

Welcome back students to another module of History of Western Art and Culture. Today we are going to be starting with the second unit and the title of the unit is Styles in Painting and Leading Contributors. The name of this module is Renaissance Art in Italy: Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael.

So let us begin, This is the outline of the module where you will be learning about Renaissance painting and the three leading painters that we need to know about. At the end of this module the students will be able to understand the Renaissance style of painting. They will also be able to understand the contribution of leading painters to the Renaissance painting.

Let us begin. What is Renaissance? Renaissance is a collective term which is used to include all the intellectual changes that took place at the close of the Middle Ages and at the beginning of the modern times. Since the Renaissance, painting began to be executed on canvas, wood and other such materials. Most of the earlier paintings were done directly on the plaster wall (That is frescoes). One of the very important features of Renaissance painting is the technique of oil painting that was being used.

Renaissance painting has been classified into early, high and later Renaissance. Some of the early Renaissance painters were Giotto, Gaddo Gaddi and others. The High Renaissance painters are Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael. They all belong to the High Renaissance period and also the Florentine school. Renaissance painters produced great masterpieces that had a very humanistic and secular approach towards the way they were painting.

Let us begin with the first painter, that is Leonardo Da Vinci. Leonardo Davinci was one of the greatest Renaissance painters. He was born and raised in Florence and later he went to Milan. He was an all rounder. He knew Engineering, philosophy, music, craftsmanship. He was patronised by various families in his pursuit of painting such as the Sforza family of Milan, the Medici family of Florence and the French Royal family. His approach to painting was very much scientific. He studied the human body and he gave importance to the perspective of light, shade and color. He was one among the first to introduce atmospheric perspective, and that is one of the notable characteristics of some of his paintings.

The innovations that Leonardo Davinci did in the field of painting influenced the course of Italian art for more than a century after his death. Some of his important and very famous paintings are the Last Supper, the Mona Lisa, the Virgin and the Child. The Mona Lisa is listed among the greatest pictures of the world. This is a picture of the Last Supper and I'm sure most of you all have seen.

Let us now move on to the next painter, that is Michelangelo. Michelangelo was a very versatile and a brilliant man in many fields such as architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, engineering, astronomy, etc. He was a humanist like we have discussed earlier. He's paintings had a very secular approach and a very humanistic approach. He made man the center of all his work, that is the center of all his paintings and nature was not in the center anymore. It was put to the background. He developed, to a great extent, chiaroscuro, painting. That is the meaning with the use of light and dark. Michelangelo is well known for his Grand Fresco on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican in Rome, wherein he depicted the biblical story of the creation of the earth by God. This Frescoes almost contained 145 Pictures and 394 figures, approximately. Some of the figures are as high as 10 feet. The Last Judgment, which is one of the paintings of Michelangelo, is the most impressive. He made use of tough undraped male figures to express certain ideas.

The last painter that we need to know about with regard to Renaissance painting is Raphael Sanzio. Raphael Sanzio was one of another greater Renaissance painters. He was well known around all the

world for his divine portraits. Raphael believed in humanism. He chose models from actual life and gave them heavily air that is converting them into something divine. His greatest painting is that of the Sistine Madonna and this painting shows its lifelike charm and beauty. Raphael Sanzio selected beautiful women as models to depict, to show the beauty of the mother and the child in his paintings. Some of his paintings showed a synthesis that is a mix, a combination between physical beauty and a sense of devotion. His portrait of Pope Julius II is an exhibit of Renaissance individualism and naturalism, that is focusing on the individual, becoming more important rather than focusing on the divine. To a viewer his paintings gave not only width and height, that is, his paintings did not only show two dimensions but also depth and giving it the third dimension. So he's painting is so unique because of this as well.

One of the well known fresco paintings of Raphael is a School of Athens. This painting represents the group of Greek philosophers in a monumental and classical setting. These are the three painters that we need to know when we talk about Renaissance art or the period of Renaissance painting.

And as we've discussed earlier, there were three periods Early, High and Later Renaissance. We focused on the High Renaissance period, about Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael. And we have understood their contributions to Renaissance painting was very important. We also looked at some of the important paintings that they have created, their masterpieces, their techniques they have utilized?

So these are some of the references of books that you can go through and you can refer to them to get more information about these painters and paintings of the Renaissance period. Thank you.