

Art of the Northern Renaissance



Renaissance Art in Northern Europe

Should not be considered an addition to Italian art,
although Italian influence was strong.

Oil painting, developed in Flanders, became widely used in Italy.



Italy:

change was inspired by
humanism with its emphasis
on the revival of the values
of classical antiquity.
Wealthy merchant class
were patrons of artists.

Differences:



Northern Europe:

change was driven by religious
reform, the return to Christian
values, and the revolt against the
authority of the Church.
Princes & kings were patrons of
artists.

Characteristics of Northern Renaissance Art



Tendency toward realism
& naturalism.

Less emphasis on the
“classical ideal” and more
focus on peasant life.

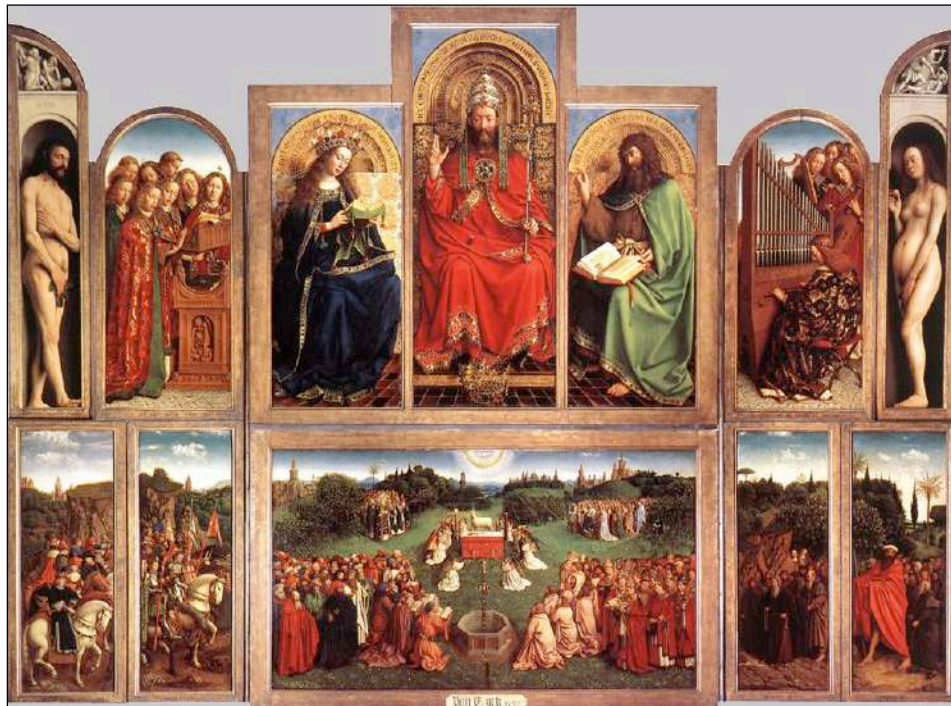
Details of domestic
interiors.

Great skill in portraiture.

Jan Van Eyck, *Rolin Madonna*, c. 1435,
Flemish, Northern Renaissance.

Jan van Eyck (1395 – 1441)

Adoration of the Lamb,
Ghent Altarpiece, 1432





Van Eyck

*The Crucifixion
&
The Last Judgment,
1420-1425*



Jan Van Eyck
*Giovanni Arnolfini
and His Wife*
(Wedding Portrait)
1434



Rogier van der Weyden (1399-1464)

The Deposition

1435



van der Weyden's *Deposition* (details)



Quentin Massys (1465-1530)

Belonged to the humanist circle in Antwerp that included Erasmus.
Thomas More called him “the renovator of the old art.”



Massys'
*The Moneylender &
His Wife*,
1514



The Ugly Dutchess,
1525-1530

Renaissance Art in France

A new phase of Italian influence in France began with the French invasions of the Italian peninsula that began in 1494.



Jean Clouet, *Portrait of Francis I*
1525

The most important royal patron
was Francis I.

Actively encouraged humanistic
learning.

Invited da Vinci to live in France.

He collected paintings by the
great Italian masters like Titian,
Raphael, and Michelangelo.

The School of Fontainebleau



A group of artists that decorated the Francis I's Palace at Fontainebleau between the 1530s and the 1560s.



The structure is characterized by a refined elegance and crowded figural compositions of painting and elaborate stucco work.

Renaissance Art in Germany

Albrecht Dürer
(1471-1528)



The greatest of the German Renaissance artists.

A scholar as well as an artist.

His patron was the Emperor Maximilian I.

Also a scientist, he wrote books on geometry, fortifications, and human proportions.

The self-conscious individualism of the Renaissance is seen in his portraits.

Self-Portrait at 26, 1498.



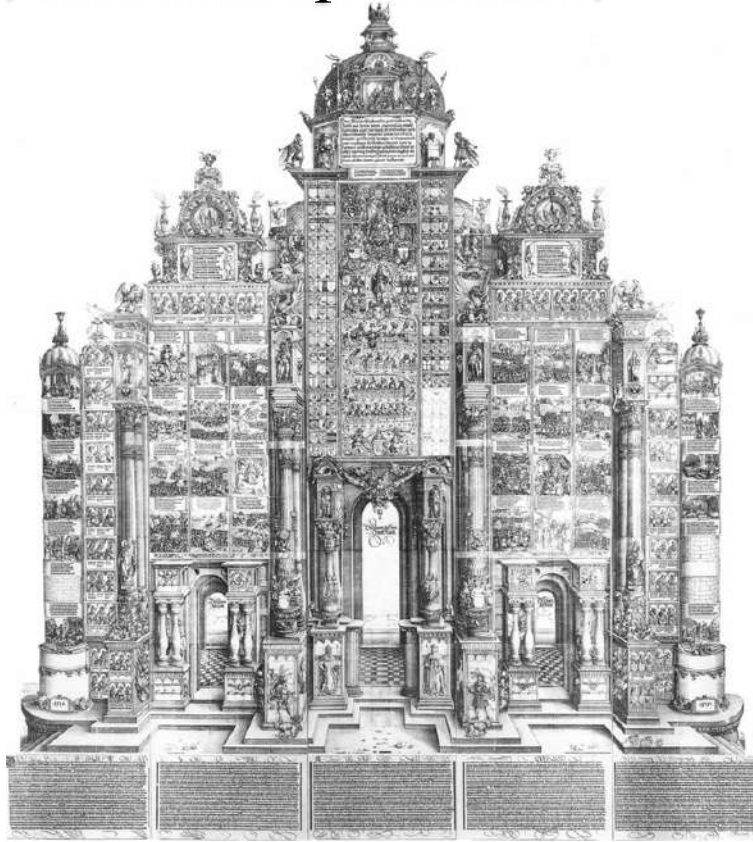
Albrecht Dürer

*Self-Portrait
in Fur-Collared Robe,
1500*

Dürer, *The Last Supper*, woodcut, 1510



Dürer, *The Triumphal Arch*, 1515-1517



Dürer,
*Four
Horsemen
of the
Apocalypse*
woodcut, 1498

Renaissance Art in England

Hans Holbein, the Younger

(1497-1543)

One of the great German artists who did most of his work in England.

While in Basel, he befriended Erasmus.

Henry VIII was his patron from 1536.

Great portraitist noted for:

Objectivity & detachment.

Doesn't conceal the weaknesses of his subjects.



Erasmus Writing, 1523

Holbein - Artist to the Tudors



Henry VIII (left), 1540 and
the future Edward VI
(above), 1543.

Holbein's, *The Ambassadors*, 1533



A Skull

Multiple Perspectives



English Architecture

Were More Interested in Architecture than Painting



Hardwick Hall, designed by Robert Smythson in the 1590s, for the Duchess of Shrewsbury [more medieval in style].

Hieronymus Bosch (1450-1516)

Early Netherlandish painter whose work was known for its use of fantastic imagery to illustrate moral and religious concepts and narratives with a pessimistic view of human nature.

Had a wild and lurid imagination.



Fanciful
monsters &
apparitions.

His figures are
flat.

Perspective is
ignored.

Admired by
Philip II of
Spain.

Hieronimus Bosch

The Garden of Earthly Delights,
1500



Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1525-1569)

Worked in Antwerp and then moved to Brussels.

In touch with a circle of Erasmian humanists, he was deeply concerned with human vice and follies.



A master of landscapes; not a portraitist.

People in his works often have round, blank, heavy faces and are often expressionless, mindless, and sometimes malicious.

The Peasant Wedding, 1566–69, oil on panel

Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1525-1569)

Netherlandish Proverbs, 1559, oil on oak wood



Bruegel's, *The Beggars*, 1568



Bruegel,

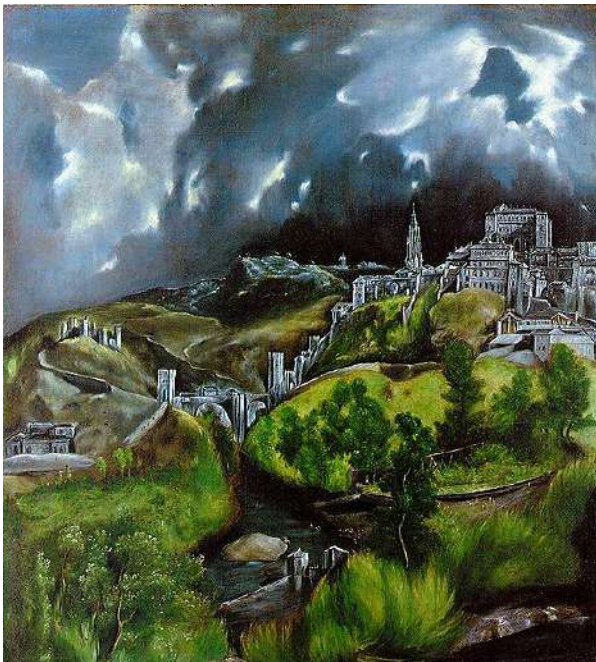
Parable of the Blind Leading the Blind, 1568



Domenikos Theotokopoulos

(El Greco)

1541 – 1614



The most important Spanish artist of this period was Greek (!)

He deliberately distorted & elongated his figures and seated them in a lurid, unearthly atmosphere.

He used an agitated, flickering light.

He ignored the rules of perspective, and heightened the effect by areas of brilliant color.

His works were a fitting expression of the Spanish Counter-Reformation.

View of Toledo (c. 1596–1600, oil on canvas
47.75 × 42.75 cm
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



El Greco
The Holy Trinity

(1577–1579)

300 × 178 cm

oil on canvas

Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain



El Greco,
*The Burial of
Count Orgaz*

1586-1588