

# #15 Late Medieval Painting

## International Gothic Style painting

### in ITALY (c. 1200 - 1400)

Text: Art Through the Ages Pages 521- 542

Text: Art Past / Art Present Pages 232 - 237

**CONTEXT:**

- Politics:** City States Italy is a collection of powerful city states ruled by oligarches or despots over a variety of political structures which were rife with internal conflicts and instability  
Papacy and Church at pinnacle of power – Pope in Rome a military power in southern Italy and a political force throughout Europe  
Florence – becomes (along with Rome) the banking capital of Europe - textile and wool trade also extremely important to Florence  
Constantinople is captured by Crusaders in 1204 which results in an influx of Byzantine artist into Italy – especially Siena – *Maniera greca* the term used for the "eastern" (Greek) style
- Religion** Cult of the Virgin expressed in many painting of the Madonna Enthroned (*Queen of Heaven*)  
St. Francis c. 1220 - a contemporary Jesus - establishes preaching order, made a saint (in 1228)
- History** The Black Death begins in 1348 and decimates the populations of Europe  
 Siena is especially decimated and the Black Death leads to it's downfall as a political power

**Works of Art - Painting:**

Berlinghieri	<u>Saint Francis Altarpiece</u>	Pescia, Italy	1235
Cimabue	<u>Madonna Enthroned with Angels and Prophets</u>	Florence	1280
Duccio	<u>Madonna Enthroned</u> ("Ruccellai" Madonna)		1285
	<u>Virgin and Child Enthroned, (Maesta Altarpiece)</u>	Siena	1310
	various <i>predella</i> panels from the <u>Maesta Altarpiece</u>		
Giotto	<u>Madonna Enthroned</u>	Florence	1310
	<u>Arena Chapel</u> (Padua) fresco cycle (and frescos at Assisi and Florence)		1310
Simone Martini	<u>Annunciation</u>	Florence	1333
Lorenzetti	<u>Allegory of Good and Bad Government</u>	Siena	1339
	<u>Birth of the Virgin</u>		
	various <u>Crucifix</u> of Cimabue, Giotto, Duccio and Lorenzetti		
<b>Sculpture:</b>	Nicola Pisano's <u>panels for baptistry pulpit</u> of Pisa Cathedral		1260
	Andrea Pisano's <u>Doors for the Baptistry of Florence Cathedral</u>		1336
	Maitani's <u>Relief sculptures from facade of Orvieto</u>		1330
<b>Architecture:</b>	Giovanni Pisano's <u>Facade of Siena Cathedral</u>		c.1300
	di Cambio's and Giotto's <u>Florence Cathedral and Campanile</u>		c. 1300
	<u>Orvieto Cathedral</u>		c. 1300

**Vocabulary:** diptych      triptych      polydiptych      predella panel  
 Humanism      Cult of the Virgin expressed in painting as "*Madonna Enthroned*"

**Painting:** Basic Definition "capturing illusionary form, space and light on a flat surface"

- 1: Illusionary Form:** 1: modeling      2: foreshortening      3: chiaroscuro      4: definition
- 2: Illusionary Space:** 1: light      2: diagonals      3: overlapping      4: intensity/value  
 5: detail      6: size      7: position on the picture plane

**Painting Media:**

Egg Tempera:

- |            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| gesso      | wood panel     |
| linen      | under painting |
| terra vert | bole           |
| gold leaf  | gilding        |
| punchwork  |                |

Fresco Technique:

- |          |              |
|----------|--------------|
| arriccio | giornata     |
| sinopia  | sinopie      |
| intonaco | egg white    |
| lime     | fresco secco |
| vehicle  | pigment      |

Two Schools of Late Medieval / Proto Renaissance Painting:

Florentine (Florence)	Sieneese (Siena)
<u>Influence:</u> Roman art ("Classical Art")	<u>Influence:</u> Byzantine art
<u>Characteristics:</u> naturalism sculptural form softer modeling in modeling of form in light & dark	<u>Characteristics:</u> decorative linear frontal presentations love of pattern
<u>Artists:</u> Cimabue Giotto	<u>Artists:</u> Duccio Simone Martini Lorenzetti Brothers
<u>Giotto's Madonna Enthroned</u>	<u>Duccio's Madonna Enthroned</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sculptural rendering of forms in space</li> <li>- modeling of form in highlight and shadow</li> <li>- increased sense of naturalism</li> <li>- recorded the world of visible things</li> <li>- sculptural solidity and weight of figures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- linear decorative quality</li> <li>- pattern and flat shapes</li> <li>- iconic, conceptual approach</li> <li>- symbolic representation</li> <li>- linear, insubstantial figures</li> </ul>

**Giotto:** Why Giotto (1266 - 1337) is considered by many to be the "father" of European painting:

- 1: The visible world is the source of knowledge of nature.
- 2: Stressed the preeminence of the faculty of sight in gaining knowledge of the world.
- 3: Outward vision replaces the inward vision that characterized earlier painting

**Characteristics of Giotto's Painting style:**

- constructs a limited but believable environment (space) for his figures
- abandons frontal, centralized compositions for dramatic compositions
- focuses on a single event of drama and emotion evoking a single, intense response
- emphasis on the foreground space using figures with their backs turned to viewer
- stresses the essentials of a dramatic scene, ignoring the extraneous and distracting

**Pictorial Strategies used by Giotto**

Illusionary Form:

- Modeling
- Limited foreshortening

Illusionary Space:

- Overlapping
- Use of diagonals
- Position on the picture plane
- Limited use of size relationships

"In nearly the same great scale as the Madonna painted by Cimabue, Giotto presents her in a work that offers an opportunity to appreciate his perhaps most telling contribution to representational art - sculptural solidity and weight. The Madonna, enthroned with angels, rest within her Gothic throne with the unshakable stability of a marble goddess out of antiquity. The slender Virgins of Duccio and Cimabue, fragile beneath the thin ripples of their draperies, are replaced by a sturdy, queenly mother, corporeally of this world, even to the swelling of the bosom. The body is not lost; it is asserted. The new art aims, before all else, to construct a figure that will have substance, dimensionality, and bulk. Works painted in the new style portray figures, like those in sculpture, which project into the light and throw a shadow or give the illusion that they do. In this work of Giotto, the throne is deep enough to contain the monumental figure and breaks away from the flat ground to project and enclose it." Gardner

**"International Gothic" Style Painting**

Beginning with Simone Martini and continuing into the 15<sup>th</sup> Century with Gentile de Fabriano

- emphasis on surface details, patterns and textures, especially rich fabrics
- brilliant color, richly contrasting hues in fabrics, foliage / fauna, landscape
- elegance in figures with an emphasis on contour (rather than emphasis on body structure, weight and mass) elongation of body proportions - due in part to chivalric etiquette
- expressive gestures, (sometimes) facial expressions of figures emotion depicted humanization of religious subject
- synoptic sequencing of events of a story (several different episodes or events told within the same painting)
- use of gold leaf in background areas and in details within painting, along with lavishly carved and gilt wood frames using Gothic elements such as tracery, pointed arches, and quatrefoils