Chapter Guide #22: Renaissance and Mannerism in

Cinquecento Italy

**CONTEXT:**

The High Renaissance flourished in the cultivated courts of princes, doges, and popes – each wanted to make his city-state greater than his neighbor’s. Unfortunately, most of this came to a temporary halt with the sack of Rome in 1527 – a six-month destruction of the city did much to undo the achievements of one of the most creative moments in art history. What emerged from the runs of Rome was a new period, Mannerism, which took art on a different path.

1. Rome as cultural capital becomes the new Athens after expulsion of the Medicis in Florence

2. Papal power – Pope Julius II and Leo X had political and cultural ambitions

3. The artist as genius, the artist as hero, inspired, divine

4. Art as metaphor – art signs for the ambitions of their patrons, the ego of the artist, and philosophical ideas

5. Monumental ambition and scale – large scale painting, sculptural programs, and architecture

6. Neoplatonic thought – the philosophical basis of Michelangelo’s sculpture and painting

**ART WORK CARDS: 3D (Yellow) 2D (Red) Architecture (Green)**

**High Renaissance**

Leonardo’s Madonna of the Rocks

Leonardo’s Madonna and Child with Saint Anne and the Infant Saint John

Leonardo’s Last Supper

Leonardo’s Mona Lisa

Leonardo’s Sketches

Raphael’s Marriage of the Virgin

Raphael’s Madonna in the Meadow

Raphael’s School of Athens

Raphael’s Galatea

Michelangelo’s David

Michelangelo’s Pieta

Michelangelo’s Bound Slave

Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel Ceiling

Michelangelo’s Last Judgment

Bramante’s Tempietto

Michelangelo’s Saint Peter’s

Michelangelo’s Laurentian Library

Antonio da Sangallo’s Palazo Farnese

**Late Renaissance**

Palladio’s Villa Rotonda

Pallasio’s San Giorgio Maggiore

Bellini & Titian’s Feast of the Gods

Giorgione’s The Tempest

Titian’s Pastoral Symphony

Titian’s Assumption of the Virgin

Titian’s Meeting of Bacchus and Ariadne

Titian’s Venus of Urbino

**Mannerism**

Pontormo’s Entombment of Christ

Parmigianino’s Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror

Parmigianino’s Madonna with the Long Neck

Bronzino’s Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time

Tintoretto’s Last Supper

Veronese’s Triumph of Venice

Correggio’s Assumption of the Virgin

Cellini’s Saltcellar of Francis I

Giovanni da Bologna’s Abduction of the Sabine Women

Giacomo’s da Vignola’s Il Gesu

**TIMELINE:**

**1494** Medici are exiled from Florence, signaling a general exodus of artists from Florence to Rome

**1506** New St. Peter’s begun by Pope Julius II

**1517** Luther posts his 95 Theses and the Protestant Reformation begins

**1527** Rome invaded and sacked by French and Spanish troops, ending its artistic preeminence

**1545** The Council of Trent launches the Counter-Reformation and establishment of Universal Inquisition

**VOCABULARY:**

Neoplatonism

Pieta

Sfumato

Cartoon

Disegno

Grisalle

Lunette

Balustrade

Drum

Cartouche

Doge

Personification

Sacra conversazione

Loggia

Belvedere

Rotunda

**CONTEXT CARDS: Blue**

High Renaissance

Late Renaissance

Mannerism

**INNOVATIONS IN HIGH RENAISSANCE PAINTING:**

Northern European artists discovered the durability and portability of canvas as a painting aurface. This was immediately taken up in Venice, where the former backing of choice – wood – would often warp in the damp climate. Since canvas is a material with a grainly tecture, greater care was made to prepare it in suc a way as to minimize the effect the cloth would have on the paint. Canvas, therefore, had to be primed properly to make it resemble the enamel-like surface of wood.

**HIGH RENAISSANCE ARTISTS**

**LEONARDO DA VINCI:**

Rejects humanist Neoplatonic scholarship, favoring instead first-hand investigation and observation of nature (the flight of birds, flow of water, force of winds, movement of clouds, inventions of machines.

**Contributions/Innovations in painting:**

Light natural lighting with atmospheric perspective

Form/Space sculpturesque modeling, introduced sfumato (elimination of contour lines), use of very subtle chiaroscuro, forms emerge out of surrounding darkness due to diffused light, interest in nature represented with extreme accuracy

Figure elements of grace in all his work, delicacy of expression and quality of warmth and intimacy with his subjects, revealing the true character and personality

Composition use of pyramidal composition creating stability, masterpiece of dramatic power and pictorial logic

**RAPHAEL:**

In the court circle of Julius II and Leo X and was appointed architect of St. Peter’s when Bramante dies in 1514. Appointed chief inspector of antiquities in Rome, but dies unexpectedly in 1520.

**Contributions/Innovations in painting:**

Composition more complex composition and expanding pictorial space, skillful arrangement of the futures within a clearly defined space relating to each other and the surrounding architecture, brilliant and varied color

Content attempts to paint metaphysical abstractions with clear thinking and logical organization, attempt to convey inner emotion

Figure extreme gestures, much more expressive, increased individuality

**MICHELANGELO:**

Sistine Chapel Ceiling – conceived as an organic composition motivated by a single unifying philosophical as well as artistic design.

**Contributions/Innovations in painting:**

Iconography combination of Hebrew-Christian theology and Neoplatonic philosophy

Format use of circle, triangle, and square which were regarded in Plato’s philosophy as the eternal forms that furnished clues to the true nature of the universe

Organization symbolic division correspond to the three Platonic stages (the world of matter, the world of becoming, and the world of being)

**BRAMANTE:**

Tempietto – a conscious revival of round building of antiquity and became an architecture manifesto of the Roman Renaissance. Central plan structures distinguished by the module whereby all parts of the building are either multiple or fraction of the basic unit of measure, balancing of the proportions of the lower and upper stories, and space ornament.

**CONCEPTS OF VENETIAN RENAISSANCE:**

1: Why oil painting was developed and used almost exclusively in Venice?

2: What political, geographic and economic factors accounted for Venice’s prosperity and power?

3: List the characteristics of Sansovino’s architectural style

4: Why is Palladio’s architecture and writing (his Treatise) so important to architectural history?

5: List the characteristics of 16th Cent. Venetian painting, as seen in the work of Titian and Giorgione.

6: Why is Titian’s Venus of Urbino so important to the history of the representation of the female nude.

7: What aspects of Tintoretto’s painting is Venetian? What aspects are Mannerist?

8: Compare the Last Supper of Castagno, Ghirlandaio, da Vinci, Tintoretto and Veronese

**CHARACTERISTICS OF VENTIAN ARCHITECTURE:**

Sculptural facades

* open loggias (galleries) and recessed entrances and windows - pierced, deep-cut masonry
* lively contrast of structural elements and decorative details
* combination of broken and complete intersecting pediments
* reflection of facades in canals/use of mirrored interior walls serve to activate heavy masses of masonry and to increase the perception of light/space

Visually complex facades, interiors, and spacial relationships

* spacious interiors = freedom of movement
* combination of curved (round) and rectangular surfaces/elements
* open, semi-circular colonnades around the altar and windows in the apse allow eye to continue into deep space in Palladio's churches

**CHARACTERISTICS OF MANNERISM:**

The breaking up of the Renaissance sense of unity.

* virtuosity of technique, tendencies to over-refinement/self-consciously contrived attitudes
* self-awareness of previous golden age, consciously breaking rules
* self-referential to world of art and previous art making, appropriation, and puns
* attempt to shock audience with subject matter and presentation

**Painting Characteristics:**

* Cramped compositions: crowded pictorial space filled with figures blotting out the background
* Undefinable space: space appears too shallow or undefined for what is taking place in it
* Exaggeration: fanciful gestures and attitudes, deliberately intricate groupings
* Movement: figure are characterized by athletic bending and twisting
* Distortion: unnatural elongation in the body, and unrealistically small heads
* Unbalanced compositions: unstable groupings of figures
* Nervous: Quality of restlessness that leads to distortion, exaggeration and bizarre posturing
* Un-classical: center of compositions are often left void, or there is an absence of one focal point
* Self-conscious: figures look out into viewer's space, anxiously
* Subjective Color: unnatural color
* Idiosyncratic: highly individual choice of subject matter and interpretation

**Sculpture Characteristics:**

* interlocking bodies meant to be seen from multiple viewpoints
* dramatic movement and gesture with spiral movement along a central axis
* the spectator must move around the whole sculpture to appreciate it
* the spaces between masses are as important to the composition is the masses themselves

**Architecture Characteristics:**

* architects parody classical styles: a joke requiring a highly sophisticated audience
* ambiguity in organization of exterior facade and interior floor levels
* unsettling quality - deliberate attempt to shock viewer with structural surprises