

EUROPE - 1300-1750 CE

Part 5: Mannerism (c. 1530)

Context - Historic Events: *the fragmentation of the Christian monolith*Instability in the culture was created by the following events:

- The Reformation - Martin Luther, John Calvin break from the church in Rome: the Reformation is born (1517)
- The Sack of Rome 1527 by Charles V - invasion of Italy - Pope Clement VII under siege in Castel Sant'Angelo
- Universal Inquisition (c. 1550) the beginnings of the Counter-Reformation
- Copernicus publishes *On the Revolution of the Planets in their Orbits* in 1543 results in the following questions:
 - new consciousness of earth's significance (or insignificance) - man not the center of creation
 - weakening of man's belief in miracles and divine intervention
- Peasant revolts and religious wars throughout Europe
- Threat of the encroaching Ottoman Turks from the east



What is the FUNCTION of this art work?

STOKSTAD, 5th Edition, Chapter 21: pgs 661-668

Artistic Response: Mannerism**Definition:** idiosyncratic, affected, exaggerated or contrived mode of behavior**Major Tenants:**

1. *Each artist has a right to a personal interpretation of the "rules"*
2. *Removed one step away from nature, beginning with reinterpretations of previous art*
3. *Investigation into the human figure, presented in a very staged (artificial) way*
4. *Artists intent on expressing their own personalities, powers of imagination, and technical skills*

General Characteristics:

1. *The breaking up of the Renaissance sense of purity*
2. *Virtuosity of technique, tendencies to over-refinement/self-consciously contrived attitudes*
3. *Self-awareness of previous golden age (High Renaissance) - consciously breaking "rules"*
4. *Self-referential to world of art and previous art making, appropriation, and puns*
5. *Attempt to shock audience with subject matter and presentation*

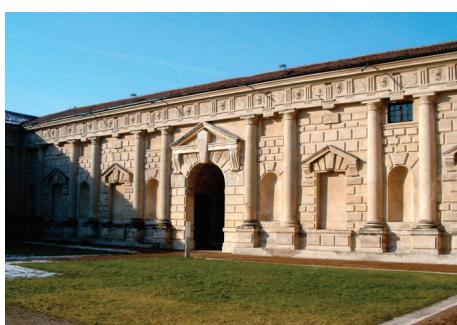


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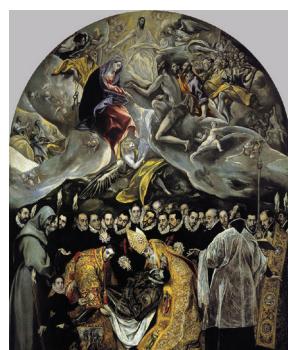
ARTWORKS

78. Entombment of Christ, Jacopo da Pontormo

* Burial of Count Orgaz, El Greco

Stylistic Characteristics of Mannerist Painting:Cramped compositions: crowded pictorial space filled with figures blotting out the backgroundUndefinable space: space appears too shallow or undefined for what is taking place in itExaggeration: fanciful gestures and attitudes, deliberately intricate groupingsMovement: figures are characterized by athletic bending and twistingDistortion: unnatural elongation in the body, unrealistically small headsUnbalanced compositions: unstable groupings of figuresNervous: Quality of restlessness that leads to distortion, exaggeration, and bizarre posturingUn-classical: center of compositions are often left void or there is an absence of one focal pointSelf-conscious: figures look out into viewer's space, anxiouslySubjective color: unnatural colorIdiosyncratic: highly individual choice of subject matter and interpretation

Romano, Palazzo del Te, Mantua, Italy



El Greco
The Burial of the Count of Orgaz
1586

Giambologna
Rape of the Sabine Women
1583

**Vocabulary:**

idiosyncratic
exaggeration
composition
subjective

artifice
serpentinata
focal point