

Renaissance Art

When?

1400 – 1st quarter of the 16th century

Where?

Italy, Flanders, German

Art function

The quick rising of rich and powerful Italian courts changed the role of the artist in the society. The sovereigns needed to celebrate their new political and cultural position affording the artists to develop their own research through the production of public and private artworks. In that situation, the artist changed his anonymous artisan position in that of a rich and famous intellectual who dealt with art making as well as he wrote about art theory.

Direct study of reality

In Renaissance period the vision of human life was no more based just on faith, as in medieval age: the man became the centre of universe, able to rise toward god by his own intelligence. That's bore the artist to study anatomy and perspective, finding rules in the experience of reality.

Anatomy is a complex of studies that led the artists to a perfect knowledge of the human body, his elements and his proportion.

Perspective is a geometrical construction that allows the rendering on a flat surface of three-dimensional objects view directly from the eye of a man standing in front of them. Filippo Brunelleschi was the first artist who investigated this method that puts everything in strict relationship with the human being.

Classicism

A new interest for the ancient roman and greek art and architecture supplied artist with models of beauty and elements that added prestige to their artwork.

Subjects

In Renaissance period some new subjects appeared beside the religious scenes. The big public celebrations of court events (triumphs and others entertainment) as well as the birth of state portrait, added prestige to the sovereigns, often using ancient roman elements and fresco painting. On the other hand, the idea of private collection was rising asking for small very refined artworks and mythological subjects or more intimate scenes.

Technique

Sanguine drawing and other kind of sketching technique were used by the artist to investigate reality. Oil painting on canvas substituted tempera on wood because of its wider possibility in rendering light and texture effects. Fresco painting was improved to create huge scenes painted on the walls acting like propaganda about the political role of dukes and Popes.