

The Baroque Period 1600-1750

- Counter Reformation
- Point of view
- genre
- glazes/glazed
- impasto
- tenebrism
- Caravaggista
- etching
- burin
- camera obscura
- vanitas painting

○ Baroque in Europe: The 17th Century

- Italian and French Baroque
- Spanish Baroque
- Spain in the New World
- Dutch and Flemish Baroque

- This unit deals with a world that is growing more and more complex.
- Europe is now firmly divided into religious camps that will never rejoin one another.
- Yet, all of Europe is under the sway of a style rooted in naturalism that seeks drama.
- It is a chapter of contrasts as well as continuations.
- What some regard as the excessive decorativeness of Mannerism is replaced by a stout, bolder Baroque style, which gives way to another highly decorative impulse, the Rococo.

The common element throughout Baroque art was the sensitivity to and the absolute mastery of LIGHT in order to achieve maximum impact

CATHOLIC VS PROTESTANT:

The 16th-century Protestant Reformation and subsequent Catholic Counter-Reformation compelled a divergence between northern and southern western European art with respect to form, function, and content. In Catholic countries, like Flanders, religious art flourished, while in the Protestant lands of northern Europe, religious imagery was forbidden as a result art tended to be still life, portraits, landscapes and scenes from everyday life, genre scenes.

Northern Europe: Production of religious imagery declined in northern Europe, and nonreligious genres, such as landscape, still life, genre, history, mythology, and portraiture, developed and flourished.

Southern Europe: In the south, there was an increase in the production of political propaganda, religious imagery, and pageantry, with the elaboration of naturalism, dynamic compositions, bold color schemes, and the affective power of images and constructed spaces. Northern Europe: Production of religious imagery declined in northern Europe, and nonreligious genres, such as landscape, still life, genre, history, mythology, and portraiture, developed and flourished.

I. The Italian Baroque

- Baroque began in Rome.
- Italian baroque artists could expertly represent the human body from any angle, portray the most complex perspective and realistically reproduce almost anything
- Italian Baroque art differs from Renaissance art with its emphasis on emotion rather than rationality, on dynamic rather than static compositions.
- The most striking difference between Italian Baroque and Renaissance painting was the use of light to dramatize a composition.

The Counter Reformation

The Counter-Reformation Church searched for authentic religious art with which to counter the threat of Protestantism, and for this task the artificial conventions of Mannerism, which had ruled art for almost a century, no longer seemed adequate.

Caravaggio

Caravaggio's novelty was a radical naturalism which combined close physical observation with a dramatic, even theatrical, approach to chiaroscuro, the use of light and shadow.

Artemisia Gentileschi

Follower of Caravaggio, First well known female artist, presented woman's point of view

Bernini

Greatest sculptor of the Baroque period

Also an architect, painter, playwright, composer and theater designer

More than any other artist, with his public fountains, religious art, and designs for St Peter's, he left his mark on the city of Rome

Borromini

What Caravaggio did for painting Borromini did for architecture.

Just as Caravaggio's figures seem to leap out at the viewer, Borromini's undulating walls also to come life with dramatic light and shadow.

II Baroque Art in France

In the 17th century, France was the most powerful country in Europe.

Louis XIV, the sun king built his lavish palace at Versailles, by **Mansart and Le Vau**

George de la Tour

Use of candlelight, simplified compositions, unusual point of view

The Cross Cultural Palaces:

- Versailles, France
- Alhambra, Spain
- Forbidden City, China

III Baroque in Spain

- The Spanish kings who ruled throughout the 17th century, reigned over an increasingly weakening empire.
- However, the 17th century was a rich period for painting and literature, which sometimes concealed the country's economic and political decline.

- It was a period of great rebellion, both the Portuguese and the Protestants in the northern Netherlands fought for independence from Spain.
- Furthermore, what had seemed to be an endless flow of gold and silver from the Americas diminished.
- Attempting to defend the Roman Catholic Church and their empire on all fronts, Spanish kings squandered their resources and finally went bankrupt in 1692.

Spanish Painting

17th century Spanish painting, profoundly influenced by Caravaggio, was characterized by an ecstatic religiosity combined with intense realism whose surface details emerge from the deep shadows of **tenebrism**.

Diego Velasquez

- Court painter to Philip IV
- Spain's most gifted painter was also one of the greatest artists of all time.
- A master of technique, highly individual in style,
- He was a master realist, and no painter has surpassed him in the ability to seize essential features and fix them on canvas with a few broad, sure strokes.

The West: A White Man's World

- The traditional art history survey presents a historical narrative that, by **selectively** mapping development of the so-called Old World, **constructs the idea of the West**.
- One problem with this model is that in **privileging Europe**, the Old World is placed in an oppositional relationship to **the rest of the world, which tends to be marginalized, if not neglected**.
 - A focus upon early modernity and interconnectedness of the Atlantic regions presents a more comprehensive approach to the study of art.

The Age of Exploration

- At the start of the 15th century, the Catholic monarchs of Spain, feeling powerful after their victory over Islamic forces in Spain, decided to search for glory and riches in undeveloped parts of the world.
- The advent of the **Age of Exploration** in the late 15th century resulted in the emergence of global commercial and cultural networks via transoceanic trade and colonization.
 - European ideas, forms, and practices began to be disseminated worldwide as a result of exploration, trade, conquest, and colonization.
- Spain paid for many expeditions to the "New World", perhaps the most famous being Columbus's voyage in 1492.
- These European explorers wanted to conquer and colonize these new lands.
- The Spanish were especially interested in the lands of what are today called Latin America.
- Great civilizations like the Aztec and the Inka soon fell to the technologically advanced and disease carrying Europeans.

New Spain:

- Hybridization
- Enconchado
- Tenochtitlan
- Aztec
- Inka
- Viceroyalty
- Viceroy
- Mestizo
- New Spain
- Creolization
- Codex

Hybridization in the Viceroyalties

- Viceroy is a regal official who runs a country or colony in the name of and as representative of the monarch.
- Art production in the Spanish viceroyalties in the Americas exhibited a hybridization of European and indigenous ideas, forms, and materials, with some African and Asian influences.
- From South America the Spanish were eventually able to sail onto Asia, conquering the Philippines.

Examples of Hybridization:

- The Codex Mendoza
- Angel with Arquebus
- Virgin of Guadalupe
- Screen with the Siege of Belgrade and Hunting Scene
- Portrait of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Pinturas de Castas

These caste paintings seek to document the inter-ethnic mixing occurring in New Spain among Europeans, indigenous peoples, Africans, and the existing mixed-race population.

Example:

- Spaniard and Indian Produce a Mestizo

IV Baroque Art Netherlands

Southern Netherlands/ Flanders/ Catholic

- The southern Netherlands, called Flanders and later Belgium, remained Catholic after the Reformation.
- This gave artists ample incentive to produce both secular and religious paintings.
- After nearly a century of conflict with their Spanish rulers, Flanders won independence in the early 17th century.

Peter Paul Rubens

- High energy was the secret to Rubens life and art.
- His work explodes with a flurry of brushstrokes.
- Worked primarily from life, unlike many of his contemporaries who worked from plaster casts.
- Rich, luscious colors
- Full bodied, sensuous nudes
- Warm, luminous flesh tones

Northern Netherlands/ Holland/ Protestant

- Although Holland shared its southern border with Flanders, culturally and politically the two countries could not have been more different.
- While the monarchy and the Church dominated Flanders, Holland was an independent, democratic Protestant country.
- Religious art was forbidden, and the usually sources of patronage, the Church and the monarchy no longer existed.
- The result was a democratizing of art in both subject matter and ownership.
- Artists were at the mercy of the marketplace, and had to create paintings that would appeal to the rising middle class.
- Luckily Holland's prosperous middle class was very interested in purchasing and collecting art.
- Dutch artists produced highly detailed genre paintings, portraits, still lifes, landscapes, and interior scenes.

Rembrandt van Rijn

- During his lifetime, Rembrandt was an extremely successful portrait painter.
- Today his reputation rests principally on the introspective painting of his later years.
- During the first 20 years of his career, Rembrandt's portraits were in great demand, he also painted biblical and historical scenes in the Baroque style.
- Later works, beginning w/ the Night Watch in 1642, reflect a marked change in his style
- His beloved wife had died and he had already lost three children in infancy.
- A palette of rich reds and browns began to dominate his paintings, as did solitary figures and a pervasive theme of loneliness.
- Master etcher
- **He pushed the limits of chiaroscuro, using gradations of light and dark to convey mood, character and emotion.**

Jan Vermeer

- Dutch genre painter lived and worked in Delft, and created some of the most exquisite paintings in Western art. But little is known of his life and work
- Of the 35 or 36 paintings generally attributed to him, most portray figures in interiors.
- All his works are admired for the sensitivity with which he rendered effects of light and color and for the poetic quality of his images.
- **No painter, except for perhaps van Eyck or van der Weyden, was as skilled as Vermeer in his masterful use of light.**
- Vermeer's colors were brighter, purer, and glowed with an intensity unknown before.
- In addition to his expert handling of color and light, Vermeer was a master of perfectly balanced compositions.

- His handling of paint was also revolutionary, applying paint in dabs and dots so that the raised surface of the paint reflected more light.
- One critic described his paint surface as “crushed pearls melted together”
- He died bankrupt at the age of 43.

Rachel Ruysch

- Well known female Dutch painter
- Very successful still life artist
- Specialized in flowers
- Self taught
 - Her father was a botanist
 - Invention of the microscope
 - She studied his specimens in detail
- The unseen could now be seen
- Reflects careful study and interest in categorizing the natural world
- Paintings are almost scientific studies
- **Vanitas Painting:** Transient nature of life
 - Objects in the paintings have symbolic meaning