

Renaissance Sculpture: Benvenuto Cellini Benvenuto Cellini was a sculptor and goldsmith. Born in Florence in his life was a mix of violence and supreme artistry which saw him imprisoned for looting and, by contrast, producing the famous golden saltcellar for Cardinal Ippolito d' Este.

Visit Website Did you know? Leonardo da Vinci, the ultimate "Renaissance man," practiced all the visual arts and studied a wide range of topics, including anatomy, geology, botany, hydraulics and flight. His frescoes were said to have decorated cathedrals at Assisi, Rome, Padua, Florence and Naples, though there has been difficulty attributing such works with certainty. In , the sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti c. The other major artist working during this period was the painter Masaccio , known for his frescoes of the Trinity in the Church of Santa Maria Novella c. Masaccio painted for less than six years but was highly influential in the early Renaissance for the intellectual nature of his work, as well as its degree of naturalism. Florence in the Renaissance Though the Catholic Church remained a major patron of the arts during the Renaissance—“from popes and other prelates to convents, monasteries and other religious organizations—”works of art were increasingly commissioned by civil government, courts and wealthy individuals. Much of the art produced during the early Renaissance was commissioned by the wealthy merchant families of Florence, most notably the Medici. Three great masters—“ Leonardo da Vinci , Michelangelo and Raphael—”dominated the period known as the High Renaissance, which lasted roughly from the early s until the sack of Rome by the troops of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V of Spain in Michelangelo Buonarroti drew on the human body for inspiration and created works on a vast scale. He carved the latter by hand from an enormous marble block; the famous statue measures five meters high including its base. Though Michelangelo considered himself a sculptor first and foremost, he achieved greatness as a painter as well, notably with his giant fresco covering the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, completed over four years and depicting various scenes from Genesis. Raphael Sanzio, the youngest of the three great High Renaissance masters, learned from both da Vinci and Michelangelo. Among the other great Italian artists working during this period were Bramante, Giorgione, Titian and Correggio. Renaissance Art in Practice Many works of Renaissance art depicted religious images, including subjects such as the Virgin Mary, or Madonna, and were encountered by contemporary audiences of the period in the context of religious rituals. Today, they are viewed as great works of art, but at the time they were seen and used mostly as devotional objects. Many Renaissance works were painted as altarpieces for incorporation into rituals associated with Catholic Mass and donated by patrons who sponsored the Mass itself. Renaissance artists came from all strata of society; they usually studied as apprentices before being admitted to a professional guild and working under the tutelage of an older master. Far from being starving bohemians, these artists worked on commission and were hired by patrons of the arts because they were steady and reliable. In addition to sacred images, many of these works portrayed domestic themes such as marriage, birth and the everyday life of the family. Expansion and Decline Over the course of the 15th and 16th centuries, the spirit of the Renaissance spread throughout Italy and into France, northern Europe and Spain. Oil painting during the Renaissance can be traced back even further, however, to the Flemish painter Jan van Eyck died , who painted a masterful altarpiece in the cathedral at Ghent c. By the later s, the Mannerist style, with its emphasis on artificiality, had developed in opposition to the idealized naturalism of High Renaissance art, and Mannerism spread from Florence and Rome to become the dominant style in Europe. Renaissance art continued to be celebrated, however:

Chapter 2 : Italian Renaissance Art

A Rebirth of Classical Antiquity. The Renaissance, the rebirth of Art and Science, represents the pinnacle of artistic achievement, revived and confidently executed after a thousand years in the wilderness.

Rome was a city of ancient ruins, and the Papal States were loosely administered, and vulnerable to external interference such as that of France, and later Spain. In the south, Sicily had for some time been under foreign domination, by the Arabs and then the Normans. Sicily had prospered for years during the Emirate of Sicily and later for two centuries during the Norman Kingdom and the Hohenstaufen Kingdom, but had declined by the late Middle Ages. In contrast, Northern and Central Italy had become far more prosperous, and it has been calculated that the region was among the richest of Europe. The Crusades had built lasting trade links to the Levant, and the Fourth Crusade had done much to destroy the Byzantine Roman Empire as a commercial rival to the Venetians and Genoese. The main trade routes from the east passed through the Byzantine Empire or the Arab lands and onward to the ports of Genoa, Pisa, and Venice. Luxury goods bought in the Levant, such as spices, dyes, and silks were imported to Italy and then resold throughout Europe. Moreover, the inland city-states profited from the rich agricultural land of the Po valley. From France, Germany, and the Low Countries, through the medium of the Champagne fairs, land and river trade routes brought goods such as wool, wheat, and precious metals into the region. The extensive trade that stretched from Egypt to the Baltic generated substantial surpluses that allowed significant investment in mining and agriculture. Thus, while northern Italy was not richer in resources than many other parts of Europe, the level of development, stimulated by trade, allowed it to prosper. In particular, Florence became one of the wealthiest of the cities of Northern Italy, mainly due to its woolen textile production, developed under the supervision of its dominant trade guild, the Arte della Lana. Wool was imported from Northern Europe and in the 16th century from Spain [4] and together with dyes from the east were used to make high quality textiles. The Italian trade routes that covered the Mediterranean and beyond were also major conduits of culture and knowledge. The recovery of lost Greek classics and, to a lesser extent, Arab advancements on them following the Crusader conquest of the Byzantine heartlands, revitalized medieval philosophy in the Renaissance of the 12th century, just as the refugee Byzantine scholars who migrated to Italy during and following the Turkish conquest of the Byzantines between the 12th and 15th centuries were important in sparking the new linguistic studies of the Renaissance, in newly created academies in Florence and Venice. Humanist scholars searched monastic libraries for ancient manuscripts and recovered Tacitus and other Latin authors. The rediscovery of Vitruvius meant that the architectural principles of Antiquity could be observed once more, and Renaissance artists were encouraged, in the atmosphere of humanist optimism, to excel the achievements of the Ancients, like Apelles, of whom they read. Thirteenth-century[edit] In the 13th century, much of Europe experienced strong economic growth. The trade routes of the Italian states linked with those of established Mediterranean ports and eventually the Hanseatic League of the Baltic and northern regions of Europe to create a network economy in Europe for the first time since the 4th century. The city-states of Italy expanded greatly during this period and grew in power to become de facto fully independent of the Holy Roman Empire; apart from the Kingdom of Naples, outside powers kept their armies out of Italy. During this period, the modern commercial infrastructure developed, with double-entry book-keeping, joint stock companies, an international banking system, a systematized foreign exchange market, insurance, and government debt. The new mercantile governing class, who gained their position through financial skill, adapted to their purposes the feudal aristocratic model that had dominated Europe in the Middle Ages. A feature of the High Middle Ages in Northern Italy was the rise of the urban communes which had broken from the control by bishops and local counts. In much of the region, the landed nobility was poorer than the urban patriarchs in the High Medieval money economy whose inflationary rise left land-holding aristocrats impoverished. The increase in trade during the early Renaissance enhanced these characteristics. The decline of feudalism and the rise of cities influenced each other; for example, the demand for luxury goods led to an increase in trade, which led to greater numbers of tradesmen becoming wealthy, who, in turn, demanded more luxury goods. This change

also gave the merchants almost complete control of the governments of the Italian city-states, again enhancing trade. One of the most important effects of this political control was security. Those that grew extremely wealthy in a feudal state ran constant risk of running afoul of the monarchy and having their lands confiscated, as famously occurred to Jacques Coeur in France. The northern states also kept many medieval laws that severely hampered commerce, such as those against usury, and prohibitions on trading with non-Christians. In the city-states of Italy, these laws were repealed or rewritten. In the east, war was also disrupting trade routes, as the Ottoman Empire began to expand throughout the region. Most devastating, though, was the Black Death that decimated the populations of the densely populated cities of Northern Italy and returned at intervals thereafter. It was during this period of instability that the Renaissance authors such as Dante and Petrarch lived, and the first stirrings of Renaissance art were to be seen, notably in the realism of Giotto. Paradoxically, some of these disasters would help establish the Renaissance. The resulting labour shortage increased wages and the reduced population was therefore much wealthier, better fed, and, significantly, had more surplus money to spend on luxury goods. The new demand for products and services also helped create a growing class of bankers, merchants, and skilled artisans. The horrors of the Black Death and the seeming inability of the Church to provide relief would contribute to a decline of church influence. Additionally, the collapse of the Bardi and Peruzzi banks would open the way for the Medici to rise to prominence in Florence. Roberto Sabatino Lopez argues that the economic collapse was a crucial cause of the Renaissance. However, in the leaner years of the 14th century, the wealthy found few promising investment opportunities for their earnings and instead chose to spend more on culture and art. Another popular explanation for the Italian Renaissance is the thesis, first advanced by historian Hans Baron, [10] that states that the primary impetus of the early Renaissance was the long-running series of wars between Florence and Milan. By the late 14th century, Milan had become a centralized monarchy under the control of the Visconti family. Giangaleazzo Visconti, who ruled the city from 1395 to 1402, was renowned both for his cruelty and for his abilities, and set about building an empire in Northern Italy. He launched a long series of wars, with Milan steadily conquering neighbouring states and defeating the various coalitions led by Florence that sought in vain to halt the advance. This culminated in the siege of Florence, when it looked as though the city was doomed to fall, before Giangaleazzo suddenly died and his empire collapsed. For Baron, the most important figure in crafting this ideology was Leonardo Bruni. This time of crisis in Florence was the period when the most influential figures of the early Renaissance were coming of age, such as Ghiberti, Donatello, Masolino, and Brunelleschi. Inculcated with this republican ideology they later went on to advocate republican ideas that were to have an enormous impact on the Renaissance.

Chapter 3 : Italian Renaissance Learning Resources - The National Gallery of Art

The Italian Renaissance is best known for its achievements in painting, architecture, sculpture, literature, music, philosophy, science and exploration. Italy became the recognized European leader in all these areas by the late 15th century, during the Peace of Lodi () agreed between Italian states.

For an introduction to Flemish and Dutch oil painting, see: For painting and wood carving in Germany , see: However, bronze became a favourite material with Renaissance sculptors - not just because of its ductility and durability, but also due to its brilliance when gilded - being employed first for reliefs, then for statues, portrait busts, and minor items. Even so, bronze-casting remained problematic for some time and early bronzes were not highly polished. High Renaissance sculptors would overcome these difficulties during the 16th-century. White Carrara marble was popular for monumental sculpture, and was often softened in colour by the use of wax. Highly coloured marble sculpture was rare. The range of sculpture was considerably extended by a greater introduction of terracotta, which was a much cheaper substitute for marble and, when glazed and fired, equally durable. Terracotta was soon employed for altar-pieces, pulpits and fonts, as also was an ever cheaper type of stucco made from marble dust and sand. Wood-carving was also not uncommon, but only in forested regions - hence the preeminence of southern German wood-carvers. In matters of practical technique, such as the use of tools and implements, Renaissance sculptors generally followed the methods of classic sculptors, although there was a much greater emphasis on the pictorial and on graphic aids. In keeping with Renaissance fine art philosophy, " disegno " was seen as paramount, thus designs on paper were an important feature of the sculpting process. Indeed, preliminary studies incorporating clay, wax or wood models were sometimes developed to the point where the actual execution of the work in bronze or marble could be done by an artisan or skilled apprentice. How to Appreciate Sculpture. For later works, please see: How to Appreciate Modern Sculpture. Early Renaissance Florentine School of Sculpture The sculptors working on the Cathedral of Florence at the end of the 14th-century, especially Piero di Giovanni Tedesco, were already creating naturalistic sculptures and combining classic with Christian themes. The top sculptors of the early Renaissance in Florence were Lorenzo Ghiberti , Donatello and Nanni di Banco died In many ways, the works of Donatello most accurately reflect the changing spirit of the times. As late as his sculpture was emphatically Gothic in treatment. His statues for the Florence Cathedral , for the Campanile, and for Orsan Michele are relatively inelegant and heavy with drapery: Prophets and Evangelists excepting St George are hardly more than portraits of his own contemporaries. During the period , Donatello produced his best sculptures acquiring a countrywide reputation in the process. In his relief sculpture Donatello demonstrated perspective through the use of retreating flat planes, notably on the Font for the Siena Baptistery. His earlier realism was now replaced by a refined classicism - as in his bronze statue David - along with a noticeable sense of drama. David by Donatello for details. Michelozzo Michelozzi was closely associated with Donatello during this time. A third and final period, which runs from until his death in , witnessed the full development of this sense of drama, usually at the cost of exaggerated and unbalanced compositions. Two other followers of Donatello include: Bernardo Ciuffagni , creator of the seated St. Matthew in Florence Cathedral; and Agostino di Duccio creator of the mannered column-statues on the facade of S. Bernardino at Perugia and the relief-sculptures in S. Like his uncle Luca Della Robbia , Andrea della Robbia was a highly distinguished exponent of terracotta sculpture , who was noted for his Bambino Tondi. During the latter half of the 15th-century the demand for monumental works of marble and bronze sculpture grew significantly. Churches received sculpted altarpieces, pulpits, tombs and statuary, while secular palaces were decorated with sculptured doorways, friezes, reliefs and portrait busts. The most talented marble sculptors of the time included Bernardo Rossellino , Desiderio da Settignano , Antonio Rossellino , Mino da Fiesole , Matteo Civitali and Benedetto da Majano The top bronze sculptors were Antonio Pollaiuolo and Andrea del Verrocchio Although the Florentine Renaissance remained the driving force of sculpture during the 15th-century, other centres soon appeared, such as Siena, Milan, Venice, and Padua each of whom trained talented sculptors of independent status and influence. His earliest works, as exemplified by the Fonte Gaja , were robustly Gothic in character. After this came a more classical

period, and lastly a more dramatic period. Other noted Sieneese sculptors included the bronze artist Giacomo Cozzarelli and Lorenzo di Mariano died. There was a demand for more elaborate decoration. Eminent sculptors from Milan include Cristoforo Mantegazza died, Antonio Mantegazza died, Giovanni Antonio Amodeo, the virtuoso goldsmith and terracotta relief sculptor Caradosso, Agostino Busti and Cristoforo Solari called "Il Gobbo" the hunchback active. Venice represented a taste for rich decorative works, notably less banal than those of Milan, more sentimental than those of Florence. In essence, Renaissance art in Venice appealed to the pleasurable emotions while Milan and Florence both appealed to the intellect. Notable Venetian sculptors included: As for Roman sculpture, this would have to wait until the later Renaissance in Rome. Italian High Renaissance Sculpture and Beyond c. Sometimes it even dominated her sister arts. For example, architecture became more sculpture-like pilasters were replaced by columns while in painting, modelling and perspective superceded outline and composition. Taste in sculpture also changed. Intricate decorative low-relief was largely replaced by high-relief and sculpture in the round. Nobility of design became less important than modelling, posture of arms and legs, and movement in drapery. Effect was all-important, and though the influence of classic sculpture was maintained, only occasionally did it lead to the reproduction of antique forms. Florentine Sculptors of the High Renaissance Leading sculptors in Florence during this time included: In Milan and Pavia the line of talented sculptors ended with Agostino Busti. In Venice the top sculptor was the Florentine Jacopo Sansovino. His pupils, such as Tommaso Lombardo, Girolamo Lombardo, Danese Cattaneo, and Alessandro Vittoria continued his traditions, although with exaggeration. Roman Sculptors of the High Renaissance If during the Early Renaissance Florence supplied Rome with artists, the roles were reversed during the High Renaissance, when Rome, principally through Michelangelo, influenced the development of sculpture across Italy. Michelangelo, equally famous as architect, sculptor, and painter, was primarily a sculptor in all his work, concerned above all with the human form. His first period roughly is comparable with that of Donatello, except it was freer and more classic. He portrayed the Madonna and Child with the same degree of dignity and humanity that are found in Greek reliefs. He rejoiced in his study of the nude human form in his Battle of the Centaurs. His second period c. Its heavy drapery aside, how soulful is his Pieta, at St. How noble his David. His final style c. Other noteworthy High Renaissance sculptors from Rome include: Giambologna had a huge influence on a wide range of pupils and contemporary artists. A good example is the Dutch bronze sculptor Adriaen de Vries, who trained in Italy under Giambologna, and worked mainly in Prague and Augsburg. One of the last Mannerist sculptors of Rome, whose naturalistic unposed marble statue of Saint Cecilia led into the Baroque era and Bernini, was Stefano Maderno. Renaissance Sculpture In France 15th Century The Renaissance took a unique form inside Italy - it was, in effect, a rebirth of the national spirit. In other nations outside Italy, however, it was no more than a blending of Italian art with the national style. Thus in France, which had given birth to the magnificent movements of Romanesque and Gothic sculpture and architecture, the Italian Renaissance had a far less revolutionary effect, although its simple, classical forms were a welcome replacement for the rather tired Gothic style. Another important factor was the transformation of French feudal castles into chateaux of pleasure, triggering numerous commissions for the new Renaissance-style sculpture in the process. Many sculptors from Northern Italy moved to France to accomodate this new demand - settling in Tours, Paris, and Fontainebleau - joining others who had settled before them, like Guido Mazzoni, Girolamo da Fiesole, Girolamo della Robbia, and Benedetto da Rovezzano. The first school of French sculpture to exhibit the new Italian Renaissance influence was that of Tours. Its chief representative, Michel Colombe, is comparable with the best Italian sculptors of the Early Renaissance. His relief of St. The great chateaux at Blois, Chambord, Fontainebleau, and St Germain were refurbished in accordance with the new style of early Renaissance Florentine sculpture. Next came public buildings and private houses at Tours, Angers, Orleans, Rouen, Reims, and Toulouse, followed by churches, whose doorways, altarpieces, choir screens, and stalls were redecorated with Renaissance reliefs, friezes, and statuary. Gothic architecture no longer determined structural forms, and sculpture became much more independent. The three great sculptors of the age were, Pierre Bontemps active mid-century, Jean Goujon Active, and Germain Pilon. Other schools of French Renaissance sculpture included the school of Toulouse, represented by Nicholas Bachelier, and the school of Troyes, exemplified by Francois Gentil. Another strong

tradition, the Burgundian school, established strong artistic links with Charles I in Spain. Spanish Renaissance Sculpture Early Renaissance sculptors in Spain of the 15th century were much less advanced than their colleagues in Italy. Indeed it is not easy even to date the beginning of a proper Renaissance in the Iberian Peninsula. Spanish artists had none of the ambitious patrons of the arts like the Medici family of Florence, or the Papal patrons in Rome. During the High Renaissance c. These individuals helped to further the humanist Renaissance spirit, but generally within the context of Spanish traditions. He also created part of the great retables of Toledo and Palencia cathedrals. From time to time he worked alongside Diego de Siloe c. The Burgos native sculptor Bartolome Ordonez c. In Palencia, then an important cultural centre, the plastic arts were led by the Gothic sculptor Juan de Valmaseda b. In Aragon, the Renaissance relied on the sculptor Gil Morlanes the Elder, renowned for the alabaster retable of the monastery of Montearagon Huesca cathedral. Another significant Spanish carver of the 16th-century was Damian Forment - noted for the superb retable of Nuestra Senora del Pilar, the retable of Huesca cathedral and the great retable of the monastery of Poblet - who worked in Valencia then Saragossa. The period witnessed the highpoint of Spanish Renaissance sculpture. This era was led by the genius Alonso Berruguete , son of the painter Pedro Berruguete and a pupil of Michelangelo. Noted for the retable of the Mejorada, the retable of San Benito de Valladolid, the choir-stall reliefs in Toledo cathedral, and the tomb of Cardinal Tavera.

Chapter 4 : Renaissance Art - HISTORY

Florence was the inspirational driving force of Italian Renaissance sculpture during the fifteenth century, and her influence radiated throughout Italy. Even so, other centres, like Siena, Milan, Venice, Padua, and Umbria, also produced sculptors of originality and influence.

Italy The revival of Classical learning in Italy, which was so marked a feature of Italian culture during the 15th century, was paralleled by an equal passion for the beauty of Classical design in all the artistic fields; and when this eager delight in the then fresh and sensuous graciousness that is the mark of much Classical workâ€”to the Italians of that time, seemingly the expression of a golden ageâ€”became universal, complete domination of the Classical ideal in art was inevitable. This turning to Classical models was less sudden and revolutionary than it seemed. Throughout the history of Romanesque and Gothic Italian art, the tradition of Classical structure and ornament still remained alive; again and again, in the 12th and 13th centuries Classical formsâ€”the acanthus leaf, moulding ornaments, the treatment of drapery in a reliefâ€”are imitated, often with crudeness, to be sure, but with a basic sympathy for the old imperial Roman methods of design. Nicola Pisano , at work in the mid-th century, was but the first of many Italian artists, particularly sculptors, to turn definitely to Roman antecedents for inspiration. The competition reliefs for the bronze doors indeed reveal a change in attitude toward sculpture. The development of Florentine sculpture roughly parallels the development in painting from a dignified monumental style to a relaxed sweetness, although there is no one in painting to approach the rich inventive genius of Donatello. Donatello, like his friends the architect Brunelleschi and the painter Masaccio, was one of the most outstandingly original artists in Western history. He undoubtedly was influenced by the concepts of antiquity current in Florence, but there was relatively little antique sculpture visible for him to study in his formative years. He first appears as a mature genius working on two of the major projects of the 15th century, the sculptural decoration of the cathedral of Florence and of the guild church of Or San Michele. Here he reveals such a deep knowledge of the human figure at rest and in movement that he may already have begun his investigation into proportion and the statics and dynamics of the human figure. But the tension between repose and actionâ€”the representation, in fact, of pauseâ€”also is a psychological achievement, hardly to be matched in earlier sculpture. It is noteworthy, too, that the monumental simplicity and power of the piece is achieved by such a subtle manipulation of the planes and such a technical virtuosity in carving the marble that the observer is rarely concerned with the material. The figure stands in *contrapposto* , a disposition of legs and shoulders that emphasises a natural rotation of the central body axis and weight shift, which was first introduced in classical Greek art as a means to animate the frontality of the figure. George, bronze copy of a marble statue by Donatello, begun c. Relief has always been a problem for sculptors because it must follow a narrow path between the two-dimensionality of painting and the three-dimensionality of full-round sculpture. Donatello conceived of a very low relief *rilievo schiacciato* in which the subtle modelling of planes suggests the illusion of depth and figures moving in space while still respecting the integrity of the plane. He continued to develop the potentialities of this relief style throughout his long career and strongly influenced relief sculpture executed in Florence. In his brief career Nanni di Banco was as prolific and inventive as Donatello. In this commission he solved one of the most difficult problems facing the sculptor, that of the group conceived in the round for the confining space of a niche. Although some of the figures still retain certain Gothicizing elements in the draperies and in the heads, the major impression is of a group of Roman senators. The group is bound together by the spatial relation of one to the other and by a kind of mute conversation in which they are all engaged. He began work in and set the doors in place in The gilded bronze reliefs are treated almost like paintings, for they are rectangular in format and contained within a frame. Unlike the earlier doors, in which the ground plane is simply a neutral backdrop, it is here treated in such a way that it suggests sky and space. Figures are placed in landscape or in perspectively rendered architecture to suggest a greater depth to the relief than actually exists. Ghiberti achieved fame in his own time as a bronze founder and as the master of the shop in which many sculptors and painters of the early Renaissance were trained. Gates of Paradise, gilded bronze doors from the east side of the

Baptistery in Florence, by Lorenzo Ghiberti, " He executed the Fonte Gaia "19 , a public fountain for the Piazza del Campo , the main square of Siena, and was awarded the commission for a baptismal font in the baptistery of Siena cathedral. Always a procrastinating artist, he postponed work on the font to such a degree that the reliefs were finally awarded to other sculptors, including Donatello and Ghiberti. Petronio , Bologna " The sculptural treatment of the low relief figures and the suggestion of a space adequate to contain them parallels the painting of Masaccio. The dramatic vigour and powerfully conceived forms had a great influence on the young Michelangelo. During the decade "53 Donatello was in Padua executing the equestrian statue of Gattamelata to stand in front of the church in the piazza del santo. Erasmo da Narni, called Gattamelata, was a condottiere, or leader of mercenary troops, who rose to a position of importance. The statue is an idealization of nature in both horse and rider and a reinterpretation of antiquity. Donatello certainly knew the antique statue of Marcus Aurelius in Rome during his stay there " He uses the concept of antiquity, the pose of the antique bronze horses at St. Donatello is not concerned with particulars but with the idealized and generalized aspects of man that reveal his potential nobility. The nervous energy and conscious distortion of forms that may be detected in all his work becomes explicit in the emaciated figure clothed in her own hair. This same emotionalism and distortion is even more pronounced in his last work, the pulpits for the church of S. Antonio Pollaiuolo expresses in his sculpture the same sort of muscular activity and linear movement as in his painting"he has the energy but not the interest in emotion found in Donatello. The angular contours of the limbs and the jagged voids between the figures are all directed toward expressing tautness, muscular and emotional strain, and the work is one of the earliest examples of the statuette in modern times. The elegant, polished antique gods made by Antico in Mantua and the brilliantly modelled satyrs made by Riccio in Padua set a standard in such works that has rarely been excelled. Bronze statuettes were made by almost all the major sculptors of the 16th century in Italy. In complete contrast with Pollaiuolo, Desiderio da Settignano is perhaps best known for his portraits of women and children, although he also executed two public monuments of major importance in Florence"the tomb of Carlo Marsuppini in Sta. The central panel employs linear perspective to render space. The figures moving into that space are defined in a linear manner that emphasizes contours and billowing draperies to suggest movement. Antonio Rossellino collaborated with his older brother Bernardo on the tomb of Leonardo Bruni c. Croce but soon became the dominant personality in the family business. The great sculptural complex of the Cardinal of Portugal tomb "66 in S. The tomb is decorated with soft and relaxed angels and a tender Madonna and Christ Child in the roundel. Andrea del Verrocchio was more interested than other sculptors were in movement, which he expressed in a somewhat restrained manner. Thomas partly outside the niche and causing him to turn inward toward the figure of Christ. Verrocchio also reveals his indebtedness to Desiderio in his refined treatment of the surfaces. Although he was born and trained in the 15th century, his style and the bulk of his creations place him firmly in the 16th century. Others, such as Vincenzo Danti, found it easier to succumb and to follow docilely. Jacopo Sansovino effectively escaped the influence of Michelangelo by transferring his activities to Venice. After the expulsion of the Medici from Florence, Michelangelo fled to Bologna; there he executed three figures for the tomb of S. Domenico and saw the powerful reliefs of Jacopo della Quercia. Michelangelo recaptures the antique treatment of the young male figure by the soft modulation of contours. The figure seems to be slightly off-balance, and the parted lips and hazy eyes suggest that he is under the influence of wine. The little faun also joins in the Bacchic revel by slyly stealing some grapes. In his first major sculptural work the year-old artist succeeded in capturing the spirit of the antique as no artist before him had done. The robes of the Madonna are exaggerated to create a solid base for the pyramidal composition. The figure of Christ is bent and twisted, in part to express the suffering of the crucifixion and in part to make it conform to the contours of the pyramid. All is directed toward creating a calm, dignified, and stable composition that expresses emotion and religious fervour by implication rather than by overstatement. The work is carried to a higher degree of finish than any of the succeeding works, and it is one of the few that Michelangelo signed. The youthful David was one of the symbols of Florence. Michelangelo sees him as a slightly awkward adolescent with large hands and feet, a powerful figure who has not yet realized his full potential. The balance of the figure is subtly arranged to keep the bearing leg under the head while permitting the apparently nonbearing leg to be relaxed. The

positions are reversed in the arms, giving the cross-axis balance of working and relaxed members. The head turns to the left to meet Goliath and the stone of the sling is concealed in the right hand, while the composure of the expression conveys the calm and self-assured poise of a hero. It is this subtle balance and adjustment of parts to create a unified and harmonious whole that places this work firmly in the High Renaissance style that was appearing simultaneously in painting and architecture. On command of Julius II he returned to Rome. The Roman years 1565-1566 are characterized by what Michelangelo later called the tragedy of the tomb. The death of Julius II caused the heirs to press for a smaller, cheaper tomb and rapid completion. After many years of negotiations, in a much-reduced version was set in place in S. Pietro in Vincoli, instead of in St. The figures by Michelangelo for the tomb are now widely scattered. Four unfinished figures of slaves were carved before and remained in Florence, where they once formed part of the grotto decoration at the Pitti Palace. Lorenzo, a church under Medici patronage. Although Michelangelo promised that the facade would become the showplace of Italian sculpture, nothing came of the project. While engaged in these projects Michelangelo was also put in charge of the fortifications of Florence prior to and during the siege of He complained, justly, that no one can plan and execute three projects simultaneously. The Medici tombs 1562-1564 gave the artist the unique opportunity to plan the architectural setting of his sculpture and to control both the light cast on the work and the position of the observer. Since the chapel was originally planned to contain the tombs of the Medici popes Leo X and Clement VII, it is best seen from behind the altar, where the papal celebrant of the mass for the dead would have stood. The artist had almost completely carved the piece when he changed his mind, returned to the block, and drastically reduced the breadth of the figures. He was working on the stone 10 days before he died, and the piece remains unfinished. Mannerism Whether in Rome or Florence, Michelangelo had a strong influence on sculptors of the 16th century. Many of his figures in marble are only free variations on themes by Michelangelo. Bartolommeo Ammannati should be best known for his design of the bridge of Sta. Benvenuto Cellini through his celebrated autobiography has left a fuller account of his picturesque life than that of any other artist of the 16th century. The saltcellar is at once an example of 16th-century conspicuous consumption and of Mannerist conceits in art. It is of solid gold, which is covered in part by enamels as though it were a base metal. The youthful figure of Perseus seems to retain some of the airiness from his flight on the winged sandals of Hermes. He holds aloft the head of the Medusa in an outstretched arm, thus creating an open composition that exploits to the full the potential of the bronze medium. Void is almost as important as solid in this light and airy composition that would have been unthinkable and impossible in marble. Cellini intended the figure to be seen from a variety of viewing points, a relatively new idea in sculpture of this sort, and he leads the observer around by the position of the arms and the legs. Giambologna went to Italy for study shortly after mid-century and settled in Florence in

The Proto Renaissance. Simone Martini (c. 1) The Annunciation, (egg tempera and gold on panel) The Proto Renaissance is the name given to that uncertain period of transition in Italian art as the creative influence of the Byzantine tradition began to decline.

Visit Website Did you know? When Galileo died in , he was still under house arrest. The Catholic Church did not pardon him until . Cornerstone of the Renaissance Thanks to the patronage of these wealthy elites, Renaissance-era writers and thinkers were able to spend their days doing just that. Instead of devoting themselves to ordinary jobs or to the asceticism of the monastery, they could enjoy worldly pleasures. They traveled around Italy, studying ancient ruins and rediscovering Greek and Roman texts. To Renaissance scholars and philosophers, these classical sources held great wisdom. It also encouraged people to use experimentation and observation to solve earthly problems. As a result, many Renaissance intellectuals focused on trying to define and understand the laws of nature and the physical world. He also created pioneering studies of human anatomy. Likewise, the scientist and mathematician Galileo Galilei investigated one natural law after another. By dropping different-sized cannonballs from the top of a building, for instance, he proved that all objects fall at the same rate of acceleration. He also built a powerful telescope and used it to show that the Earth and other planets revolved around the sun and not, as religious authorities argued, the other way around. For this, Galileo was arrested for heresy and threatened with torture and death, but he refused to recant: However, perhaps the most important technological development of the Renaissance happened not in Italy but in Germany, where Johannes Gutenberg invented the mechanical movable-type printing press in the middle of the 15th century. For the first time, it was possible to make books—and, by extension, knowledge—widely available. Renaissance artists and architects applied many humanist principles to their work. For example, the architect Filippo Brunelleschi applied the elements of classical Roman architecture—shapes, columns and especially proportion—to his own buildings. The magnificent eight-sided dome he built at the Santa Maria del Fiore cathedral in Florence was an engineering triumph—it was feet across, weighed 37, tons and had no buttresses to hold it up—as well as an aesthetic one. Brunelleschi also devised a way to draw and paint using linear perspective. That is, he figured out how to paint from the perspective of the person looking at the painting, so that space would appear to recede into the frame. After the architect Leon Battista Alberti explained the principles behind linear perspective in his treatise *Della Pittura On Painting* , it became one of the most noteworthy elements of almost all Renaissance painting. Later, many painters began to use a technique called *chiaroscuro* to create an illusion of three-dimensional space on a flat canvas. The End of the Italian Renaissance By the end of the 15th century, Italy was being torn apart by one war after another. At the same time, the Catholic Church, which was itself wracked with scandal and corruption, had begun a violent crackdown on dissenters. In , the Council of Trent officially established the Roman Inquisition. In this climate, humanism was akin to heresy. The Italian Renaissance was over.

Chapter 6 : How to recognize Italian Renaissance art (video) | Khan Academy

Today, the Italian Renaissance is perceived as the pinnacle of art history. With an emphasis on balance and an appreciation for humanism, art produced during this period has influenced contemporary art, as evident in everything from photorealistic depictions to lifelike sculptures.

See Article History Renaissance art, painting , sculpture , architecture , music , and literature produced during the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries in Europe under the combined influences of an increased awareness of nature, a revival of classical learning, and a more individualistic view of man. Spirit of the Renaissance The intellectual and artistic climate of Florence during the 14th and 15th centuries is illustrated through its contrasts with the daily lives of contemporary Florentines. Top Questions What are the characteristics of Renaissance art, and how does it differ from the art of the Middle Ages? Renaissance art is marked by a gradual shift from the abstract forms of the medieval period to the representational forms of the 15th century. Subjects grew from mostly biblical scenes to include portraits, episodes from Classical religion, and events from contemporary life. Human figures are often rendered in dynamic poses, showing expression, using gesture, and interacting with one another. They are not flat but suggest mass, and they often occupy a realistic landscape, rather than stand against a gold background as some figures do in the art of the Middle Ages. Renaissance art from Northern Europe emphasized precise detail as a means of achieving a realistic work. Learn more about the Middle Ages, the era that preceded the Renaissance. When and where did Renaissance art start and end? Characteristics of Renaissance art, notably an interest in realistic representation, can be found throughout European art during the 13th century, but they did not dominate art until the 15th century. Experiments in naturalism during the early Renaissance reached their culmination primarily in Italy during the High Renaissance c. After the deaths of the latter two artists and , respectively , the High Renaissance gave way to Mannerism , wherein artists complicated realistic representations with a sense of drama and exaggeration. Learn more about Mannerism, the art movement that followed the High Renaissance. How did humanism and religion affect Renaissance art? Interest in humanism , a philosophy that emphasized the individual and the human capacity for fulfillment through reason, transformed the Renaissance artist from an anonymous craftsman to an individual practicing an intellectual pursuit. Artists introduced new subjects to their work, which reflected the growing emphasis on the individual, including portraits, scenes of contemporary life, and historical narratives. Although Renaissance culture was becoming increasingly secular, religion was still important to daily life, especially in Italy, where the seat of Catholicism was located. A good portion of Renaissance art depicted scenes from the Bible or was commissioned by the church. Emphasis on naturalism, however, placed such figures as Christ and the Madonna not on a magnificent gold background, as in the Middle Ages, but in landscapes from the observable world. Read more about humanism, the doctrine that influenced the culture of the Renaissance. What made Renaissance art revolutionary? The developments of the Renaissance period changed the course of art in ways that continue to resonate. Interest in humanism transformed the artist from an anonymous craftsman to an individual practicing an intellectual pursuit, enabling several to become the first celebrity artists. A growing mercantile class offered artists new patrons that requested novel subjects, notably portraits and scenes from contemporary life. Moreover, scientific observations and Classical studies contributed to some of the most realistic representations of the human figure in art history. Figures have accurate anatomy , stand naturally through the Classical scheme of contrapposto , and have a sense of mass, an accomplishment made easier by the flexibility of oil paint , a medium that was gaining popularity. They also occupy believable space—an achievement based on the development of linear perspective and atmospheric perspective , illusionistic devices to suggest depth on a two-dimensional surface. Learn more about the scientific and artistic developments of the Renaissance era. What are some famous Renaissance artworks? Two of the most famous artworks in history were painted during the Renaissance: Francis had rejected the formal Scholasticism of the prevailing Christian theology and gone out among the poor praising the beauties and spiritual value of nature. His example inspired Italian artists and poets to take pleasure in the world around them. The great poet Dante lived at about the same time as

Giotto, and his poetry shows a similar concern with inward experience and the subtle shades and variations of human nature. Although his *Divine Comedy* belongs to the Middle Ages in its plan and ideas, its subjective spirit and power of expression look forward to the Renaissance. Petrarch and Giovanni Boccaccio also belong to this proto-renaissance period, both through their extensive studies of Latin literature and through their writings in the vernacular. Unfortunately, the terrible plague of and subsequent civil wars submerged both the revival of humanistic studies and the growing interest in individualism and naturalism revealed in the works of Giotto and Dante. The spirit of the Renaissance did not surface again until the beginning of the 15th century.

Chapter 7 : Renaissance Sculpture | Essential Humanities

David is a masterpiece of Renaissance sculpture created between 1501 and 1504, by Italian sculptor, painter, architect, poet Michelangelo. It is a marble statue of a standing male nude.

Counter Reformation” the response of Roman church to the Protestant Reformation wherein beliefs were clarified, reaffirmed, and justified. A few main themes that can guide your discussion of all the major Italian Renaissance works include: The revival of classical styles and ideas specifically humanism, return to the naturalistic style 3D objects and space, and the rising status of the individual both artist and patron. An important point of contrast here is the fact that earlier large-scale sculpture decorated architecture. As such, there was less danger of it generating idol worship and violating the third commandment forbidding graven images. One rarely finds life-sized, naturalistic sculpture in early Christian art or early medieval art. It was not until the Renaissance, when Europe was firmly Christian and comfortably distanced from pagan idols that naturalistic sculpture in the round made a large-scale comeback. I find this a good time to make or reiterate the point that societies construct different ideas about gender, social roles, ideals of beauty, etc. Donatello was intentionally pushing social boundaries here with his provocative pose and his use of nudity—that is, his combination of a lack of clothing and the presence of boots and a hat—in order to challenge his viewers. The fact that he revived the lost-wax bronze technique was also very innovative for the time and enhances the sensuality of his surface texture. Donatello was able to be so experimental, because he had the support and protection of the Medici family, a wealthy and influential banking family that operated as the de facto rulers of Florence and who saw themselves as great patrons of the arts. For more specific descriptions of these see the above mentioned resource from National Geographic. Other references to classical architecture include the use of columns, minimal decoration, symmetry, and rationalized proportions. This work is also illustrative of the rising status of the artist, because Brunelleschi had to win the commission through a competition. His ideas were his own—he kept them secret until he was awarded the victory—and his victory brought with it fame and celebrity. If you have extra time: For the cathedral dome, Brunelleschi had to make certain concessions. At San Lorenzo and Santo Spirito, Brunelleschi had more of an opportunity to embrace rounded arches and execute a comprehensive plan based on classical ideals such as symmetry and harmonious proportions. The clarity of his architectural style is evident through his approach to materials. When an element is structural, Brunelleschi tended to signal this by using the local grey stone, pietra serena. Vasari claimed that Brunelleschi and Masaccio were friends, and that the former taught the latter the technique of perspective. Such an activity demonstrates how one can make a 3-D space by simply making the orthogonal lines perpendicular to the picture plane converge at the vanishing point. This will help them realize that Trinity is effectively a real altarpiece depicting a fictive chapel that allowed one to occupy sacred real estate inside the church and prepare for their afterlife through artistic patronage. As was the case with Medici sponsorship of Donatello, patronage was also an important issue here. The donor portraits provide an opportunity to talk about the rise of portraiture, its commemorative aspect, and the fact that the donors hoped later visitors would pray on their behalf to help them in the afterlife. Through the inscription, which can be seen as something akin to a speech bubble, the skeleton proclaims that what you now are alive, I once was and what I am now dead, you will one day become. Sometimes students struggle with this because the foreshortened edges of the sarcophagus and the capitals are very small and they converge upwards towards the same vanishing point, that is, they converge in an opposite manner than those in the upper portion of the fresco. Subsequently, one can observe a general tendency to appeal to the viewer through naturalistic settings and figures, vernacular details, and displays of psychological tension or drama. Linear perspective provided artists with more space and, consequently, the opportunity to convey more detailed stories. Another artistic convention that fostered greater narrative capabilities was continuous narrative seen here. Masaccio showed three events from one story in a single frame, rather than dividing the scenes as Giotto did. The artist was not necessarily educating the viewer about this story. The odds were that the viewer already knew it, and so Masaccio could take artistic license. In addition to linear perspective, this fresco uses atmospheric perspective to show depth in a natural setting by

making objects that are further away smaller, more bluish, and less sharply defined. The artist also used the lighting to draw the viewer into the story and make the scene more believable and relatable. The illusionistic lighting within the painting enters from the right and casts shadows that fall towards left. As such, the lighting within the painting would have matched the actual lighting in the chapel, as there was originally a window on the wall to the right of the painting. This would have made the viewers feel as if the painted reality was an extension of their own, an aspect of the work which is reinforced when one considers how people actually used this room. Seats were not arranged at large tables in the center of the room. Rather, it was common practice in monastic settings to arrange seats in a single row with their backs to the wall and the table running in front of them. Such an arrangement prevented conversations during mealtime and fostered a more meditative, prayerful experience for the monks. When seated in this way, the monks could contemplate the scene of the Last Supper before them, imagining how they might have reacted if they were there. There are important points to make about technique and the artist as innovator here. Leonardo felt restricted by the fast-drying tempera paint used in the traditional fresco technique. At this point, he had become interested in capitalizing on the qualities of oil paint and tried to incorporate this medium into his fresco. This work is also characteristic of Renaissance humanism because it explores the psychological state of those depicted. Every apostle reacts differently to the news that Christ will be betrayed, turned over to authorities, and crucified. He anchors the composition with his pyramidal pose and the viewer is drawn to him because the vanishing point directs one toward him. Another way this work is characteristic of Renaissance naturalism is the fact that the artist did not depict the holy figures with bright, gold disks to symbolize halos. Although Giotto was interested in developing naturalistic figures and space, his depiction of the halos led him to overlap some of the faces, effectively obscuring his depictions of the adjacent holy figures. Leonardo resolved this tension with his move away from symbolic elements and embraced a more naturalistic scene. These aspects of the work are characteristic of the High Renaissance, because they signal a shift towards a more humanistic subject matter and indicate that the artistic center has moved to Rome, where the Pope was the most sought-after patron of the arts. Working for the Pope at the Vatican was the most prestigious commission an artist could obtain at that time and provided them with an international stage for their works. Such a notion is visually represented in the fact that the architecture of the space in which the thinkers gather was similar to the contemporaneous view of the new St. Peter's Basilica. To be sure, the Renaissance outlook is one of revival, but not solely in order to pay homage to the past. The greatest artists and thinkers of Renaissance Italy aimed to surpass their cultural ancestors. This aspect of the work is seen through the lens of portraiture. Raphael based the figure of Aristotle on Leonardo, the figure of Heraclitus on Michelangelo who was working on the Sistine Ceiling a short walk away while Raphael painted this, and Raphael painted his own self-portrait looking out at the viewer from the far right. If you have more time: However, because Michelangelo viewed himself as sculptor first and painter second, he was not pleased with this commission. He did not want to paint the chapel ceiling and even wrote a poem about unpleasance. This work was seen in PowerPoint slides for more on this. Despite his reluctance, this commission demonstrates the rising status of the artist, not through self-portraiture but rather through the idea of artistic license. When depicting The Creation of Adam, Michelangelo significantly modified the biblical story to suit his own artistic and ideological position. After giving Adam a body, God prepares to give him a soul. To get a sense of Michelangelo as a sculptor, we turn to one of his most famous works, the David. Michelangelo was very selective with his blocks of marble, believing that the spirit of the sculpture resided within the stone and his artistic intuition was necessary for selecting the right portion of marble from the quarry. That he was still able to achieve his ideal form is evident when one compares the male nude of Adam from the Sistine Ceiling and his sculpture of David. As in the Sistine Ceiling, Michelangelo took artistic license here. Rather than follow the story as closely as Donatello did with his David, Michelangelo did not represent David as a youthful, weak figure. Michelangelo gave David a strong, confident pose and a physique that could challenge the strength of the mighty Goliath. It also raises issues related to gender and the evolution of the female nude. The early sixteenth century was dominated by the naturalism and idealism of the so-called Old Masters Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo, but over the course of the century, artists would experiment with new styles and subjects. Some consider the fluctuating artistic styles as a reflection of the tumultuous

social landscape” a period marked by intense political and religious unrest. However, despite the changes caused by these events, some constants remained. For instance, the status of the artist continued to rise to new heights, at times even to the point of challenging powerful patrons as well as artistic norms. Students can lead the discussion here by pointing out the strange aspects of the work: It embraces the artificial, the contrived, the overly stylized, and art that is based on other art forms, not on nature. Some art historians have interpreted this strange new style as an intentional deviation from the previous generation. Artists in the generation after Raphael needed to find new modes of expression after the height of classicism had been reached. By this time, patrons and art collectors had become savvy connoisseurs and looked to collect new artworks that demonstrated their erudite taste, artistic knowledge, and religious understanding. Debating the various approaches to this issue is a nice opportunity to introduce different methodologies within the field of art history. The contorted, unstable, bodies and intense”sometimes deranged”expressions of the figures in the Last Judgment contrast greatly with the pristine, calm, idealized poses in the ceiling. A particularly interesting detail is found in the figure of St. Bartholomew, who was skinned alive and therefore holds the instruments of his torture: The facial features of the flayed skin is said to be a self-portrait of the artist, making for a potentially interesting comment on the psychology of the artist. The artist is also said to have painted other contemporaries into the scene, the most notable of which is the figure of Minos just over the door at the bottom right. In some ways Biagio had the last word. At this council, the church clarified their beliefs regarding various doctrine and the sacraments as well as outlined rules for decorous religious art. Because of the Counter-Reformation efforts of the church, art produced during the second half of the century tended to be less ambiguous and more straightforward, both visually and iconographically. This is not to say, however, that it lacked innovation. The clear emphasis on the self-portrait is notable. Rather, the artist at work is the subject of the piece. The liveliness of the scene is enhanced by the naturalistic expressions, suggesting lively conversation. One of the most innovative aspects of this piece is its sketch-like quality. Annibale Carracci painted the simple scene with loose brushwork that seems to capture an authentic, spontaneous moment and fit with the homely subject. The fact that the viewer is almost at the table with the sitter helps to strengthen their connection to the work and blur the boundaries between the painted world and the real one” another novel approach to art making at the time. To this end, Annibale established a workshop with his brothers and an art academy in Bologna. The academy once again emphasized copying the works of the great masters, but also sketching from life and capturing local street scenes. Annibale Carracci, Mystic Marriage of St.

Chapter 8 : List of Renaissance artists - Simple English Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

During the Italian Renaissance, art was everywhere. Patrons such as Florence's Medici family sponsored projects large and small, and successful artists became celebrities in their own right.

Leo Steinberg Pre-Renaissance Sculpture In studying the art of sculpture in Italy during this period, it is important to remember that Renaissance sculptors had before their eyes tangible examples of classical Greek sculpture - the very work they admired - whereas painters had no examples of antique painting to refer to. What is noteworthy about the sculpture of Nicola Pisano is that the classical prototypes from which it derives had, for all their availability for so many centuries, lost the power to stimulate the imagination of the medieval artists who saw them. The history of sculpture had never been inactive: What Nicola Pisano discovered was not the physical existence of a few ancient statues or monuments, but the fact that suddenly it had achieved a new significance. There is no lack of technical accomplishment, nothing primitive or hesitant in his work. Beyond a slight tendency to an overcrowding of the forms, and, of course, the Christian subject matter, the carvings themselves might easily look to the casual eye like products of Imperial Rome. Nicola himself, one might guess, must have been a Roman Rip Van Winkle who had fallen into a coma in the days of Diocletian and having been awakened in the mid-thirteenth century, had instantly set to work in a style that had been dead for nearly a thousand years. Even so, it is in his work - especially on the pulpit in the Church of St Andrea in Pistoia, of , and that at Pisa, finished in - that we begin to see the true Renaissance yeast at work. These are not trecento versions of Roman carving but attempts to give formal expression to the new spirit. On the Pistoia pulpit are Sibyls that have no Roman counterparts. Their gestures and attitudes are full of dramatic tension. They are troubled, nervous, anxious creatures, and it is from them that, two centuries later, Michelangelo was to extract the kind of meaning that he poured into the Sibyls in his Sistine Chapel frescoes. Giovanni Pisano was followed by Andrea Pisano - no relation, in fact he is sometimes called Andrea da Pontedera - who worked with Giotto on the reliefs in the Campanile of the Florentine Cathedral, and later executed the first of the famous series of three bronze doors for the Cathedral Baptistery. They show how the spirit of Gothic sculpture was steadily infiltrating across the Alps into Northern Italy and replacing the heavier Roman forms of eighty years earlier. Andrea still belongs to the fourteenth century. For a glimpse of French sculpture during the fourteenth century, most of which was done in the International Gothic style a sort of sophisticated Gothic manner adopted by court artists , see the career of the French sculptor Andre Beauneveu c. His contemporary the Flemish sculptor Claus Sluter c. Renaissance Italy During the fifteenth century, Italy was composed of a mixture of differing regional entities, including the Duchies of Milan and Savoy, and the Republics of Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Siena. Generally speaking, these communities were ruled in monarch-fashion by families and individuals, many of whom became important patrons of Renaissance art , including the art of sculpture as well as painting. General Characteristics Almost from the outset, sculpture and painting were characterized by individualism, as progress became less and less a reflection of schools, and more about the work of individual artists. An equally important feature of Renaissance art was its naturalism. In sculpture, this was evident in the increase of contemporary subjects, together with a more naturalistic handling of proportions, drapery, anatomy, and perspective. A third feature was the reemergence of classical subjects and forms. Since the fall of Rome in the fifth century, Italy never completely forgot the sculpture of ancient Greece , nor could it ignore the visible mass of Roman ruins. The revival of classicism in sculpture began about the time of Nicola Pisano c. True, Gothic traditions survived for a good deal of the quattrocento , but typically assumed something of a classic manner. Classicism took over completely only during the High Renaissance c. One final point needs to be stressed. Italian Renaissance art was primarily religious art. Less so perhaps than during the Romanesque or Gothic periods - after all Europe was becoming wealthier - but Christianity remained a dominant force in the lives and art of princes and paupers alike. Religious and Secular The demand for sculpture during the quattrocento and cinquecento remained largely ecclesiastical. Church exteriors were adorned with stone sculpture, not only around the doorways, but sometimes the whole facade was decorated with relief sculpture and column-statues. Meanwhile church interiors were filled with marble

sculpture for pulpits, baptismal fonts, tabernacles, important tombs, groups of statues, and wood carving notably, for choir stalls, statuettes, as well as painted altarpieces after the Late Gothic style. Cathedral baptistery, and sacristy doors were often composed entirely of bronze sculpture, usually low reliefs. The interior walls of Renaissance churches also housed large architectural tombs, memorializing secular rulers, generals, statesmen, and philosophers as well as the usual cardinals and bishops. Palaces and private homes were also decorated with sculpture. Doorways, gardens, reception rooms and interior features were the most commonly embellished areas. Interior sculptural works included, friezes, carved ceilings, fireplaces, statuettes and busts, while exterior works extended to gargoyles, fountains, shrines, statues including Madonnas and saints. Themes used in sculpture were very similar to those used in early Renaissance painting. Subjects for ecclesiastical works nearly always came from the Old and New Testament of the Bible. If the Madonna and Child is the most popular subject, other common subjects included scenes from the life of Christ or the Virgin Mary, as well as episodes from Genesis. Decorative motifs of classic origin were occasionally introduced into religious sculpture, but mythological subjects much more rarely, except for Cupids and Putti. Subjects broadened however, during High Renaissance painting, and this also affected sculpture. Themes for non-church sculpture might feature scenes from classical mythology, and portraits of or motifs connected with the patron concerned, as well as Biblical subjects. Materials and Methods Precious metals, like gold and silver, were used less in sculpture than in the preceding Gothic period. Bronze however was given a more important role, being employed first for reliefs, then for statues or busts. It was a particularly popular medium for Renaissance sculptors, both because of its ductility and durability and also because of its brilliance when gilded. Not surprisingly, such benefits took time to emerge, as early bronze-casting was crude, and finished pieces were not highly polished. But by the time of the High Renaissance these difficulties had been overcome and a high degree of technical perfection achieved. In stone sculpture, growing refinement and demand for detail, led to a greatly increased use of marble, as well as other finer types like Istrian stone, and Pietra serena sandstone. White Carrara marble, the favourite of Michelangelo, was used widely for monumental sculpture, its colour sometimes softened by wax. Details of statues - including hair, ornaments and sometimes skin - were often gilded or painted. Terracotta became fashionable as a cheap alternative to marble and, when glazed, was equally durable. It could also be painted before glazing, for a permanent polychromatic effect. It was used throughout Italy during the 15th-century, for altarpieces, pulpits, fonts, and other ecclesiastical fixtures, as well as numerous domestic applications. Even cheaper material than terracotta was fine stucco, made from marble dust and sand. Both terracotta and stucco stimulated the copying of ancient masterworks by the most distinguished sculptors of antiquity. Wood was another inexpensive sculptural material, but the tradition of wood carving was limited generally to thickly wooded regions, notably the Austrian Tyrol and Southern Germany, where it was practised with virtuoso skill by master-craftsmen like Michael Pacher, Tilman Riemenschneider, Veit Stoss and Gregor Erhart. Whether working in stone, bronze or wood, the sculptural techniques used by Renaissance sculptors were by and large the same as those used by Greek or Roman sculptors: But the ethos of the Renaissance was far more pictorial. Written designs, for instance, were considered to be essential. In addition, great attention was paid to perspective, the use of multiple planes, and gradations of relief. Furthermore, preliminary cartoons, studies, and small-scale models of the intended sculpture in clay, wood or wax, could be progressed far enough by the master-sculptor to allow it to be completed in bronze or marble by a pupil or other artisan. Florentine Renaissance Sculpture c. Thus it is not surprising that the beginnings of a recognizably Italian style are to be found in sculpture a little earlier than in painting. Nor is it surprising that after the first Pisan outburst, the great sculptors of Italy were almost all Florentines. The keen Florentine mind had a natural bias towards formal and structural problems, which - given its reverence for disegno - could find their solution as easily in sculpture as in painting. Added to which was the proximity of stone and marble quarries without which a regional school of sculpture cannot easily flourish. Lorenzo Ghiberti Lorenzo Ghiberti obtained his technical training from his stepfather Bartolo, a goldsmith. He began as a painter, but his real talent lay in the sculpture of small objects. In his *De Orificeria* Benvenuto Cellini comments: He put his entire soul into the production of miniature works, and although occasionally he applied himself to larger-scale sculpture, he was much more at home when making smaller

objects. These beautiful mitres, embellished with miniature reliefs and figures and emblazoned with precious gems, were melted down in to provide funds for Pope Clement VII His bronzes were more fortunate, as they have all survived, and Ghiberti devoted himself to bronze with the same spirit of the goldsmith. In he succeeded in winning the contract for a pair of bronze doors for the Florence Baptistery, beating contemporary rivals Jacopo della Quercia c. His design for the doors followed the same basic scheme as used previously by Andrea Pisano: Ghiberti devoted almost the whole of his Early Renaissance working life to the making of the famous second and third pairs of bronze doors for the Florentine Baptistery. In the second pair of doors the narrative panels are contained within Gothic quatrefoils, similar in shape to those of Andrea Pisano cast ninety years earlier, but more crowded in composition. In the third pair, begun in and finished in , the advancing classic tide had swept away the outward forms of Gothicism. The quatrefoils are replaced by square panels, and the treatment - as though a rectangle meant for Ghiberti, a picture, - becomes ingeniously but almost embarrassingly pictorial. Rarely have the frontiers of painting and sculpture approached each other so nearly as in these ten Old Testament narratives. Michelangelo himself declared that the doors were worthy of forming the entrance to Paradise. Other important contemporaries of Ghiberti included the sculptor-architect Filippo Brunelleschi , another of the competitors for the first baptistery doors, and a friend of Donatello; Nanni di Banco , whose statues of St. Eligius at Or San Michele, of St. Donatello Donatello Donato di Niccolo was in many ways the most representative sculptor of the quattrocento. The chronology of his work reflects the changing aesthetic of the times. Up to his sculpture was thoroughly Gothic. With some exceptions, the statues he created for the Cathedral, for the Campanile, and for Or San Michele are somewhat awkward in pose, over-heavy with drapery, and lacking in grace. Apostles and prophets appear to be little more than portraits of his own contemporaries. Even his Christ is but a peasant. George, however, is completely different - an outburst of creative energy. It was during the period, , that Donatello produced most of his best works, and extended his reputation beyond Florence, as far as Siena, Montepulciano, Orvieto, Rome, even Naples. Like Luca della Robbia, he fused Hellenic grandeur with northern naturalism. But to this fusion of opposites he added the unique force of his own creative imagination which could produce, at one moment the stylish elegance of the boy David, casually resting his foot on the severed head of Goliath surely one of the greatest sculptures ever and the first free-standing nude statue since Classical times - for more details, see: These marvellously inventive works could be described as the archtypes of all expressionism in narrative art. All kinds of restless, momentary gestures add to the emotional intensity of the story to be told. He collaborated on several works with the Florentine architect and bronze sculptor Michelozzo di Bartolommeo sometimes mistakenly referred to as Michelozzo Michelozzi In partnership with Michelozzo, Donatello produced three important tombs: In his relief sculpture of this period, he introduced some new perspective effects, most visibly on the font in the Siena Baptistery, the pulpit at Prato, and the organ gallery of the Florence Cathedral.

Chapter 9 : Italian Renaissance - Wikipedia

The term Renaissance means rebirth and generally refers to this period's revival of an interest in classical antiquity, ancient literature, humanistic principles, and classical artistic styles. Many textbooks contrast the interest in naturalism and humanism found in Renaissance art with the more.

Brancacci Chapel The first Early Renaissance frescos or paintings were in started in when two artists commenced painting a fresco cycle of the Life of St. Peter in the chapel of the Brancacci family, at the Carmelite Church in Florence. More than any other artist, Masaccio recognized the implications in the work of Giotto. He carried forward the practice of painting from nature. His frescos demonstrate an understanding of anatomy, of foreshortening, of linear perspective, of light, and the study of drapery. In the Brancacci Chapel , his Tribute Money fresco has a single vanishing point and uses a strong contrast between light and dark to convey a three-dimensional quality to the work. As well, the figures of Adam and Eve being expelled from Eden, painted on the side of the arch into the chapel, are renowned for their realistic depiction of the human form and of human emotion. They contrast with the gentle and pretty figures painted by Masolino on the opposite side of Adam and Eve receiving the forbidden fruit. The painting of the Brancacci Chapel was left incomplete when Masaccio died at 26 in . The Tribute Money was completed by Masolino while the remainder of the work in the Chapel was finished by Filippino Lippi in the s. The Presentation of the Virgin shows his experiments with perspective and light. During the first half of the 15th century, the achieving of the effect of realistic space in a painting by the employment of linear perspective was a major preoccupation of many painters, as well as the architects Brunelleschi and Alberti who both theorised about the subject. In the s Piero della Francesca , in paintings such as The Flagellation of Christ , demonstrated his mastery over linear perspective and also over the science of light. Another painting exists, a cityscape, by an unknown artist, perhaps Piero della Francesca, that demonstrates the sort of experiment that Brunelleschi had been making. From this time linear perspective was understood and regularly employed, such as by Perugino in his Christ Giving the Keys to St. Peter in the Sistine Chapel. Understanding of light[edit] Giotto used tonality to create form. Taddeo Gaddi in his nocturnal scene in the Baroncelli Chapel demonstrated how light could be used to create drama. Paolo Uccello , a hundred years later, experimented with the dramatic effect of light in some of his almost monochrome frescoes. He did a number of these in terra verde or "green earth", enlivening his compositions with touches of vermilion. The best known is his equestrian portrait of John Hawkwood on the wall of Florence Cathedral. Both here and on the four heads of prophets that he painted around the inner clockface in the cathedral, he used strongly contrasting tones, suggesting that each figure was being lit by a natural light source, as if the source was an actual window in the cathedral. In the Flagellation he demonstrates a knowledge of how light is proportionally disseminated from its point of origin. There are two sources of light in this painting, one internal to a building and the other external. Of the internal source, though the light itself is invisible, its position can be calculated with mathematical certainty. Madonna and Child Filippino Lippi: Madonna and Child, The Blessed Virgin Mary , revered by the Catholic Church worldwide, was particularly evoked in Florence, where there was a miraculous image of her on a column in the corn market and where both the Cathedral of "Our Lady of the Flowers" and the large Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella were named in her honour. The miraculous image in the corn market was destroyed by fire, but replaced with a new image in the s by Bernardo Daddi , set in an elaborately designed and lavishly wrought canopy by Orcagna. The open lower storey of the building was enclosed and dedicated as Orsanmichele. Depictions of the Madonna and Child were a very popular art form in Florence. They took every shape from small mass-produced terracotta plaques to magnificent altarpieces such as those by Cimabue , Giotto and Masaccio. In the 15th and first half of the 16th centuries, one workshop more than any other dominated the production of Madonnas. They were the della Robbia family, and they were not painters but modellers in clay. Luca della Robbia , famous for his cantoria gallery at the cathedral, was the first sculptor to use glazed terracotta for large sculptures. Many of the durable works of this family have survived. The skill of the della Robbias, particularly Andrea della Robbia , was to give great naturalism to the babies that they modelled as Jesus , and expressions

of great piety and sweetness to the Madonna. They were to set a standard to be emulated by other artists of Florence. The custom was continued by Botticelli who produced a series of Madonnas over a period of twenty years for the Medici ; Perugino , whose Madonnas and saints are known for their sweetness and Leonardo da Vinci , for whom a number of small attributed Madonnas such as the Benois Madonna have survived. Even Michelangelo who was primarily a sculptor, was persuaded to paint the Doni Tondo , while for Raphael , they are among his most popular and numerous works. Early Renaissance painting in other parts of Italy[edit] Mantegna: The Gonzaga family detail Andrea Mantegna in Padua and Mantua[edit] One of the most influential painters of northern Italy was Andrea Mantegna of Padua , who had the good fortune to be in his teen years at the time in which the great Florentine sculptor Donatello was working there. He also worked on the high altar and created a series of bronze panels in which he achieved a remarkable illusion of depth, with perspective in the architectural settings and apparent roundness of the human form all in very shallow relief. At only 17 years old, Mantegna accepted his first commission, fresco cycles of the Lives of Saints James and Christopher for the Ovetari Chapel in the transept of the church of the Eremitani , near the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua. Unfortunately the building was mostly destroyed during World War II, and they are only known from photographs which reveal an already highly developed sense of perspective and a knowledge of antiquity, for which the ancient University of Padua had become well known, early in the 15th century. The walls are frescoed with scenes of the life of the Gonzaga family, talking, greeting a younger son and his tutor on their return from Rome, preparing for a hunt and other such scenes that make no obvious reference to matters historic, literary, philosophic or religious. They are remarkable for simply being about family life. Antonello da Messina[edit] In Alfonso V of Aragon became ruler of Naples , bringing with him a collection of Flemish paintings and setting up a Humanist Academy. But one of his most famous works, St. Jerome in His Study , demonstrates his superior ability at handling linear perspective and light. The composition of the small painting is framed by a late Gothic arch, through which is viewed an interior, domestic on one side and ecclesiastic on the other, in the centre of which the saint sits in a wooden corral surrounded by his possessions while his lion prowls in the shadows on the floor. The way the light streams in through every door and window casting both natural and reflected light across the architecture and all the objects would have excited Piero della Francesca. Much of the patronage came from the Medici family, or those who were closely associated with or related to them, such as the Sassetti, the Ruccellai and the Tornabuoni. In the Renaissance it came increasingly to be associated with enlightenment. The figures of Classical mythology began to take on a new symbolic role in Christian art and in particular, the Goddess Venus took on a new discretion. Born fully formed, by a sort of miracle, she was the new Eve , symbol of innocent love, or even, by extension, a symbol of the Virgin Mary herself. In the Tornabuoni Chapel is another portrait of Poliziano, accompanied by the other influential members of the Platonic Academy including Marsilio Ficino. The Portinari Altarpiece Ghirlandaio: The Sassetti Altarpiece Flemish influence[edit] From about , with the arrival in Italy of the Flemish painter Rogier van der Weyden and possibly earlier, artists were introduced to the medium of oil paint. Whereas both tempera and fresco lent themselves to the depiction of pattern, neither presented a successful way to represent natural textures realistically. The highly flexible medium of oils, which could be made opaque or transparent, and allowed alteration and additions for days after it had been laid down, opened a new world of possibility to Italian artists. In the huge altarpiece of the Adoration of the Shepherds painted by Hugo van der Goes arrived in Florence. The altarpiece glows with intense reds and greens, contrasting with the glossy black velvet robes of the Portinari donors. In the foreground is a still life of flowers in contrasting containers, one of glazed pottery and the other of glass. The glass vase alone was enough to excite attention. But the most influential aspect of the triptych was the extremely natural and lifelike quality of the three shepherds with stubbly beards, workworn hands and expressions ranging from adoration to wonder to incomprehension. Domenico Ghirlandaio promptly painted his own version, with a beautiful Italian Madonna in place of the long-faced Flemish one, and himself, gesturing theatrically, as one of the shepherds. The interior of the new chapel, named the Sistine Chapel in his honour, appears to have been planned from the start to have a series of 16 large frescoes between its pilasters on the middle level, with a series of painted portraits of popes above them. In , a group of artists from Florence was commissioned with the work: This fresco cycle

was to depict Stories of the Life of Moses on one side of the chapel, and Stories of the Life of Christ on the other with the frescoes complementing each other in theme. The Nativity of Jesus and the Finding of Moses were adjacent on the wall behind the altar, with an altarpiece of the Assumption of the Virgin between them. Domenico Ghirlandaio and workshop: Vocation of the Apostles , Sistine Chapel The remaining 12 pictures indicate the virtuosity that these artists had attained, and the obvious cooperation between individuals who normally employed very different styles and skills. The paintings gave full range to their capabilities as they included a great number of figures of men, women and children and characters ranging from guiding angels to enraged Pharaohs and the devil himself. Each painting required a landscape. Because of the scale of the figures that the artists agreed upon, in each picture, the landscape and sky take up the whole upper half of the scene.