

Why study art history?

- Art and antiques market is a multibillion US dollar industry - art as an alternative investment for rich people who want to come across as cultured
- Possible careers in art – artist, designer, illustrators, comic book artists, filmmaker, academicians, art restorer, gallery owners, trader, art lawyer
- Highly enjoyable experience when visiting art museums, traveling the world, etc – you come across as knowledgeable about art history (makes you look good)
- Understanding the importance and value of preserving art from the past and present (Hitler didn't)
- Endless inspiration for other forms of art such as films, literature, dance as well as your design projects
- Nothing better to do



Damien Hirst, For the Love of God, 2007

- Created by British artist Damien Hirst, who claims to have sold it to an anonymous buyer for US\$100 million in cash
- Platinum cast of a human skull covered in 8,601 flawless diamonds, costing 14 million pounds to produce
- Went on display at the White Cube Gallery in London with asking price of 50 million pounds in 2007, the highest price then for a living artist



dna11 founders Adrian Salamunovic and Nazim Ahmed in front of their own combined DNA portraits.

www.dna11.com



Bad Road

<http://little-people.blogspot.com>



THE HISTORY OF WESTERN ART

Week 1 – Introduction to the History of Art

- Ivory statuette found in a cave in Hohlenstein-Stadel in Germany
- Carved out of mammoth ivory, measuring 1 foot tall
- Ca 30,000 – 28,000 BCE
- Man-like creatures with animal heads were common in the Middle East and Egypt – have been called sorcerers and described as magicians wearing masks



Venus of Willendorf

- One of the oldest known and most famous art object
- Have been interpreted as fertility images
- Discovered in 1908 by Josef Szombathy in Austria
- Dated 24,000 – 22,000 bc

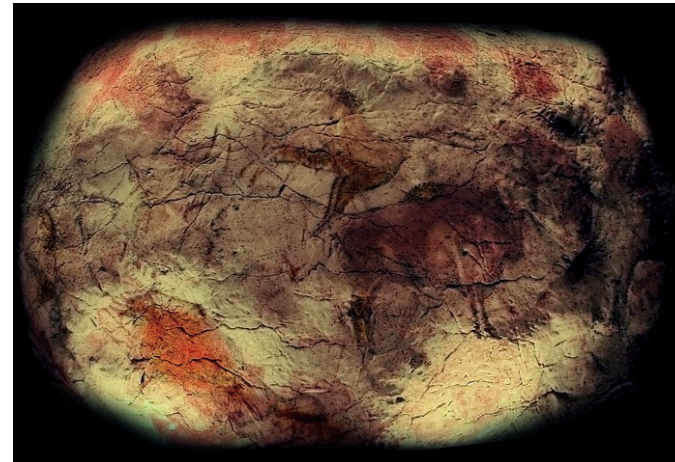


- 20,000 to 18,000 BCE
- Discovered in 1911 by a physician named J.G. Lalanne
- Found in Dordogne, France in a Paleolithic rock shelter



Altamira (Cave)

- 1879 - Upper Paleolithic cave paintings were discovered by amateur archaeologist Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola's eight-year-old daughter, Spain
- Currently a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Cave paintings of exceptional high quality created by charcoal, ochre or haematite
- Subject matter - bison, horses, doe, wild boar
- Created much speculations among scholars who wonder what inspired the cave dwellers to create these paintings
- Magical properties attributed to images of wild animals, belief that man had animal ancestors, teaching tools, belief that painting animals would ensure their survival, etc



Chauvet Cave (oldest cave paintings in the world)

- Located in south of France
- 30,000 – 32,000 BCE
- Discovered in 1994 by Jean-Marie Chauvet, Christian Hillaire and Eliette Brunel-Deschamps
- Walls of the cave were richly decorated with Paleolithic artwork containing remains of many animals now extinct



Stonehenge

- Prehistoric monument located in the English county of Wiltshire.
- Construction began in phases starting 3100BC. Some claim it began in 8000BC
- Last known construction took place 1600BC.
- Last known usage was in 1200BC during the Iron Age
- Purpose: burial sites, place for religious rites.



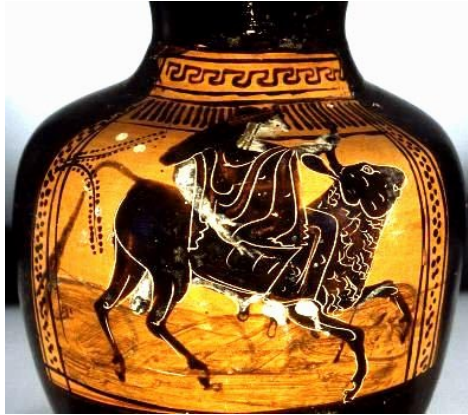
GREEK CLASSICISM (around 480 – 330 BC)

- Benchmark for Western civilisation
- The leader Pericles [**per-i-kleez**] dominated Athenian politics between 450 and 429 BC
- Athens adopted the first ever known form of democracy in Western civilization and became the richest of the Greek city-states
- This period of political stability gave rise to the arts and was known as the Golden Age of Athens. It refers to the highest age in the Greek spectrum of the Iron, Bronze, Silver and Golden ages
- It is a time in the beginnings of Humanity which was perceived as an ideal state or utopia, when mankind was pure and immortal; a period of peace, harmony, stability and prosperity
- Art mainly influenced by Greek Archaic Art (mainly oversized stone sculptures of standing males and females known as Kroisos and Kore respectively)

Greek Archaic Art (before 480BC)



Black-figure olpe by the Amasis painter, depicting Herakles and Athena, circa 540 BC, Louvre.



Europa and the Bull, 510 – 500BCE

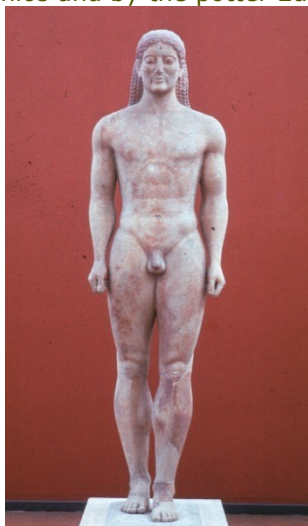




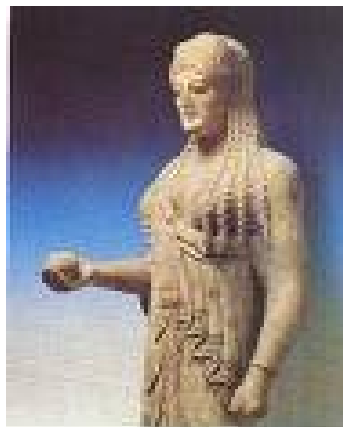
Late archaic, 515 B.C., signed by the painter Euphronios and by the potter Euxitheos.



Late archaic, 490 BC



Kroisos (male)



Kore (female)

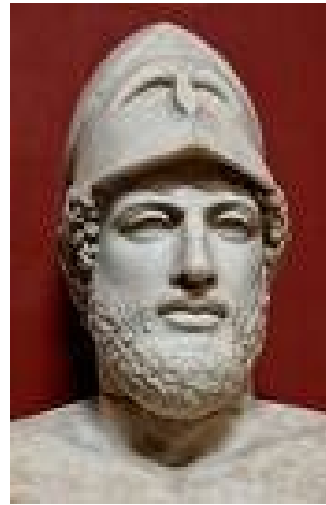
Greek Classicism (around 480 – 330 BC)



Myron, The Disc Thrower
450BC



Polyclitus, The Lance Bearer



Pericles, leader of the
Athenians (450 – 429BC)

Greek Humanism

- “For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness...” Pericles, leader of the Athenians comparing his fellow citizens with their rivals, the Spartans.
- The Greeks called themselves Hellenes
- Humanity was very important to the ancient Greeks. They valued important contributions to art, literature and science
- Based on this worldview, they created the concept of democracy (rule by the demos, or the people)
- Foundation of the modern Western civilization
- Pantheism (worship of many deities) is very much a way of life. It is said that Greeks made their gods into humans and their humans into gods

Classical ideals

- Simplicity

- Proportion
- Harmony
- Reason
- Restraint

Aesthetic Theory

- Portrayal of anatomically perfect human beings – showing the sculptor's knowledge and understanding of the human body
- The anatomy is depicted as flawless and 'god-like'

Subject Matter

- Athletes
- Greek Gods and Goddesses (portrayed in human proportions)

Composition

- Symmetrical, rigid

Trade mark

- 'God-like' man (anatomically perfect human)
- Idealized
- Emphasis on logic

HELLENISTIC ART (330bc onwards until Roman Empire)

- This period was a natural development from the Classical Period, but was named after the Great Macedonian Conqueror Alexander the Great, who spread Greek culture to territories as far as India
- A natural development from the late Classical period, which placed more emphasis on the human/emotional aspects of sculptures



Apollo Belvedere
350 - 325BC



Nike of Samothrace
220 - 190BC



Venus de Milo



The Belvedere Torso
~1st century AD

The Dying Gaul
~3rd Century AD

Polydorus, Hagesandrus,
Athenodorus/ Laocoon & His
Sons
160BC – 20BC

Philosophy

- Complex
- Proportion
- Harmony
- Irrational
- Emotional Outburst
- Individualistic

Aesthetic Theory

- Virtuosity – sculptors display tremendous technical skills
- Sculptors aim to capture the inner emotions of the figures portrayed (observation of the intricate details e.g. facial expressions, body language, muscle movements, etc)

Subject Matter

- Banality, trivial subjects from everyday life or ignoble//base stories (of gods and humans in torture, defeat and shameful sexual pursuits)
- 'man-like god' (gods showing human emotions)
- Human/flawed – portrayal of individuals not types
- Extreme emotional states

Byzantine Art

- Described as the artistic products of the Byzantine Empire from 5th century until Fall of Constantinople in 1453
- Benchmark for Christian iconography, Emperor Constantine I encouraged public worship of Christianity
- Byzantine icon is the image of Christ, the Virgin or a saint (objects of worship)
- Developed from the art of Roman Empire
- Subject matter was primarily religious and imperial, such as portraits of emperors



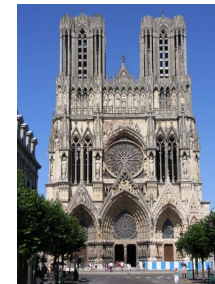
Medieval Manuscripts

- Illustrated religious texts, highly decorated in gold and silver
- Found in medieval Christian, Islamic and Mesoamerican cultures
- Commonly written on parchment made of calf, sheep, goat skin (vellum)
- Best surviving specimens of medieval painting
- Earliest surviving manuscripts – AD400 to 600, from Ireland and Europe
- A major genre of Byzantine art
- Purpose: prayer books, bibles, etc



Gothic Architecture

- A style of architecture which flourished in Europe during the high and late medieval period (betw 11th & 13th century)
- Originated in 12th century France and lasted into the 16th century
- Known as “the French style” (Opus Francigenum)
- Characteristic features include pointed arch (ogive), ribbed vault and flying buttress
- Common style of architecture in cathedrals, abbeys and parish churches of Europe
- Exceptionally tall
- Design & decorative features emphasize verticality



Reims Cathedral, France (13th century)

- Large and expansive windows
- Majestic façade/front



San Zanipolo, Venice (1430)



The flying buttress is a distinctive feature of Gothic architecture

The Gods and Goddesses of Mount Olympus

Greek deities mythology are frequently the source of inspiration for art in the classical antiquity. These gods and goddesses represented in art are all ultimately the offspring of the two key elements of the Greek universe, Earth (Gaia/Ge; names are given in Greek/Latin form) and Heaven (Ouranos/Uranus). Earth and Heaven mated to produce 12 Titans, including Ocean (Okeanos/Oceanus) and his youngest brother Kronos (Saturn). Kronos castrated his father in order to rule in his place, married his sister Rhea, and then swallowed all this children as they were born, lest one of them seek in turn to usurp him. When Zeus (Jupiter) was born, Rhea deceived Kronos by feeding him a stone wrapped in clothes in place of the infant. After growing to manhood, Zeus forced Kronos to vomit up Zeus' s siblings. Together they overthrew their father and the other Titans and ruled the world from their home on Mount Olympus, Greece's highest peak.

This cruel and bloody tale of the origin of the Greek gods has parallels in Near Eastern (Middle Eastern) mythology and is clearly pre-Greek in origin, one of many Greek borrowings from the East. The Greek version of the creation myth, however, appears infrequently in painting and sculpture. Instead, the later 12 Olympian gods and goddesses, the chief deities of Greece, figure prominently in art – not only in Greek, Etruscan and Roman times but also in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and up to the present.

The Olympian Gods (and their Roman equivalents)

Zeus (Jupiter)

- King of the gods, ruled the sky, and gave his brother Poseidon the sea, and his other brother, Hades, to rule the Underworld.
- His weapon is the thunderbolt

Hera (Juno)

- Wife and sister of Zeus
- Goddess of marriage
- Favourite cities were Mycenae, Sparta and Argos
- Zeus's many love affairs angered her

Poseidon (Neptune)

- Lord of the sea
- One of the three sons of Kronos and Rhea
- Controlled waves, storms and earthquakes with his trident

Hestia (Vesta)

- Goddess of the hearth
- Daughter of Kronos and Rhea, sister of Zeus, Poseidon and Hera
- Her six Vestal Virgins were the most important priestesses of the state

Demeter (Ceres)

- Goddess of grain and agriculture
- Taught humans how to sow and plow
- The word *cereal* derives from *Ceres*

Ares (Mars)

- God of War, son of Zeus and Hera and lover of Aphrodite
- In Roman Mythology, Mars was the father of the twin founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus

Athena (Minerva)

- Goddess of wisdom and warfare, Athena was born from the head of her father, Zeus.
- Athens is her city, her greatest temple was the Parthenon

Hephaistos (Vulcan)

- God of fire and metalworking
- Son of Hera, or on other accounts, son of Hera and Zeus
- Spilt open Zeus's head when Athena was born, in full armour
- Born lame and not very good-looking for a god
- He made the armor Achilles wore in battle against Troy, made Zeus's scepter, and Poseidon, his trident

Apollo (Apollo)

- God of light and music
- Fantastic archer and healer
- Son of Zeus and Leto/Latona
- Identified as the sun (Helios/Sol)

Artemis (Diana)

- Goddess of the hunt and wild animal
- Sister of Apollo
- As Apollo's twin, she was occasionally regarded as the moon (Selene/Luna)

Aphrodite (Venus)

- Goddess of love and beauty
- Daughter of Zeus and Dione
- Mother of Eros by Ares and of the Trojan hero Aeneas by Anchises
- Julius Caesar and Augustus traced their lineage to Venus through Aeneas

Hermes

- Messenger of the gods, wears winged sandals
- Guide of travelers, including the dead going to the Underworld
- Carried the *caduceus*, a magical herald's rod and wore a traveler's hat

Hades (Pluto)

- Lord of the Underworld and the dead

Dionysos (Bacchus)

- God of wine
- Son of Zeus and a mortal woman

Eros (Cupid)

- Winged child god of love
- Son of Aphrodite and Ares

Asklepios (Aesculapius)

- Greek god of healing
- His serpent-entwined staff is the emblem of modern medicine
- Son of Apollo and a mortal woman

Source: Gardner's Art Through the Ages