Renaissance Art and Architecture, painting, sculpture, architecture, and allied arts produced in Europe in the historical period called the Renaissance. Broadly considered, the period covers the 200 years between 1400 and 1600, although specialists disagree on exact dates. The word renaissance literally means "rebirth" and is the French translation of the Italian rinascita. The two principal components of Renaissance style are the following: a revival of the classical forms originally developed by the ancient Greeks and Romans, and an intensified concern with secular life—interest in humanism and assertion of the importance of the individual. The Renaissance period in art history corresponds to the beginning of the great Western age of discovery and exploration, when a general desire developed to examine all aspects of nature and the world.

During the Renaissance, artists were no longer regarded as mere artisans, as they had been in the medieval past, but for the first time emerged as independent personalities, comparable to poets and writers. They sought new solutions to formal and visual problems, and many of them were also devoted to scientific experimentation. In this context, mathematical or linear perspective was developed, a system in which all objects in a painting or in low-relief sculpture are related both proportionally and rationally. As a result, the painted surface was regarded as a window on the natural world, and it became the task of painters to portray this world in their art. Consequently, painters began to devote themselves more rigorously to the rendition of landscape—the careful depiction of trees, flowers, plants, distant mountains, and cloud-filled skies. Artists studied the effect of light out-of-doors and how the eye perceives all the diverse elements in nature. They developed aerial perspective, in which objects become increasingly less distinct and less sharply colored as they recede from the eye of the viewer. Northern painters, especially those from Flanders and the Netherlands, were as advanced as the Italians in landscape painting and contributed to the innovations of their southern contemporaries by introducing oil paint as a new medium.

Although the portrait also developed as a specific genre in the mid-15th century, Renaissance painters achieved the greatest latitude with the history, or narrative, picture, in which figures located within a landscape or an architectural environment act out a specific story, taken either from classical mythology or Judeo-Christian tradition. Within such a context, the painter was able to show men, women, and children in a full range of postures and poses, as well as their diverse emotional reactions and states.

The Renaissance of the arts coincided with the development of humanism, in which scholars studied and translated philosophical texts. The use of classical Latin was revived and often favored at this time. The Renaissance was also a period of avid exploration; sea captains began to be more daring in seeking new routes to Asia, which resulted in the discovery and eventual colonization of North and South America. Painters, sculptors, and architects exhibited a similar sense of adventure and the desire for greater knowledge and new solutions; Leonardo da Vinci, like Christopher Columbus, discovered whole new worlds.
II THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY
That the Renaissance first developed in Italy is readily explained. The example of the ancient Greeks and Romans was constantly available to the Italians—their language, which was only codified about 1300, had evolved from the Latin of the Romans, and Italy also had on its soil a wealth of classical ruins and artifacts. Roman architectural forms were found in almost every town and city. Roman sculpture, particularly in the form of marble sarcophagi covered with reliefs, had been familiar for centuries.

A Early Renaissance Sculpture
Sculptors led the way in introducing the new Renaissance forms early in the 15th century. Three Florentines, who were originally trained as goldsmiths, made crucial innovations. The eldest was Filippo Brunelleschi, who developed linear perspective. He eventually became an architect, the first truly Renaissance builder, and in that capacity designed the enormous octagonal dome of Florence Cathedral, also called the Duomo, completed in 1436. The dome was considered one of the most impressive engineering and artistic feats since Roman times. Brunelleschi was responsible for the revival of the classical columnar system, which he studied in Rome. He introduced into all his public and private structures a new formal spatial integrity that was unique to the Renaissance.

Lorenzo Ghiberti is best known for the reliefs he made for two sets of gilded bronze doors, produced for the Florence Baptistery. His second pair of doors, illustrating Old Testament themes, was highly praised by Michelangelo, who termed them worthy of the Gates of Paradise, which they have been called since then.

Donato di Niccolò di Betto Bardi, known as Donatello, was one of the most influential artists of the Renaissance, not only because of the power of his figures but also because he traveled widely. A Florentine, Donatello also worked in Venice, Padua (Padova), Naples, and Rome and was thereby instrumental in carrying the new Florentine innovations to much of Italy. His principal works include the bronze David (1430?-1435, Bargello, Florence), an image of the biblical hero with the head of Goliath at his feet. The nearly life-size nude figure, conceived in the round, was the first such statue made since ancient times. Another major work is the marble Cantoria, or Singing Gallery (1443?-1448, Museo dell' Opera del Duomo, Florence), made for Florence Cathedral, with scores of frolicking nude children (putti), which became favorite subjects in Renaissance art. Donatello, who also worked in terra-cotta and wood, made use of Brunelleschi's perspective devices in his reliefs. His dignified and expressive freestanding statues, often representing saints, became a measure of excellence for the next hundred years.

B Early Renaissance Painting
The first painter to employ the new techniques was Masaccio. Despite a regrettably short career (he died at the age of 27), Masaccio had a dramatic effect on the course of art. He made use of both linear and aerial perspective in his frescoes (1427?) depicting episodes in the life of Saint Peter for the Brancacci Chapel in Florence's Church of Santa Maria del Carmine. In the most famous of these scenes, the Tribute Money, Masaccio invested the figures of Christ and the apostles with a new sense of dignity, monumentality, and refinement. The Brancacci Chapel became a training ground for later painters, including Michelangelo, who copied Masaccio's figures. In the Trinity fresco (1425?, Santa Maria
Renaissance Art and Architecture, painting, sculpture, architecture, and allied arts produced in Europe in the historical period called the Renaissance

Novella, Florence), Masaccio, by employing some of Brunelleschi's discoveries concerning linear perspective, created for the first time a convincing illusionistic space suggesting a chapel.

The direction taken by Masaccio was shared by his contemporaries, including Paolo Uccello, who was much taken with the pictorial potentialities of linear perspective. Among his finest works are three battle scenes (Uffizi, Florence; National Gallery, London; Louvre, Paris) made in the late 1440s for the Medici Palace in Florence, in which all the participants are shown sharply foreshortened. He also did the large fresco *Sir John Hawkwood* (1436, Florence Cathedral), painted to simulate a bronze equestrian monument, a type known from Roman examples and soon to be revived in freestanding sculpture by Donatello. Another master of the same period was Fra Angelico, a monk, whose refined style combined the rugged new Renaissance forms with delicacy of color and treatment. Angelico was particularly innovative in painting tree-filled landscapes. His works include a series of fresco decorations painted in the 1430s and 1440s for his fellow Dominicans at the Convent of San Marco in Florence.

Florence continued to maintain a commanding position in the flowering of Renaissance art in Italy, although other regions provided important masters throughout the entire period. Pisanello, who worked for various small ducal courts including that of the Gonzaga of Mantua and the Este of Ferrara, was from Verona; he had a highly refined style, more lyric and flowing than Masaccio's. Among his contributions are scores of bronze portrait medals that were greatly prized by his aristocratic patrons. Jacopo Bellini is usually regarded as the founder of Renaissance painting in Venice, which later became a powerful artistic rival of Florence. Although few of his works survive, many drawings are extant, unique in both number and complexity for the period. Jacopo was the father of two Renaissance masters, Gentile and Giovanni Bellini, and the father-in-law of another, Andrea Mantegna.

Another first-generation painter of the Renaissance was the Umbrian genius Piero della Francesca, an expert on perspective and mathematics, subjects on which he wrote extensively. Piero's style is best seen in his cycle the *Legend of the True Cross* (1453?-1454), in the choir of San Francesco in Arezzo. His measured, geometric style echoes the monumentality of Masaccio's art, but it is more abstract and distant. Late in his career, Piero began to combine tempera, the usual medium for panel pictures, with oil paint, which was adapted from the painters of the Low Countries.

The art of the early Renaissance is summed up in many ways by the work of Leon Battista Alberti. A humanist, a Latin scholar, and a prolific writer, Alberti was trained in north Italy because his family had been expelled from Florence. He had some direct experience with painting and sculpture and was an inventive architect. Among his influential designs was the facade (completed 1458) of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, in which Alberti developed a flattened temple-front system, which was later widely adopted. He also designed several churches in Mantua (Mantova), including Sant' Andrea (completed 1494). Of equal importance to his buildings were his theoretical works on painting, sculpture, and architecture. In these books Alberti synthesized all the innovations of his contemporaries and also included ancient practices. As a result of his writings, the new ideas were propagated throughout Italy and beyond. He dedicated his book on painting to Brunelleschi, as well as to Ghiberti, Donatello, Luca della Robbia, and Masaccio.
C The Second Generation of Renaissance Artists

In the subsequent generation, the innovations in aerial and linear perspective, the rendition of landscape, the powerful figural types, and the rigorous compositions were consolidated and further refined. In Florence, artists such as Antonio del Pollaiuolo and Andrea del Verrocchio explored the complexities of human anatomy, studying directly from life. Both were sculptors as well as painters, and their figures show a new concentration on musculature, as exemplified by Pollaiuolo's masterpiece, the *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* (1475, National Gallery, London). Pollaiuolo also made two important bronze papal tombs, the tomb (1484-1493) of Sixtus IV and the tomb (1493-1497) of Innocent VIII, which are both in the Grotte Vaticane, Saint Peter's Basilica, Rome. The concerns of Pollaiuolo and Verrocchio were later taken up by Leonardo da Vinci, Verrocchio's greatest pupil, whose scientific and artistic investigations were among the most important of the Renaissance. Leonardo was active in all the various arts as well as in a score of other fields.

In north Italy, the leading painters of the second generation were Andrea Mantegna from Padua and Giovanni Bellini from Venice. Mantegna, who was active in both Verona and Rome for a short time, spent most of his career working for the ruling Gonzaga family in Mantua. The fresco decoration of the Camera degli Sposi (1465-1474) in the Doge's Palace (Palazzo Ducale) is considered one of his masterpieces. He extended the boundaries of painting by opening out the walls and the ceiling in a unified fresco program to give the impression of a much larger space, where the real and the painted worlds become difficult to separate. His trompe l'oeil ("fool-the-eye") approach was continued by many mural painters during the following two centuries, especially in the vast illusionistic baroque ceilings for churches and palaces.

Mantegna's rather severe style, with its sinewy draftsmanship, rich modeling, and bold use of perspective, influenced the art of his brother-in-law, Giovanni Bellini, who worked almost exclusively in Venice. Bellini was also immensely influential, not only through the example of his magnificent pictures but also through his role as a teacher of many leading painters of the next generation, including Sebastiano del Piombo, Giorgione, and Titian. Bellini introduced bright, rich, strong colors into his palette, which became characteristic of subsequent Venetian painting. Vibrant Venetian color is often seen in contrast to the emphasis placed on drawing (*disegno*) in Florentine art. The *San Giobbe Altarpiece* (1488, Accademia, Venice) is one of Bellini's finest works. The strong color, softened edges, and silent actors encapsulated within a golden atmosphere are typical of his later style. He was also a consummate painter of landscapes, a genre that soon became a specialty of Venetian painters. Bellini began to use oil on canvas as his favored medium, preferring it to tempera on wood panel; oil on canvas was to become the common medium by the beginning of the 16th century.

Another leading painter of the second generation was Sandro Botticelli, a master favored frequently by the ruling Medici family in Florence. His art is lyric, flowing, and often decorative in appearance, whether on religious or pagan subjects. His two most famous works, both in the Uffizi Gallery, are the *Birth of Venus* (after 1482) and *Primavera or Spring* (1478?). The figural type in the *Venus* is based on an antique statue, but here she is shown standing on a shell emerging from the pale blue sea from which she was born. Botticelli made powerful use of heavy outlines in establishing this elegant image;
modeling with light to dark tonalities (chiaroscuro) is kept to a minimum.

**D Artists of the High Renaissance**

The artists of the following generation were responsible for taking art to a level of noble expression. This period, usually referred to as the High Renaissance, was initiated by Leonardo da Vinci, who, when he returned to Florence from Milan in 1500, found the milieu ready for his pictorial inventions. There he found the young Michelangelo, who was about to begin the famous gigantic statue *David* (1501-1504, Accademia). This bold image soon became not only the symbol of the city of Florence, but of High Renaissance art as well, and a standard against which other works were measured. David as a subject has all the potentiality for vigorous, forceful action, but Michelangelo chose to show instead his self-control the moment before the encounter with Goliath, much as Leonardo had done with the figures of the apostles in the *Last Supper* (1495-1497, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan) by choosing to depict the moment just after Christ has said that one of them will betray him. During the High Renaissance, artists tended to reduce their subjects to the bare essentials; few extraneous details or anecdotal features were permitted, ensuring that the viewer's attention would be focused on the essence of the theme.

The center of the High Renaissance began to shift to Rome and the court of Pope Julius II, who hired the leading Italian artists and architects to work on his ambitious projects. Donato Bramante was the outstanding architect of the period. An Umbrian, he started out as a painter working in the style of Piero della Francesca. After a long stay in Milan, during which time Leonardo was also there, Bramante settled in Rome. There he produced such works as the Tempietto (1502), a miniaturized classical *tholos* (round) temple set in the courtyard of San Pietro in Montorio; a series of private palaces including the so-called House of Raphael (destroyed in the 17th century); and, most notable of all, the design (1506?) for the new Saint Peter's Basilica. For the main church of Roman Catholic Christendom, Bramante envisioned a centrally planned, domed, Greek-cross (equal-armed) structure. Michelangelo eventually took charge of the construction of the church, making changes that suited his own architectural aims but remaining close in spirit to Bramante's original design. Bramante also had a strong influence on later Renaissance architects, including the Sienese Baldassare Peruzzi, who built the Farnesina (1509-1511), the finest private villa of the early 16th century, for the Chigi family in Rome.

**Raphael**, who was born in Umbria, was among those painters attracted to Rome. A pupil of Perugino, Raphael studied in Florence at a time when Leonardo and Michelangelo were there, helping to form the artistic language of the High Renaissance. Raphael went to Rome in 1508 and remained there until his death in 1520. He became the city's leading painter and formed an active shop with many assistants. In addition to a series of distinguished portraits of Pope Julius II and other notables, as well as smaller altarpieces, Raphael's works include fresco decorations (1508-1517) for the Stanze, a suite of four rooms in the Vatican Palace. The most important are those in the Stanza della Segnatura, which contains the *Disputà*, an elaborate explication of the sacrament of the Eucharist. Churchmen discuss the doctrine in the lower zone; above them, Christ and a heavenly company are shown in a sweeping semicircle.

On the other side of the room is the *School of Athens*, representing classical philosophy as the *Disputà* stands for Christian theology. Here the stress is horizontal, and earth rather than heaven is depicted. The vanishing point of the perspective is behind the central figures of Plato and Aristotle, and they are
Renaissance Art and Architecture, painting, sculpture, architecture, and allied arts produced in Europe in the historical period called the Renaissance surrounded by the noblest thinkers of the classical past. Many of these figures are actually portraits of artists contemporary to Raphael. Rarely has narrative painting reached such clarity and perfection as in the School of Athens. Michelangelo's immense frescoes in the Sistine Chapel were done at the same time and may have given the younger Raphael some ideas.

Having been set on its course by Giovanni Bellini, painting in Venice flourished. Giorgione, whose original name was probably Giorgio Barbarelli, set into motion a poetic school of painting, despite his short lifetime. His art is characterized by softened contours, strong colors, and often enigmatic, always personalized subjects. His most famous picture, the Tempest (1505?; Accademia), depicts an idyllic landscape in which a menacing storm hovers over the figures of a handsome young man seemingly standing guard over a woman nursing her child.

A pupil of Bellini and an early follower of Giorgione, Tiziano Vercellio, better known as Titian, was the most gifted High Renaissance painter in Venice and as such was a worthy rival of Raphael and Michelangelo. Among his most admired early works is Sacred and Profane Love (1515?, Galleria Borghese, Rome), an allegorical picture in which two women, one nude (Sacred Love) and the other fully clothed (Profane Love), are seated opposite each other in a serene manner reminiscent of Giorgione's mysterious world. The Assumption of the Virgin (1516-1518), a huge oil painting for the main altar of Santa Maria dei Frari in Venice, is one of Titian's masterpieces. The figure of the Virgin is depicted soaring above the apostles and moving toward God the Father, shown in the curved top of the painting. Warm tones, such as vivid reds and golden yellows, dominate. Titian also excelled in treating classical subjects, as exemplified by Bacchus and Ariadne (1520-1523, National Gallery, London) and Worship of Venus (1518-1519, Prado, Madrid), both executed for the duke of Ferrara.

In his long career, Titian produced many important works for his patron, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who made the painter a member of the nobility. Among these pictures were several portraits of the Habsburg monarch, including one of the emperor on horseback, Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg (1548, Prado). This equestrian image became the prototype for state portraits during the next two centuries. Titian continued to paint even in extreme old age, and his characteristic free brushwork, vivid color, monumental figure types, and idealized landscapes continued to mark his art. This is most evident in Crowning with Thorns (1570?, Alte Pinakotheck, Munich), in which the forms seem dissolved by a maze of pure light, color, and pigment.

Antonio Allegri, called Correggio after his native Emilian town, was another influential High Renaissance painter of great power. Correggio spent most of his life working in Parma, where he settled in 1518. He made enormous fresco cycles for the cathedral of Parma and for the church of San Giovanni Evangelista. With its references to Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian, Correggio's art reveals that he knew of the monumental style being practiced in Rome and Venice. The influence of Leonardo can also be seen, but Correggio created his own unique style. His paintings are characterized by great skill in foreshortening; Mannerist rejection of classical balance that anticipated the art of the late Renaissance; silvery, sensuous colors; and a tendency to portray spiritual and physical ecstasy. As with most of the other artists of the period, Correggio's production was divided among classical paintings, portraits, and religious frescoes and altarpieces for churches. In Parma's Convent of San Paolo he frescoed a room
with scenes depicting the goddess Diana surrounded by allegorical references of great complexity. In his work Correggio proves himself a master among equals in High Renaissance painting.

**E Mannerism—Late Renaissance Art**

While Michelangelo, Titian, and Raphael were working in a robust figurative style, other contemporaries moved in a more lyric and decorative direction, one removed from classical antiquity and decidedly more unexpected and unpredictable. The work of these masters shows the beginning of a new style, called Mannerism, heralding a shift away from the High Renaissance.

Jacopo Carrucci, called Pontormo, was a particularly gifted painter who grew up in Florence under the influence of Michelangelo. His elegant style, based on careful drawing, pale unnaturalistic colors, and elongated forms, harks back to that of Botticelli. Both artists deemphasized three-dimensional form in favor of a flatter, more decorative surface activity. One of Pontormo's finest works is the *Deposition* (1526), in the Church of Santa Felicità in Florence, in which the tightly compressed figures are difficult to read anatomically. The forms are underscored by Pontormo's palette, consisting of fragile yet electrifying hues. In its refinement and delicacy, Pontormo's style is different from Michelangelo's, whose art, nevertheless, influenced him. Pontormo's extreme sensitivity bordered on the eccentric, and in his personal life he was aloof and antisocial.

Another Florentine, Rosso Fiorentino, worked in a similar manner, but, unlike Pontormo, he traveled extensively, ending his career in France under the patronage of Francis I. Rosso, consequently, was particularly influential in spreading early Florentine Mannerism, especially at the royal Palace of Fontainebleau. The *Deposition* (1521, Pinacoteca, Volterra), one of his most successful pictures, is a more open and less compressed figural composition than Pontormo's, but, at the same time, is more intricate and even less immediately readable. By the 1520s, in reaction to High Renaissance clarity and monumental classicism, artists had become consciously anticlassical. Some turned to northern European art as an antidote, particularly looking to readily accessible prints for alternate solutions. The calligraphic qualities of Rosso's art were derived, in part, from German engravings, by that time highly prized in Italy.

In the next generation, younger artists began to reject the seemingly unsurpassable models left by Michelangelo, Raphael, and Titian in order to seek different avenues of artistic expression. The deeply individualized qualities found in both Rosso and Pontormo became popular. In the period from about 1530—following the sack of Rome in 1527—until the end of the 16th century, Italian art developed in a less coherent fashion. During this Mannerist, or late Renaissance, period a number of distinguished masters emerged in all the arts.

Among the architects, Andrea Palladio was the most influential. Trained as a stone carver in his native city of Vicenza, he became an architect only in midlife. His most extraordinary works are a series of country villas in the area around Venice called the Veneto. Particularly significant is the Villa Rotonda, or Villa Capra (1550-1551), near Vicenza. Built on a slight rise, the domed building has identical facades on all four sides, complete with imposing flights of steps and a six-column temple-front porch.
More than any other of his buildings, the Villa Rotonda was the inspiration for Palladianism, the English architectural movement that dominated building design in the 18th century in England and its colonies. Palladio's plan for the Church of II Redentore (begun 1577) in Venice involved using two sets of superimposed orders (columns and pilasters) on the facade, a treatment that became important in the 17th century.

The architect Jacopo Sansovino was active in Venice a few decades before Palladio. He was trained in sculpture in Florence, and his best-known work in that medium is the marble Bacchus (1514?, Bargello). Sansovino's Libreria Vecchia (Old Library, 1536-1588) in the Piazzetta San Marco in Venice is the most admired Renaissance building of its kind. An analogous structure in Florence, the Uffizi (1560-1580), was designed by Giorgio Vasari to house the Medici family's administrative offices; it is now a museum. Vasari wrote the first systematic biography of the Italian artists, Lives of the Artists (1550, enlarged 1568, translated 1912-1914, 10 volumes). As a painter, he combined traits borrowed from both Michelangelo and Raphael. Vasari was in charge of the fresco decoration of the gigantic dome of Florence Cathedral and of the refurbishing of the Palazzo Vecchio interiors.

Benvenuto Cellini was one of the leading sculptors and goldsmiths of the late Renaissance. Cellini's adventurous life is well known from his remarkable autobiography, written between 1538 and 1562, the standard English edition of which was published in 1960. Like Rosso, he also went to work at the Palace of Fontainebleau. Cellini's most successful work is his heroic bronze statue Perseus and Medusa (1545-1554, Loggia dei Lanzi, Florence). The nude, muscular hero holds the bloody severed head of Medusa high in the air as he looks over the Piazza della Signoria, the main square of Florence. The work of Giambologna—called Jean Boulogne in France—a Flemish sculptor and architect who settled in Italy, is characteristically Mannerist. The Rape of the Sabine Woman (1583), which stands close by Cellini's Perseus in the Loggia dei Lanzi, is composed of three intertwined nude figures spiraling up vertically. This sculpture, which Giambologna carved from a single block of marble, deliberately avoids frontality and manages to achieve its effect of violent movement when viewed from any side.

One of Pontormo's followers, the painter Agnolo Bronzino, was Mannerism's most exquisite portraitist, highly regarded by the Medici. He painted in a meticulous manner, with tight modeling that denies nature in favor of high artifice. In his melancholic Eleonora of Toledo and Her Son Giovanni (1545?, Uffizi), the painting of the magnificent dress of Cosimo de' Medici's wife visually overwhelms the figures.

The greatest Mannerist painter in Venice was Jacopo Robusti, called Tintoretto, who sought to combine the rich color of Titian with the powerful line of Michelangelo. He displayed a formidable virtuosity in handling oil paint and executed his numerous and often monumentally large commissions rapidly. Tintoretto was devoted to optical effects, dramatic foreshortenings, unusual compositions, and virtuosic renderings of light, all splendidly demonstrated in his 56 huge paintings (1564-1587) for the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice.

III THE RENAISSANCE IN NORTHERN EUROPE  In northern Europe, features typical of late
Gothic culture (see Gothic Art and Architecture) were contemporary with the discoveries and the changing outlook toward humans and their world that were characteristic of Italy. If the northern countries, such as Germany, the Lowlands, and England, were slow to accept the new Renaissance manner, they were slower still in allowing it to be superseded.

The earliest works of the 15th century were on a much smaller scale than those produced in Italy. At the same time, the miniature paintings in the \textit{Très riches heures du Duc de Berry} (1416?, Musée Condé, Chantilly), by the Limbourg brothers, reveal a degree of realism and attention to naturalistic detail that was then unknown in Italy. Furthermore, the attention to landscape detail was extremely precocious, as revealed in the depiction of the months of the year.

\textbf{A Renaissance Art of the Low Countries}

The Flemish painter Jan van Eyck, however, was the founder of Renaissance painting in Flanders and the Netherlands. His style developed from both the realism of the Limbourg brothers and the innovations in the use of light of another earlier painter, Robert Campin, until recently known as the Master of Flémalle. These elements, combined with a superior skill and intelligence, made Jan a worthy counterpart to Masaccio in Italy. The \textit{Ghent Altarpiece} (completed 1432, Saint Bavon, Ghent), one of the most famous works of the Renaissance, is a large polyptych consisting of two hinged panels, painted on both sides, that open to reveal a two-tiered central panel. Apparently it was produced, in part, with the help of Jan's brother, Hubert van Eyck. The central section of the lower tier contains the \textit{Adoration of the Lamb}, with scores of figures set in a clearly articulated landscape representing paradise. Above this is the enthroned God the Father, crowned with a papal triple tiara and flanked by the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist. Van Eyck reveals himself here to be an acute observer of the visual world. Almost intuitively he devised a linear perspective system and used minimal aerial perspective in some of his landscape backgrounds. Jan was also aware of the attraction of pure still-life elements, but he integrated every apparently casual detail into the complex iconography of his works. What makes his art and that of most 15th-century northern masters different from the art of their Italian contemporaries is the complete absence of references to classical antiquity.

By the middle of the 15th century Jan had been singled out by an Italian observer as the foremost painter of the age. Jan's \textit{Giovanni Arnolfini and His Wife} (1434, National Gallery, London) is a wedding document for an Italian banker. On the back wall, behind the couple, is a convex mirror revealing a reflection of the room with the artist himself represented. Above it, Jan boldly signed and dated the painting. This extraordinary painter also produced a small group of portraits with an insistent, unidealized realism.

Rogier van der Weyden was a painter from Tournai in Flanders, who, unlike Jan van Eyck, seems to have made a trip to Italy in 1450. His works were admired there and may have influenced the Ferrarese school. Rogier's most important painting is the \textit{Deposition} (1439-1443, Prado), painted for a Flemish guild in Leuven. The agony of the participants, shown in their facial expressions and the contortions of their bodies, is unknown in Italian art of the time. Rogier also reduced the corporeality of his figures, placing them close to the picture plane. Like Jan van Eyck, Rogier was skilled in the art of portraiture, but he instilled an added emotional dimension in his likenesses.
In the following generation, Flemish painters produced many paintings that reflected the influence of either Jan van Eyck or Rogier van der Weyden or, more frequently, a combination of the two. Among the best of these painters was Dirk Bouts, one of the first northern artists to use true perspective. Hugo van der Goes injected a personal, emotional quality into his religious paintings, which combined aspects of both Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden. His most renowned work is the Portinari Altarpiece (1476?, Uffizi), made for a Florentine patron, which finally reached Italy about 1480. On arrival, the large painting caused a sensation among local artists, who must have been astonished by the extreme realism of the newborn infant lying on the ground, as well as by the magnificent still-life objects. Van der Goes went mad in midlife, which may account for the intensity of expression in certain of his works. His contemporary Hans Memling, although born in Germany, seems to have been trained in the Netherlands and Flanders, where he spent most of his life. Not a particularly innovative painter, Memling was content to follow the accomplishments of his predecessors, but he executed his work with consummate skill.

A far more original artist was Hieronymus Bosch, who was also less dependent on traditional Flemish solutions. Almost all his pictures are wildly unconventional. The Garden of Earthly Delights (1510-1515?, Prado), an elaborate fantasy of sin and redemption, shows an imaginary, surreal world where the past, present, and future unfold in nightmarish images. Such extreme originality led to the art of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, well on in the 16th century. Bruegel's series of engravings The Seven Deadly Vices (1557) demonstrates the powerful influence of Bosch in its phantasmagorical imagery. At a time when many of his contemporaries were imitating Italian solutions, Bruegel continued an allegiance to the earlier style of Netherlandish and Flemish painters in his own paintings and engravings, which often are illustrations for folk proverbs, frequently with satirical humor.

The Dutch and Flemish Mannerists, including Bernard van Orley, Lucas van Leyden, and Jan van Scorel, were all acquainted with the works of Michelangelo and Raphael, either through prints or by directly observing originals. Furthermore, the contributions of Albrecht Dürer, the German master, served as a strong link between the Italian and the older Netherlandish styles.

If the painters of the Lowlands had a distinguished history during the Renaissance, sculptors were much less innovative, retaining a closer connection to the Gothic past. Architectural forms seemed to be virtually unaffected by the Renaissance.

**B The Renaissance in France** The French were slow to accept the innovations that had taken place in the arts in Italy. During the early 16th century an adoption of Renaissance forms came about, through the hiring of many Italian artists to work at the court of King Francis I. Leonardo da Vinci was brought to France in 1516 by Francis, but the great genius was old, and he died there before he could produce any works of significance. The work at the Palace of Fontainebleau became the focal point of French Renaissance art.

**C Renaissance Art in Germany**
Painting in Germany had an illustrious tradition during the Renaissance, thanks to several dominating artistic personalities. German art retained close connections with its Gothic past, but many artists were able to fuse their medieval heritage to the newer developments. Conrad Witz was among the first. Part of a large altarpiece, the Miraculous Draught of Fishes, also known as Christ Walking on the Waters (1444, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva), is a vivid landscape with specific references to such elements of the Swiss countryside as the Alps, and it exhibits Witz's awareness of recent Flemish painting. Germany, however, was slow to accept Italian solutions. German artists did take the lead in the development of the art of printmaking, as well as book publishing, both of which flourished throughout this period.

A consummate painter and graphic master, Albrecht Dürer almost single-handedly brought Germany into the mainstream of Renaissance art. A child prodigy, Dürer was first trained as a goldsmith, but he soon set himself up as a painter and an engraver in his native Nürnberg. His magnificent graphic series, the three versions of the Passion and the Life of the Virgin, spread his style throughout Europe. He was much taken with perspective and understood the science in all its complexity. Dürer was understandably drawn to Italy, which he visited twice, once in 1494 and again from 1505 to 1507. He was closely associated with humanists and philosophers and made prints on allegorical and classical subjects as well as on religious themes. Dürer traveled a good deal during his lifetime; on a memorable trip to Flanders and the Netherlands from 1520 to 1521, he kept an illustrated diary, still preserved. Like many of his Italian contemporaries, Dürer had a theoretical strain of mind and wrote Four Books on Human Proportions (published posthumously 1528). He used the Italian interpretation of antique figural types, rather than studying them directly from ancient sources, in order to achieve his own full, fleshy figures, which are, however, always slightly jagged and harsh. No artist of the time had a more fertile imagination, as is demonstrated by such engravings as Knight, Death, and the Devil (1513) and Melencolia I (1514). The greatest humanist of northern Europe, Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (whose image Dürer engraved), gave Dürer the highest praise by calling him the "Apelles of black lines," in reference to the famous Greek painter of the 4th century BC.

Dürer's paintings are often crowded with images, rich in detail, and strongly colored; an example is the Adoration of the Trinity (1508-1511, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). His self-portraits figure prominently in this oeuvre. Among his late pictures, the Four Apostles (1526?, Alte Pinakothek), painted on twin panels, has the simplified grandeur of the Italians, combined with an intensity of expression that typifies art north of the Alps.

Whereas Dürer was a devoted modernist, committed to the new forms and ideas he found in Italy, his contemporary Matthias Gothart-Niethart, called Grünewald, continued in a more medieval current. In this context, Grünewald produced one of the most astonishing works of the entire period, the Isenheim Altarpiece (1512?-1515, Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar, France), an enormous polyptych with two layers of painted panels that fold back to reveal an elaborate carved central shrine. The main scene of the outer panels, the Crucifixion, is unforgettable grim, with a dead, horribly contorted Christ observed by the mourning Virgin Mary, Saint John the Evangelist, Saint John the Baptist as witness, and Mary Magdalene, all racked with grief and set in a barren, desolate landscape. In his haunting, highly original art, Grünewald seems to have achieved a form of Mannerism without ever having been exposed to the
Italian High Renaissance.

**IV THE RENAISSANCE IN SPAIN** In Spain, painters during the Renaissance never fully achieved the modernity found in northern Europe and Italy, although their art was almost totally dependent on these two traditions. The Spanish always imported painters and sculptors for most of their important decorative work. Even in the 16th century, Titian was the leading painter of the Spanish court, although he was not actually present there. In architecture, a fully Renaissance structure was not built until late in the century. Near Madrid, the architects of Philip II built El Escorial, combining a monastery, a seminary, a palace, and a church. Although indebted to Italian High Renaissance style, the austere majesty and complete lack of ornamentation of this structure mark a new style in Spanish architecture.