

## EUROPE - 1300-1750 CE

## Part 3: Florentine Renaissance Art - (Early Renaissance 1450)

## History:

1. **1453** Constantinople falls to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 - final end of the "Eastern Roman Empire"
2. Florence becomes a powerful banking, textile, and trading center for Italy and Europe
3. **1494** Savonarola preaches reform and controls the city by 1494 leading to a "**Bonfire of the Vanities**"
4. Roman Catholic church becomes a military and political force prone to abuses of power and wealth



What is the FUNCTION of this art work?

STOKSTAD, 5th Edition, Chapter 20

## CONTEXT

1. **Cosimo Medici** establishes his **Neo-platonic Academy**:  
Cosimo "rules" Rep. of Florence by 1434, then Piero, then Lorenzo - Medici are exiled in 1494  
effect on the arts = advancement of **humanistic and scientific knowledge**
2. **expanding wealth** of the **merchant class** and **guilds**:  
Florence develops into powerful and wealthy republic with a few merchant families controlling politics of city  
effect on the arts = merchant and artisan class challenged the entrenched position of nobility
3. **international trade and banking** and continued **growth of cities** - **wealthy patrons support the arts**  
effect on the arts = **unparalleled productivity in the arts**
4. **expansion of national states** - **discovery** by navigating the globe  
effect on the arts = new world view - the individual's relationship with the world - **Humanism**
5. **the emergence of the artists' social position** sometimes equal in stature to their patrons  
effect on the arts = artist as hero, as divinely inspired, as genius
6. **intellectual approach** to beauty and art, including the **rediscovery of linear perspective**  
effect on the arts = mathematic > ration > module > proportion > harmony / balance / symmetry > beauty

## RENAISSANCE ARCHITECTURE



- use of Roman building motifs
- application of Classical elements to contemporary buildings
- use of geometry as a primary organizing device
- circle and square form the basis on design and proportion of plan, interior, and facade
- mathematic ratios and modular units in repetition as a basis for harmonic relationships - basis for the "beautiful"
- emphasis on symmetry, logic, and clarity
- crisp delineation by architectural elements and moldings done in *pietra serena* (gray stone) framing white plastered walls, apses, and domes
- emphasis on the wall as an important structural element
- facades separated into stories by horizontal string courses topped by a heavy cornice

## ARTWORKS

- \* Brancacci Chapel – Masaccio's Holy Trinity/Tribute Money
- 71. Madonna and Child with Two Angels, Fra Filippo Lippi
- 72. Birth of Venus, Sandro Botticelli
- \* Christ Delivering the Keys to the Kingdom, Perugino
- \* Florence Cathedral, Baptistry Doors, Ghiberti
- 69. David, Donatello and St. Mark
- 67. Pazzi Chapel, Filippo Brunelleschi
- 70. Palazzo Rucellai, Leon Battista Alberti

Terms and Techniques: perspective (one and two point)    *pietra serena*  
 atmospheric perspective    rusticated stone  
 synoptic organization  
 modeling  
 chiaroscuro  
sacra conversazione