

THE LIMBOURG BROTHERS

One of the most prevalent styles of painting in the Middle Ages was that of book illumination. In this style, artists in the early Middle Ages—mostly associated with monasteries—would *illuminate* or make elaborate drawings or paintings of the stories being told in the scriptures or other sacred books. This practice persisted throughout the Middle Ages. The illuminations were very detailed, sometimes colorful illustrations, mainly of religious subjects. They varied from full pages of illustrations to embellishments and borders with small story-telling scenes worked in. The Limbourg brothers did religious and non-religious illuminations. Many of their better-known works are calendar illuminations of everyday life.

Only the wealthy could afford illuminated manuscripts, but even among the wealthy, there were very few people who could read. Thus, illuminations served the two-fold purpose of entertaining and educating those who could afford to buy them. Actually the books were similar to today's children's story books in concept, though the pictures were more detailed and realistic than some story books, and they were meant for adults, not children.

The Limbourg brothers were some of the last in this great line of medieval book illuminators. Interestingly, they were not associated with any monastery, but apparently hired themselves out as freelance artists. They were a family of fifteenth-century Flemish illuminators named Paul, Jean, and Herman, all born after 1385 in Nijmegen, Burgundy. Around 1400 they went to Paris to begin apprenticeships as goldsmiths. However, they apparently found work as painters and illuminators and became well known in the Paris area. They were hired by one of the nobility, Philip the Bold, to decorate a Bible for him. After Philip's death they went to work for his brother, Jean de France, Duke of Berry, and illuminated a number of books for him.

Some of their most important contributions to the art of illumination were their attention to detail, interest in landscape, and rendering of depth. These three practices helped provide the foundation for later Flemish schools of art and the famous artists who would follow in the Renaissance period. These developments by the Limbourg brothers are the essence of the new International style that combined the Italian and Northern styles of painting.

The primary work that has been ascribed to them consists of illustrations for two books, one finished in approximately 1408 and the other in about 1413. By 1416 all three brothers had died, most likely the victims of an epidemic.



This is the illustration for the month of May from a book the Limbourg brothers illuminated for the Duke of Berry.

Name _____ Date _____

QUESTIONS

1. What was book illumination?

2. What were artists in the Middle Ages associated with?

3. What would these artists illuminate?

4. Who were the Limbourg brothers?

5. Why did the Limbourg brothers originally go to Paris?

6. Who was the first well-known person to hire them, and what did he hire them to do?

7. What was unusual about how the brothers made their livings as illuminators?

8. What were some of their most important contributions to the art of illumination?

9. What did these practices help provide the foundation for?

10. What was the new International style a combination of?

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI

The great Renaissance sculptor, architect, painter, and poet, Michelangelo Buonarroti, was born in 1475 and died in approximately 1564. When he was 13 he began studying painting with Domenico Ghirlandaio and sculpture with Bertoldo di Giovanni. He also had the wonderful opportunity of studying with Lorenzo de Medici, in whose palace he came in contact with the leading humanist poets and philosophers of the day. Along with his already deep religious convictions, this education gave him an intriguing and extremely well-rounded blend of knowledge and background upon which to draw for his works of art.

Michelangelo's art represented the best of the High Renaissance period and was the culmination of all the other great artists who had gone before him, such as Donatello. Throughout Michelangelo's lifetime he was associated with princes and noblemen, popes, cardinals, kings, and other rulers. He was not easy to get along with, but his artistic abilities made his social inadequacies acceptable.

While most artists have one or at most two mediums (art techniques or materials) with which they work, Michelangelo achieved success in a wide variety of artistic areas. Among other things, he was an architect, sculptor, painter, poet, and engineer. Of these he seems to have enjoyed sculpture the most. Among Michelangelo's many important artistic works was the great marble figure of *David*, which he sculpted between 1501 and 1504. The incredible detail in this sculpture is a fine example of the study of the human body that was prevalent in the Renaissance period.

Another of his fine accomplishments, and perhaps his greatest, is the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, which he was commissioned to paint by Pope Julius II. In order to complete this work, Michelangelo had scaffolding built so he would be able to reach the ceiling, and then he painted while lying on his back. It took him approximately four years—from 1508 to 1512—to paint these images on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. The finished work included nine scenes from the Book of Genesis, beginning with the separation of light from darkness and continuing with the creation of Adam, the creation of Eve, the temptation and Fall of Adam and Eve, and the Flood. This enormous endeavor changed the course of painting for the future. In 1536 Michelangelo was also asked to paint a large mural on the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel. He finished it in 1541 and this *fresco* (painting done on plaster) depicts judgment day. It is entitled *Last Judgment*.

Michelangelo's greatest achievement as an architect was his work at St. Peter's Basilica where he was the chief architect in 1546. He was responsible for one end of the building on the exterior and for the final form of its dome. The dome at St. Peter's became a symbol of the authority of the papacy and was also a model for domes all over the Western world. The Capitol building in Washington, D.C., is modeled after it.



Michelangelo was a successful architect, sculptor, painter, poet, and engineer.

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SEARCH

Find the words listed below and circle them in the word search puzzle. All the words are associated with Michelangelo in some way. Words may be printed forward, backward, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally in the puzzle.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W | Z | H | E | U | O | B | R | B | N | E | Z | S | O | C | S | E | R | F | S |
| E | S | J | D | Z | X | P | X | I | Q | N | D | I | C | P | F | M | T | E | U |
| K | L | K | Y | T | F | G | N | I | D | L | O | F | F | A | C | S | A | J | I |
| R | C | T | J | N | I | M | S | I | S | T | I | N | E | C | H | A | P | E | L |
| F | M | I | C | H | E | L | A | N | G | E | L | O | F | Q | M | Z | U | S | U |
| V | X | S | I | S | E | N | E | G | V | D | B | V | Q | X | H | Z | P | S | J |
| N | K | Y | D | A | A | J | K | J | A | K | N | V | F | J | Z | U | Y | D | E |
| P | B | H | G | B | S | U | C | V | I | U | Y | C | L | A | A | V | E | Q | P |
| V | S | E | K | P | P | L | I | E | B | A | H | D | P | D | R | O | X | U | O |
| L | Y | T | Z | X | A | D | A | H | I | A | L | L | O | Z | X | L | G | I | P |
| K | I | N | G | S | S | I | X | N | C | L | S | F | Y | B | T | J | I | P | T |
| M | S | J | Y | W | W | T | N | V | I | W | I | I | F | T | N | F | O | O | C |
| N | E | M | G | N | A | N | X | T | H | D | W | N | L | K | E | A | L | Q | E |
| U | P | C | S | T | P | Q | L | F | E | Q | R | X | G | I | X | O | M | R | T |
| X | O | Z | A | R | B | K | K | E | V | R | V | A | E | D | C | V | P | U | I |
| A | P | W | X | B | K | T | F | B | D | A | I | S | C | I | S | A | H | E | H |
| R | S | C | U | L | P | T | O | R | T | G | R | E | D | X | A | F | T | W | C |
| G | Q | Q | A | V | Q | T | T | Q | M | E | G | Y | Z | O | B | C | Z | V | R |
| N | Z | T | N | E | M | G | D | U | J | T | S | A | L | Z | M | D | G | Y | A |
| Q | C | Y | A | W | H | D | O | N | A | T | E | L | L | O | E | E | P | W | A |

WORD LIST

Architect

Ceiling

Donatello

Human Body

Michelangelo

Pope Julius

Sculptor

Basilica

David

Fresco

Kings

Painter

Popes

Sistine Chapel

Cardinals

Dome

Genesis

Last Judgment

Poet

Scaffolding

LEONARDO da VINCI

Leonardo da Vinci was one of the great masters of the High Renaissance. This artist from Florence was noted as a painter, sculptor, architect, engineer, and scientist. In particular, his innovations in painting influenced the world of art for at least a century after his death. Also, many of his scientific ideas anticipated modern practices in the fields of anatomy, optics, and hydraulics.

Leonardo was born in 1452 and died in 1519. He was born in the small town of Vinci, which is near Florence, Italy. His father was a wealthy Florentine notary, and his mother was a peasant. His family settled in Florence when Leonardo was a boy, and he was afforded the best education available to anyone of the time. Florence was the center of intellectual and artistic activity in Italy, and Leonardo was one of the many great benefactors of this quality of education. In addition to being an artist, Leonardo was also an excellent musician. At the age of 14 he was apprenticed to the greatest painter and sculptor in Florence, Andrea del Verrocchio. Under his tutelage Leonardo developed many of the skills that would make him great. By 1478 he was an independent master.

Leonardo created a relatively small number of paintings, but these paintings represented two important techniques of art that would foreshadow the further developments that would come over the next century. These two techniques are called *sfumato* and *chiaroscuro*. *Sfumato* is seen as subtle, very small transitions between color areas that create a hazy or smoky effect. *Chiaroscuro* is a technique that defines forms through contrasts of light and shadow, producing the effect of light reflecting off three-dimensional surfaces. Both of these techniques are used in Leonardo's most famous painting, *The Mona Lisa*. Some of his other works are *The Last Supper* and *The Adoration of the Magi*. All three of these paintings reveal his new approach to perspective in landscape backgrounds. While none of his sculptural projects or architectural drawings were ever brought to fruition, his actual drawings for both demonstrate a mastery of the use of massive forms and a deep understanding of ancient Roman architecture.

As a scientist, Leonardo was centuries ahead of his time. Among his technical drawings can be found flying machines such as the helicopter, vehicles such as the tank, and an underwater diving suit. In anatomy he studied the circulation of the blood and the action of the eye. He also made discoveries in meteorology and geology. He indeed embodied the term "universal man," which means a man who is very knowledgeable regarding a variety of subjects.



Leonardo da Vinci developed new techniques in painting which used gradations of color and contrasts of light and shadow to create more three-dimensional works.

Name _____ Date _____

MATCHING

Match the term in column B with its corresponding term in Column A. Place the letter of the term in Column B on the line next to the item in Column A.

Column A**Column B**

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Leonardo da Vinci | A. Made drawings of this ground vehicle |
| _____ 2. Sfumato | B. Impacted this field with his studies of blood circulation and the eye |
| _____ 3. Chiaroscuro | C. Showed his new approach to perspective |
| _____ 4. <i>Mona Lisa</i> | D. Good descriptive term for Leonardo |
| _____ 5. Landscape backgrounds | E. Subtle transitions between color areas |
| _____ 6. Architectural drawings | F. Leonardo's most famous painting |
| _____ 7. Helicopter | G. Great master of the High Renaissance |
| _____ 8. Tank | H. Defines forms through contrasts of light and shadow |
| _____ 9. Anatomy | I. A field of study impacted by Leonardo's investigations |
| _____ 10. Universal man | J. These were never turned into buildings. |
| _____ 11. <i>The Last Supper</i> | K. Made drawings of this flying machine |
| _____ 12. Hydraulics | L. Another of his famous paintings |

BAROQUE ART AND MUSIC

The Baroque period began in the late 1500s and ran to the middle of the 1700s. Perhaps the most easily understood characterization of the Baroque style of art is that it fills space with action and movement. Painters, sculptors, and architects were primarily interested in creating a complete illusion. They strove to convey a sense of dynamics, drama, and passion. Artists such as Bernini, Rubens, and Rembrandt best illustrated these characteristics of Baroque art.

The main composers of Baroque music were George Friederich Handel and Johann Sebastian Bach. However, there were others, such as Monteverdi, Purcell, and Vivaldi, who were extremely important in the development of the styles that we now think of as representative of the Baroque era.



Instrumental music gained equal importance with vocal music in the Baroque period.

Among the important developments in the field of music was the transition from using church modes, as represented in Gregorian chants, to a major-minor system, as represented in the major and minor scales that we have today. Also, the equal importance of instrumental music and vocal music was stressed, and polyphony returned to a high status. Composers of the Baroque period employed some important developments in their music. Some of these characteristics were a unity of mood (having the same mood or feeling throughout a piece of music), a continuity of rhythm (rhythmic patterns that are heard at the beginning of a piece are repeated throughout), the repeated use of a melody throughout a piece (which further provides continuity in the composition), the use of terraced dynamics (adding groups of instruments in order to achieve additional volume or taking instruments away in order to achieve a quieter volume), and as mentioned earlier, the use of polyphonic texture.

Also important in Baroque style was the attachment of words to the music so that the music was specifically used to depict the meaning of the words. This was known as *word painting*. An example would be ascending scales to represent the words "climbing the mountain." Descending scales could be used to depict a word such as "valley" or "hell."

The Baroque era may be viewed as a continuation of the developments that began during the Renaissance period. As with any of the historical periods, many composers and artists of the Baroque era sought to incorporate elements of the past into the forms and techniques of the present. Many others sought to turn in completely new and different directions.

Still important to the Baroque artists and musicians was the power and influence of religion. In the past it had been solely the Catholic church that had exercised its power. Now the Lutheran and Anglican churches also played important roles in the lives of the artists and composers of the Baroque era.

Name _____ Date _____

WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble these words and phrases that come from the narrative about the Baroque period.

1. DHANLE _____
2. SLCAES _____
3. RBUSEN _____
4. CYRIIMIHTTCHNYONUT _____
5. EIOXNTLPYTCHPORU _____
6. TWAPNRINIDGO _____
7. DOIUOYMFTNO _____
8. BTANREDRM _____
9. QUBORAE _____
10. HBAC _____
11. IDTCERDEANAMSYRC _____
12. VVIDLIA _____
13. LELCUPR _____
14. EIRBNIN _____
15. TVRENMEIDO _____
16. TNAOIC _____
17. IMRNO _____
18. EETVNOMM _____
19. JOMRA _____
20. SINLUOLI _____

WORD LIST

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Action | Bach | Baroque | Bernini |
| Handel | Illusion | Major | Minor |
| Monteverdi | Movement | Polyphonic Texture | Purcell |
| Rembrandt | Rhythmic Continuity | Rubens | Scales |
| Terraced Dynamics | Unity of Mood | Vivaldi | Word Painting |