Art in the Renaissance

1400 – 1600

Overview

- Italian/Early 1400-1490
- Italian/High 1500-1600
- Northern/Late 1500-1600
- one can argue about dates:
  - 1300 – 1520
  - 1400 – 1600

Renaissance

- 1st period to name itself and say nasty things about earlier times: “Gothic” & “Dark Ages”
- Term means “Rebirth”
- Looking back to Classical culture – Ancient Greece and Rome
- Names! Artists known by name – 1st contemporary art historian (1550);
  
  Individuality celebrated in this era

Renaissance

- Church is still the biggest power structure
- Beginning of banking
- Private fortunes & power – The Medici
- Starts in Italy – specifically Florence

The Return of Humanism

Man loves himself once again
... I feel that I have come to some understanding of why man is the most fortunate of living things and, consequently, deserving of all admiration; of what may be the condition in the hierarchy of beings assigned to him, which draws upon him the envy, not of the brutes alone, but of the astral beings and of the very intelligences which dwell beyond the confines of the world.

from Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1486)

see also p. 189
Inscription:
"The victor is whoever defends the fatherland. God crushes the wrath of an enormous foe. Behold - a boy overcame a great tyrant! Conquer, O citizens! Kingdoms fall through luxury, cities rise through virtues. Behold the neck of pride, severed by the hand of humility."

p. 203
Pazzi Chapel

Post & lintel returns;
GEOMETRY
Brunelleschi
p. 197

Pitti Palace

Alberti (façade architect), Santa Maria Novella, Florence, 1470

By the numbers:
2:1
3:1
4:1
Masaccio

*Trinity*
1427-28
Fresco
21' 10 1/2" x 10' 4"
Santa Maria Novella, Florence

1st use of linear perspective

Masaccio, *Tribute Money*, c. 1427

Note use of *chiaroscuro* (light and dark shading) to create volume in the clothes.

Ghiberti, Lorenzo

*The Gates of Paradise*
1425-52
Bronze with gilding
Ghiberti, Lorenzo  
The Gates of Paradise  
1425-52  
Bronze with gilding

Ghiberti, Lorenzo  
Detail from the Gates of Paradise  
The story of Joseph  
1425-52  
Bronze with gilding

Baptistery, Florence

BOTTICELLI, Sandro  
The birth of Venus  
c. 1485, Tempera on canvas  
(67 7/8 x 109 5/8 in.)

BOTTICELLI, Sandro  
Primavera  
c. 1482. Tempera on wood  
203 x 314 cm

BOTTICELLI, Sandro  
Venus and Mars  
c. 1485. Egg tempera and oil on poplar  
69 x 173.5 cm
Summary – Italian Renaissance

- POLITICS – Italian city-states; power from money
- EARLY RENAISSANCE – Florence
- HIGH RENAISSANCE –
- ART – Classical ideals revived
- IDEAS – Humanism returns
- MUSIC –