



CHARACTERISTICS OF MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE ART

The Renaissance (1415-1600) changed the world of art completely. The differences between medieval art and that of the Renaissance are striking. What we imagine as we think about paintings, sculpture and architecture today, all began in the Renaissance.

MEDIEVAL ART

The basic characteristics of Medieval Art are as follows:

1. Rich colors, especially the primary colors (blue and red)
2. Gold and silver are used to highlight divinity and relate importance of figure
3. Heavy outlining (principal figures are clearly defined)
4. Flat and stiff figures showing no depth (appears as if everything is on one plane)
5. Emphasis on religious icons and iconography
 - a. Biblical stories and canonical laws are reinforced without interpretation
 - b. Saints (as those who follow the laws and precepts) are the focus
6. Emphasis on the Holy Family (Jesus and Mary)
 - a. The suffering in the Passion of Christ is emphasized
 - b. The suffering and compassion of Mary is emphasized

RENAISSANCE ART

The basic characteristics of Renaissance Art are as follows:

1. Concentration upon the expression of emotion
2. Focus on the human body in a realistic fashion
3. More secular subjects
 - a. Religious figures are presented in Renaissance clothing and in Renaissance settings
4. Perspective is introduced so depth appears for the first time
5. Balance and symmetry are important
6. Realistic presentation of human figures including flaws