bodies look active, move convincingly ▪ bodies are often nude, sometimes draped in togas ▪ faces are bland and clam, without emotion ▪ scenes show heroic figures or real people doing real tasks of daily life ▪ little background or sense of perspective (when distant objects look smaller and far away) 	<p>The Medieval Period in Europe, which lasted roughly from AD 500 to AD 1400, was characterized by the rise of feudalism and the controlling power of the Catholic Church in people’s lives.</p> <p>Forms of Art: stained-glass windows, sculptures, illuminated manuscripts, paintings, tapestries</p> <p>Purposes: to teach religion to people who cannot read or write</p> <p>Characteristics of Medieval Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ subjects mostly religious ▪ figures look flat and stiff with little real movement ▪ important figures are large ▪ fully clothes, draped in deeply carved, still-looking clothes ▪ faces are solemn with little emotion ▪ paintings use vibrant colors ▪ flat, two-dimensional painted figures ▪ backgrounds a single color, often gold, no interest in creating a realistic space 	<p>The Renaissance included a rebirth of interest in Classical culture. It began around 1400 and lasted until 1650. People rediscovered the writings and artworks of the Greeks and Romans, borrowed their ancient ideas, and combined them in new ways.</p> <p>Forms of Art: sculptures, murals, drawings, paintings</p> <p>Purposes: to show the importance of people and nature, not just religion</p> <p>Characteristics of Renaissance Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ both religious and nonreligious scenes ▪ figures look idealized, perfect ▪ bodies may look active, moving ▪ bodies may be nude or clothed ▪ real people doing real tasks of daily life ▪ faces express what people are thinking ▪ colors respond to the light that falls on them ▪ interest in nature, lots of natural detail ▪ paintings are symmetrical (balanced on both sides)