



**22-1** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Vatican City, Rome, Italy, 1508–1512. Fresco, 128' × 45'.

Michelangelo, the Renaissance genius who was also a sculptor and architect, labored almost four years in the Sistine Chapel painting more than 300 biblical figures illustrating the creation and fall of humankind.

## ITALY, 1500 TO 1600

The 15th-century artistic developments in Italy (for example, the interest in perspective, anatomy, and classical cultures) matured during the early 16th century in the brief era that art historians call the High Renaissance—the period between 1495 and the deaths of Leonardo da Vinci in 1519 and Raphael in 1520. The Renaissance style, however, dominated the remainder of the 16th century (the Late Renaissance), although a new style, called Mannerism, challenged it almost as soon as Raphael had been laid to rest (in the ancient Roman Pantheon, FIG. 10-51). Thus, no singular artistic style characterizes 16th-century Italy. Nonetheless, Italian art of this period uniformly exhibits an astounding mastery, both technical and aesthetic.

### HIGH AND LATE RENAISSANCE

The High Renaissance produced a cluster of extraordinary geniuses and found in divine inspiration the rationale for the exaltation of the artist-genius. The Neo-Platonists read in Plato's *Ion* his famous praise of the poet: "All good poets . . . compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. . . . For not by art does the poet sing, but by power divine."<sup>1</sup> And what the poet could claim, the Renaissance claimed also, raising visual art to the status formerly held only by poetry. Thus, painters, sculptors, and architects came into their own, successfully advocating for their work a high place among the fine arts. During the High Renaissance, the masters in essence created a new profession, one having its own rights of expression, its own venerable character, and its own claims to recognition by the great. The "fine" artist today lives, often without realizing it, on the accumulated prestige won by preceding artists, beginning with those who made the first great gains of the High Renaissance.

As in many other artistic eras, regional differences abounded in the 16th century, not only between Northern Europe (discussed in Chapter 23) and Italy but within Italy itself. The leading artistic centers of Central Italy were Florence and Rome, where three of the greatest artists who ever lived—Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo—created works whose appeal has endured for 500 years.

## Leonardo da Vinci

Born in the small town of Vinci, near Florence, LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452–1519) trained in the studio of Andrea del Verrocchio (FIG. 21-13). The quintessential “Renaissance man,” Leonardo had prodigious talent and an unbridled imagination. Art was but one of his innumerable interests. The scope and depth of these interests were without precedent—so great as to frustrate any hopes Leonardo might have had of realizing all that his extraordinarily inventive mind could conceive. Still, he succeeded in mapping the routes that both art and science were to take for generations. Although the discussion here focuses on Leonardo as an artist, exploring his art in conjunction with his other pursuits considerably enhances an understanding of his artistic production. Leonardo revealed his unquenchable curiosity in his voluminous notes, liberally interspersed with sketches dealing with botany, geology, geography, cartography, zoology, military engineering, animal lore, anatomy, and aspects of physical science, including hydraulics and mechanics. These studies informed his art. In his notes, he stated repeatedly that all his scientific investigations made him a better painter. For example, Leonardo’s in-depth exploration of optics gave him an understanding of perspective, light, and color. His scientific drawings (FIG. 22-6) are themselves artworks.

Leonardo’s great ambition in his painting, as well as in his scientific endeavors, was to discover the laws underlying the processes and flux of nature. With this end in mind, he also studied the human body and contributed immeasurably to the fields of physiology and psychology. Leonardo believed that reality in an absolute sense was inaccessible and that humans could know it only through its changing images. He considered the eyes the most vital organs and sight the most essential function. Better to be deaf than blind, he argued, because through the eyes individuals could grasp reality most directly and profoundly.

Around 1481, Leonardo left Florence after offering his services to Ludovico Sforza (1451–1508), the son and heir apparent of the ruler of Milan. The political situation in Florence was uncertain, and Leonardo may have felt that his particular skills would be in greater demand in Milan, providing him with the opportunity for increased financial security. He devoted most of a letter to Ludovico to advertising his competence and his qualifications as a military engineer, mentioning only at the end his abilities as a painter and sculptor. The letter illustrates the relationship between Renaissance artists and their patrons, as well as Leonardo’s breadth of competence. That he should select expertise in military engineering as his primary attraction to the Sforzas is an index of the period’s instability.

And in short, according to the variety of cases, I can contrive various and endless means of offence and defence. . . . In time of peace I believe I can give perfect satisfaction and to the equal of any other in architecture and the composition of buildings, public and private; and in guiding water from one place to another. . . . I can carry out sculpture in marble, bronze, or clay, and also I can do in painting whatever may be done, as well as any other, be he whom he may.<sup>2</sup>

Ludovico accepted Leonardo’s offer, and the Florentine artist remained in Milan for almost 20 years.

**MADONNA OF THE ROCKS** Shortly after settling in Milan, Leonardo painted *Madonna of the Rocks* (FIG. 22-2) as the central panel of an altarpiece for the chapel of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception in San Francesco Grande. The painting builds on Masaccio’s understanding and usage of chiaroscuro, the subtle play of light and dark. Modeling with light and shadow and expressing emotional states were, for Leonardo, the heart of painting:



**22-2** LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Madonna of the Rocks*, from San Francesco Grande, Milan, Italy, begun 1483. Oil on wood (transferred to canvas), 6' 6½" × 4'. Louvre, Paris.

In this groundbreaking work, Leonardo used gestures and a pyramidal composition to unite the Virgin, Saint John the Baptist, the Christ Child, and an angel. The figures share the same light-infused environment.

A good painter has two chief objects to paint—man and the intention of his soul. The former is easy, the latter hard, for it must be expressed by gestures and the movement of the limbs. . . . A painting will only be wonderful for the beholder by making that which is not so appear raised and detached from the wall.<sup>3</sup>

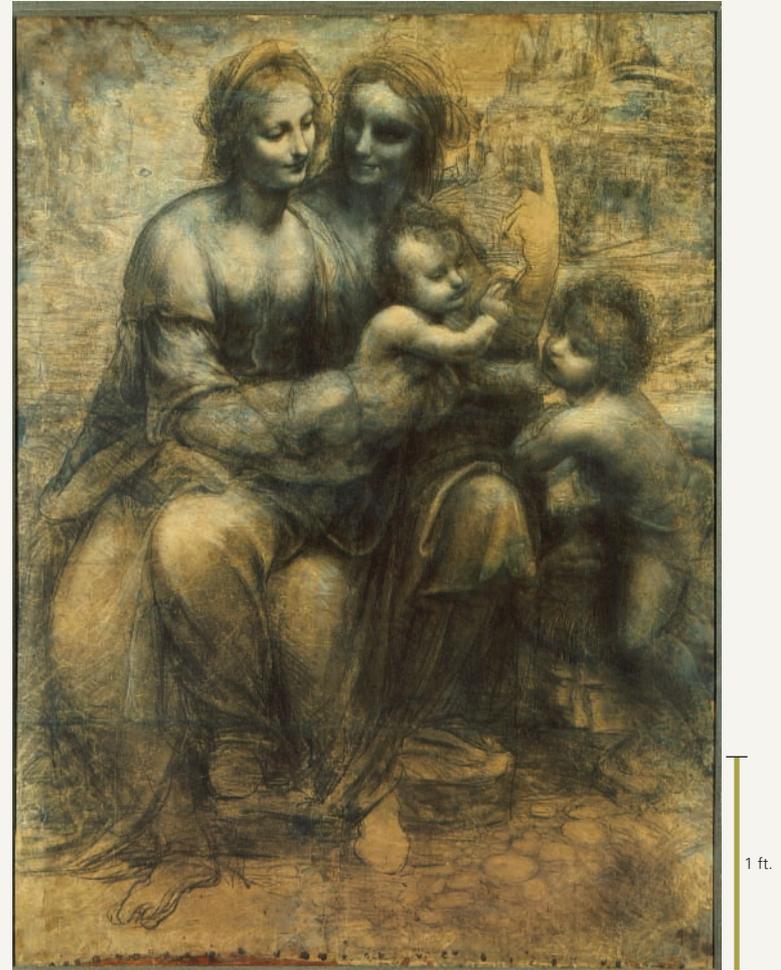
Leonardo presented the figures in *Madonna of the Rocks* in a pyramidal grouping and, more notably, as sharing the same environment. This groundbreaking achievement—the unified representation of objects in an atmospheric setting—was a manifestation of his scientific curiosity about the invisible substance surrounding things. The Madonna, Christ Child, infant John the Baptist, and angel emerge through nuances of light and shade from the half-light of the cavernous visionary landscape. Light simultaneously veils and reveals the forms, immersing them in a layer of atmosphere. Leonardo’s

## Renaissance Drawings

In the 16th century in Italy, drawing (or *disegno*) assumed a position of greater prominence than ever before in artistic production. Until the late 15th century, the expense of drawing surfaces and their lack of availability limited the production of preparatory sketches. Most artists drew on *parchment* (prepared from the skins of calves, sheep, and goats) or on *vellum* (made from the skins of young animals and therefore very expensive). Because of the cost of these materials, drawings in the 14th and 15th centuries tended to be extremely detailed and meticulously executed. Artists often drew using *silver-point* (a *stylus* made of silver) because of the fine line it produced and the sharp point it maintained. The introduction in the late 15th century of less expensive paper made of fibrous pulp produced for the developing printing industry (see “Woodcuts, Engravings, and Etchings,” Chapter 20, page 537) allowed artists to experiment more and to draw with greater freedom. As a result, sketches abounded. Artists executed these drawings in pen and ink (FIG. 22-6), chalk, charcoal (FIG. 22-3), brush, and graphite or lead.

The importance of drawing transcended the mechanical or technical possibilities it afforded artists, however. The term *disegno* referred also to design, an integral component of good art. Design was the foundation of art, and drawing was the fundamental element of design. The painter Federico Zuccaro (1542–1609) summed up this philosophy when he stated that drawing is the external physical manifestation (*disegno esterno*) of an internal intellectual idea or design (*disegno interno*).

The design dimension of art production became increasingly important as artists cultivated their own styles. The early stages of artistic training largely focused on imitation and emulation (see “Cennino Cennini on Imitation and Emulation,” Chapter 21, page 553), but to achieve widespread recognition, artists had to develop their own styles. Although the artistic community and public at large acknowledged technical skill, the conceptualization of the artwork—its theoretical and formal development—was paramount. *Disegno*—or design in this case—represented an artist’s conception and intention. In the literature of the period, the terms writers and critics often invoked to praise esteemed artists included *invenzione* (invention), *ingegno* (innate talent), *fantasia* (imagination), and *capriccio* (originality).



**22-3** LEONARDO DA VINCI, cartoon for *Madonna and Child with Saint Anne and the Infant Saint John*, ca. 1505–1507. Charcoal heightened with white on brown paper, 4' 6" × 3' 3". National Gallery, London.

The introduction of less expensive paper in the late 15th century allowed artists to draw more frequently. In this cartoon, Leonardo depicted monumental figures in a scene of tranquil grandeur and balance.

effective use of atmospheric perspective is the result in large part of his mastery of the relatively new medium of oil painting, which had previously been used mostly by Northern European painters (see “Tempera and Oil Painting,” Chapter 20, page 523). The figures pray, point, and bless, and these acts and gestures, although their meanings are not certain, visually unite the individuals portrayed. The angel points to the infant John and, through his outward glance, involves the viewer in the tableau. John prays to the Christ Child, who blesses him in return. The Virgin herself completes the series of interlocking gestures, her left hand reaching toward the Christ Child and her right hand resting protectively on John’s shoulder. The melting mood of tenderness, which the caressing light enhances, suffuses the entire composition. By creating an emotionally compelling, visually unified, and spatially convincing image, Leonardo succeeded in expressing “the intention of his soul.”

**MADONNA AND CHILD CARTOON** Leonardo’s style fully emerges in *Madonna and Child with Saint Anne and the Infant Saint John* (FIG. 22-3), a preliminary drawing for a painting (see “Renaissance Drawings,” above) he made in 1505 or shortly thereafter. Here, the glowing light falls gently on the majestic forms in a scene of tranquil grandeur and balance. Leonardo ordered every part of his cartoon with an intellectual pictorial logic that results in an appealing visual unity. The figures are robust and monumental, the stately grace of their movements reminiscent of the Greek statues of goddesses (FIG. 5-49) in the pediments of the Parthenon. Leonardo’s infusion of the principles of classical art into his designs, however, cannot be attributed to specific knowledge of Greek monuments. He and his contemporaries never visited Greece. Their acquaintance with classical art extended only to Etruscan and Roman monuments and Roman copies of Greek statues in Italy.



**22-4** LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Last Supper*, ca. 1495–1498. Oil and tempera on plaster, 13' 9" × 29' 10". Refectory, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan.

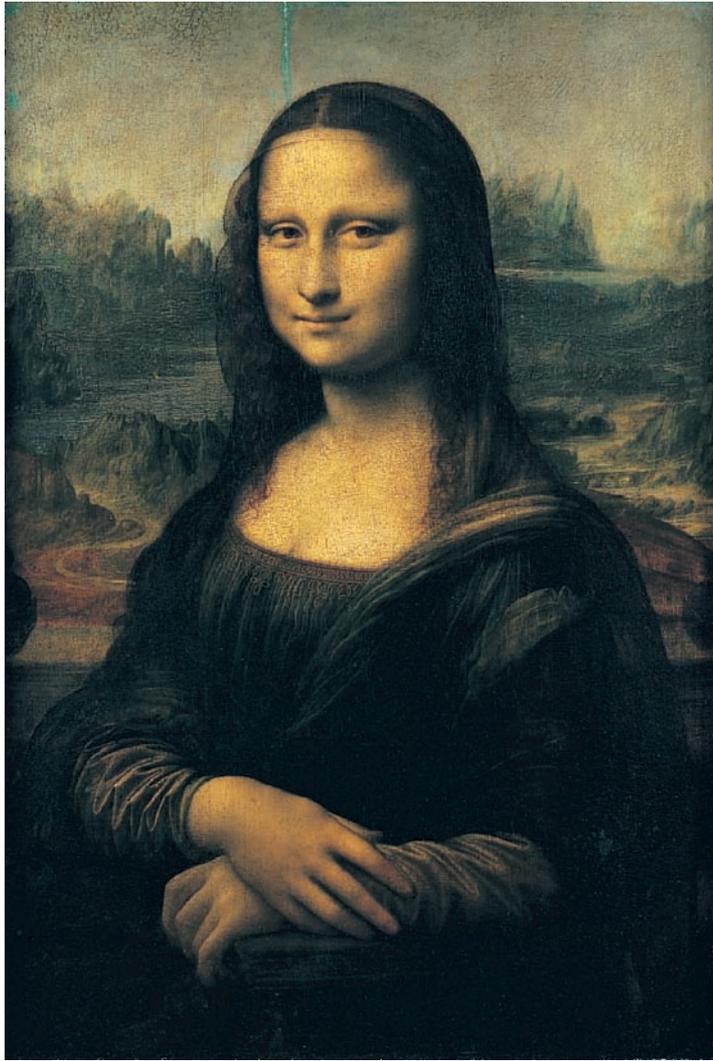
Christ has just announced that one of his disciples will betray him, and each one reacts. Christ is both the psychological focus of Leonardo's fresco and the focal point of all the converging perspective lines.

**LAST SUPPER** For the refectory of the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, Leonardo painted *Last Supper* (FIG. 22-4). Cleaned and restored in 1999, the mural is still in a poor state, in part because of the painter's unfortunate experiments with his materials (see "Restoring Renaissance Paintings," page 595). Nonetheless, the painting is both formally and emotionally Leonardo's most impressive work. Christ and his 12 disciples sit at a long table placed parallel to the picture plane in a simple, spacious room. The austere setting amplifies the painting's highly dramatic action. Christ, with outstretched hands, has just said, "One of you is about to betray me" (Matt. 26:21). A wave of intense excitement passes through the group as each disciple asks himself and, in some cases, his neighbor, "Is it I?" (Matt. 26:22). Leonardo visualized a sophisticated conjunction of the dramatic "One of you is about to betray me" with the initiation of the ancient liturgical ceremony of the Eucharist, when Christ, blessing bread and wine, said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me. . . . This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you" (Luke 22:19–20).

In the center, Christ appears isolated from the disciples and in perfect repose, the calm eye of the stormy emotion swirling around him. The central window at the back, whose curved pediment arches above his head, frames his figure. The pediment is the only curve in the architectural framework, and it serves here, along with the diffused light, as a halo. Christ's head is the focal point of all converging perspective lines in the composition. Thus, the still, psychological

focus and cause of the action is also the perspectival focus, as well as the center of the two-dimensional surface. The two-dimensional, the three-dimensional, and the psychodimensional focuses are the same.

Leonardo presented the agitated disciples in four groups of three, united among and within themselves by the figures' gestures and postures. The artist sacrificed traditional iconography to pictorial and dramatic consistency by placing Judas on the same side of the table as Jesus and the other disciples (compare FIG. 21-22). The light source in the painting corresponds to the windows in the Milanese refectory. Judas's face is in shadow and he clutches a money bag in his right hand as he reaches his left forward to fulfill the Master's declaration: "But yet behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table" (Luke 22:21). The two disciples at the table ends are quieter than the others, as if to bracket the energy of the composition, which is more intense closer to Christ, whose serenity both halts and intensifies it. The disciples register a broad range of emotional responses, including fear, doubt, protestation, rage, and love. Leonardo's numerous preparatory studies—using live models—suggest that he thought of each figure as carrying a particular charge and type of emotion. Like a stage director, he read the Gospel story carefully, and scrupulously cast his actors as the New Testament described their roles. In this work, as in his other religious paintings, Leonardo revealed his extraordinary ability to apply his voluminous knowledge about the observable world to the pictorial representation of a religious scene, resulting in a psychologically complex and compelling painting.



1 in.

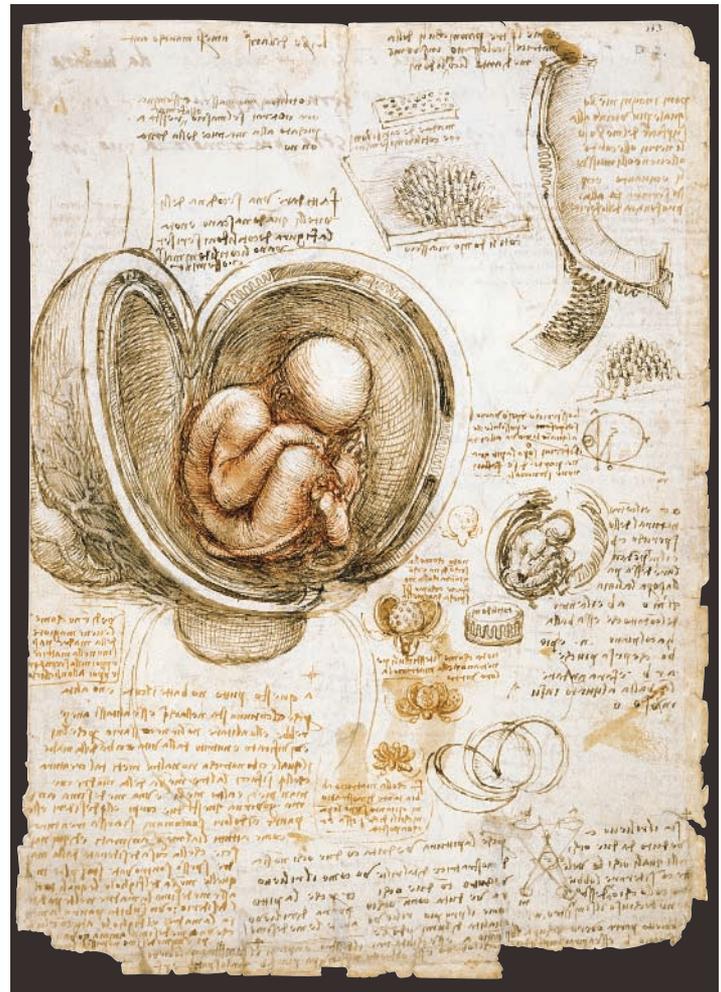
**22-5** LEONARDO DA VINCI, *Mona Lisa*, ca. 1503–1505. Oil on wood, 2' 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  $\times$  1' 9". Louvre, Paris.

Leonardo's skill with chiaroscuro and atmospheric perspective is on display in this new kind of portrait depicting the sitter as an individual personality who engages the viewer psychologically.

**MONA LISA** Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* (FIG. 22-5) is probably the world's most famous portrait. The sitter's identity is still the subject of scholarly debate, but in his biography of Leonardo, Giorgio Vasari asserted she was Lisa di Antonio Maria Gherardini, the wife of Francesco del Giocondo, a wealthy Florentine—hence, “Mona (an Italian contraction of *ma donna*, “my lady”) Lisa.” Despite the uncertainty of this identification, Leonardo's portrait is a convincing representation of an individual. Unlike earlier portraits, it does not serve solely as an icon of status. Indeed, *Mona Lisa* neither wears jewelry nor holds any attribute associated with wealth. She sits quietly, her hands folded, her mouth forming a gentle smile, and her gaze directed at the viewer. Renaissance etiquette dictated that a woman should not look directly into a man's eyes. Leonardo's portrayal of this self-assured young woman without the trappings of power but engaging the audience psychologically is thus quite remarkable. The painting is darker today than 500 years ago, and the colors are less vivid, but *Mona Lisa* still reveals the artist's fascination and skill with chiaroscuro and atmospheric perspective. *Mona Lisa* is a prime example of Leonardo's famous smoky *sfumato* (misty haziness)—his subtle adjustment of light and blurring of precise planes.

The lingering appeal of *Mona Lisa* derives in large part from Leonardo's decision to set his subject against the backdrop of a mysterious uninhabited landscape. This landscape, with roads and bridges that seem to lead nowhere, recalls his *Madonna of the Rocks* (FIG. 22-2). The composition also resembles Fra Filippo Lippi's *Madonna and Child with Angels* (FIG. 21-23) with figures seated in front of a window through which the viewer sees a distant landscape. Originally, the artist represented *Mona Lisa* in a *loggia* (columnar gallery). When the painting was trimmed (not by Leonardo), these columns were eliminated, but the remains of the column bases may still be seen to the left and right of *Mona Lisa*'s shoulders.

**ANATOMICAL STUDIES** Leonardo completed very few paintings. His perfectionism, relentless experimentation, and far-ranging curiosity diffused his efforts. However, the drawings in his notebooks preserve an extensive record of his ideas. His interests focused increasingly on science in his later years, and he embraced knowledge of all facets of the natural world. His investigations in anatomy yielded drawings of great precision and beauty of execution. *The Fetus and Lining of the Uterus* (FIG. 22-6), although it does not meet 21st-century standards for accuracy (for example, Leonardo regularized the uterus's shape to a sphere, and his characterization of the



1 in.

**22-6** LEONARDO DA VINCI, *The Fetus and Lining of the Uterus*, ca. 1511–1513. Pen and ink with wash, over red chalk and traces of black chalk on paper, 1'  $\times$  8 $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Royal Library, Windsor Castle.

Leonardo's analytical anatomical studies epitomize the scientific spirit of the Renaissance, establishing that era as a prelude to the modern world and setting it in sharp contrast to the preceding Middle Ages.



**22-7** RAPHAEL, *Marriage of the Virgin*, from the Chapel of Saint Joseph, San Francesco, Città di Castello, Italy, 1504. Oil on wood, 5' 7" × 3' 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.

In this early work depicting the marriage of the Virgin to Saint Joseph, Raphael demonstrated his mastery of foreshortening and of the perspective system he learned from his teacher, Perugino (FIG. 21-40).

lining is incorrect), was an astounding achievement in its day. Analytical anatomical studies such as this epitomize the scientific spirit of the Renaissance, establishing that era as a prelude to the modern world and setting it in sharp contrast to the preceding Middle Ages. Although Leonardo may not have been the first scientist of the modern world (at least not in the modern sense of the term), he certainly originated a method of scientific illustration, especially *cutaway* views. Scholars have long recognized the importance of these drawings for the development of anatomy as a science, especially in an age predating photographic methods such as X-rays.

Leonardo also won renown in his time as both architect and sculptor, although no surviving buildings or sculptures can be definitively attributed to him. From his many drawings of central-plan buildings, it appears he shared the interest of other Renaissance architects in this building type. As for sculpture, Leonardo left numerous drawings of monumental equestrian statues, and also made a full-scale model for a monument to Francesco Sforza (1401–1466; Ludovico's father). The French used the statue as a target and shot it to pieces when they occupied Milan in 1499. Due to the French presence, Leonardo left Milan and served for a while as a military engi-

neer for Cesare Borgia (1476–1507), who, with the support of his father, Pope Alexander VI (r. 1492–1503), tried to conquer the cities of the Romagna region in north-central Italy and create a Borgia duchy. Leonardo eventually returned to Milan in the service of the French. At the invitation of King Francis I (FIG. 23-10), he then went to France, where he died at the château of Cloux in 1519.

## Raphael

Alexander VI's successor was Julius II (r. 1503–1513). In addition to his responsibility as the spiritual leader of Christendom, the new pope extended his quest for authority to the temporal realm, as other medieval and Renaissance popes had done. An immensely ambitious man, Julius II indulged his enthusiasm for engaging in battle, which earned him a designation as the "warrior-pope." Further, his selection of the name Julius, after Julius Caesar, reinforced the perception that the Roman Empire served as his governmental model. Julius II's 10-year papacy, however, was most notable for his contributions to the arts. He was an avid art patron and understood well the propagandistic value of visual imagery. After his election, he immediately commissioned artworks that would present an authoritative image of his rule and reinforce the primacy of the Catholic Church. Among the many projects he commissioned were a new design for Saint Peter's basilica (FIGS. 22-23 and 22-24), the painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling (FIG. 22-1), the decoration of the papal apartments (FIG. 22-9), and the construction of his tomb (FIGS. 22-15 and 22-16).



**22-8** RAPHAEL, *Madonna in the Meadow*, 1505–1506. Oil on wood, 3' 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 2' 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Emulating Leonardo's pyramidal composition (FIG. 22-2) but rejecting his dusky modeling and mystery, Raphael set his Madonna in a well-lit landscape and imbued her with grace, dignity, and beauty.



**22-9** RAPHAEL, *Philosophy (School of Athens)*, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome, Italy, 1509–1511. Fresco, 19' × 27'.

Raphael included himself in this gathering of great philosophers and scientists whose self-assurance conveys calm reason. The setting resembles the interior of the new Saint Peter's (FIG. 24-5).

In 1508, Julius II called Raffaello Santi (or Sanzio), known as RAPHAEL (1483–1520) in English, to the papal court in Rome. Born in a small town in Umbria near Urbino, Raphael probably learned the rudiments of his art from his father, Giovanni Santi, a painter connected with the ducal court of Federico da Montefeltro (see Chapter 21), before entering the studio of Perugino in Perugia. Although strongly influenced by Perugino, Leonardo, and others, Raphael developed an individual style that exemplifies the ideals of High Renaissance art.

**MARRIAGE OF THE VIRGIN** Among Raphael's early works is *Marriage of the Virgin* (FIG. 22-7), which he painted for the Chapel of Saint Joseph in the church of San Francesco in Città di Castello, southeast of Florence. The subject is a fitting one for a chapel dedicated to Saint Joseph. According to the *Golden Legend* (a 13th-century collection of stories about the lives of the saints), Joseph competed with other suitors for Mary's hand. The high priest was to give the Virgin to whichever suitor presented to him a rod that had miraculously bloomed. Raphael depicted Joseph with his flowering rod in his left hand. In his right hand Joseph holds the wedding ring he is about to place on Mary's finger. Other virgins congregate at the left, and the unsuccessful suitors stand on the right. One of them breaks his rod in half over his knee in frustration, giving Raphael an opportunity to demonstrate his mastery of foreshortening. The perspective system he

used is the one he learned from Perugino (FIG. 21-40). The temple in the background is Raphael's version of a centrally planned building (FIG. 22-22), featuring Brunelleschian arcades (FIG. 21-31).

**MADONNA IN THE MEADOW** Raphael spent the four years from 1504 to 1508 in Florence. There, still in his early 20s, he discovered that the painting style he had learned so painstakingly from Perugino was already outmoded (as was Brunelleschi's architectural style). Florentine crowds flocked to the church of Santissima Annunziata to see Leonardo's recently unveiled cartoon of the Virgin, Christ Child, Saint Anne, and Saint John (probably an earlier version of FIG. 22-3). Under Leonardo's influence, Raphael began to modify the Madonna compositions he had learned in Umbria. In *Madonna in the Meadow* (FIG. 22-8) of 1505–1506, Raphael adopted Leonardo's pyramidal composition and modeling of faces and figures in subtle chiaroscuro. Yet the Umbrian artist placed the large, substantial figures in a Peruginesque landscape, with his former master's typical feathery trees in the middle ground. Although Raphael experimented with Leonardo's dusky modeling, he tended to return to Perugino's lighter tonalities and blue skies. Raphael preferred clarity to obscurity, not fascinated, as Leonardo was, with mystery.

**SCHOOL OF ATHENS** Three years after completing *Madonna in the Meadow*, Raphael received one of the most important painting commissions (FIG. 22-9) Julius II awarded—the decoration of

**22-10** RAPHAEL, *Galatea, Sala di Galatea, Villa Farnesina, Rome, Italy, ca. 1513. Fresco, 9' 8" × 7' 5".*

Based on a poem by Poliziano, Raphael's fresco depicts Galatea fleeing from Polyphemus. The painting, made for the banker Agostino Chigi's private palace, celebrates human beauty and zestful love.



the papal apartments in the Apostolic Palace of the Vatican (MAP 24-1). Of the suite's several rooms (*stanze*), Raphael painted the Stanza della Segnatura (Room of the Signature—the papal library, where Julius II signed official documents) and the Stanza d'Eliodoro (Room of Heliodoro—the pope's private audience room, named for one of the paintings). His pupils completed the others, following his sketches. On the four walls of the Stanza della Segnatura, under the headings *Theology*, *Law (Justice)*, *Poetry*, and *Philosophy*, Raphael presented images that symbolized and summed up Western learning as Renaissance society understood it. The frescoes refer to the four branches of human knowledge and wisdom while pointing out the virtues and the learning appropriate to a pope. Given Julius II's desire for recognition as both a spiritual and temporal leader, it is appropriate that the *Theology* and *Philosophy* frescoes face each other. The two images present a balanced picture of the pope—as a cultured, knowledgeable individual and as a wise, divinely ordained religious authority.

In Raphael's *Philosophy* mural (commonly known as *School of Athens*, FIG. 22-9) the setting is not a "school" but a congregation of the great philosophers and scientists of the ancient world. Raphael depicted these luminaries, revered by Renaissance humanists, conversing and explaining their various theories and ideas. The setting is a vast hall covered by massive vaults that recall ancient Roman architecture—and approximate the appearance of the new Saint Peter's (FIG. 24-5) in 1509, when Raphael began the fresco. Colossal statues of Apollo and Athena, patron deities of the arts and of wisdom, oversee the interactions. Plato and Aristotle serve as the central

figures around whom Raphael carefully arranged the others. Plato holds his book *Timaeus* and points to Heaven, the source of his inspiration, while Aristotle carries his book *Nicomachean Ethics* and gestures toward the earth, from which his observations of reality sprang. Appropriately, ancient philosophers, men concerned with the ultimate mysteries that transcend this world, stand on Plato's side. On Aristotle's side are the philosophers and scientists interested in nature and human affairs. At the lower left, Pythagoras writes as a servant holds up the harmonic scale. In the foreground, Heraclitus (probably a portrait of Raphael's great contemporary, Michelangelo) broods alone. Diogenes sprawls on the steps. At the right, students surround Euclid, who demonstrates a theorem. Euclid may be a portrait of the architect Bramante, whom Julius II had recently commissioned to design a new Saint Peter's (FIGS. 22-23 and 22-24) to replace the Constantinian basilica (FIG. 11-9). At the extreme right, just to the right of the astronomers Zoroaster and Ptolemy, both holding globes, Raphael included his own portrait.

The groups appear to move easily and clearly, with eloquent poses and gestures that symbolize their doctrines and present an engaging variety of figural positions. Their self-assurance and natural dignity convey the very nature of calm reason, that balance and measure the great Renaissance minds so admired as the heart of philosophy. Significantly, in this work Raphael placed himself among the mathematicians and scientists rather than the humanists. Certainly the evolution of pictorial science came to its perfection in *School of Athens*. Raphael's convincing depiction of a vast perspectival space on a two-dimensional surface was the consequence of the union of mathematics with pictorial science, here mastered completely.

The artist's psychological insight matured along with his mastery of the problems of physical representation. All the characters in Raphael's *School of Athens*, like those in Leonardo's *Last Supper* (FIG. 22-4), communicate moods that reflect their beliefs, and the artist's placement of each figure tied these moods together. Raphael carefully considered his design devices for relating individuals and groups to one another and to the whole. These compositional elements demand close study. From the center, where Plato and Aristotle stand, Raphael arranged the groups of figures in an ellipse with a wide opening in the foreground. Moving along the floor's perspectival pattern, the viewer's eye penetrates the assembly of philosophers and continues, by way of the reclining Diogenes, up to the here-reconciled leaders of the two great opposing camps of Renaissance philosophy. The perspectival vanishing point falls on Plato's left hand, drawing attention to *Timaieus*. In the Stanza della Segnatura, Raphael reconciled and harmonized not only the Platonists and Aristotelians but also paganism and Christianity, surely a major factor in his appeal to Julius II.

**GALATEA** Pope Leo X (r. 1513–1521), the second son of Lorenzo de' Medici, succeeded Julius II as Raphael's patron. Leo was a worldly, pleasure-loving prince who, as a true Medici, spent huge sums on the arts. Raphael moved in the highest circles of the papal court, the star of a brilliant society. He was young, handsome, wealthy, and admired, not only by his followers but also by Rome and all of Italy. Genial, even-tempered, generous, and high-minded, Raphael had a personality that contrasted strikingly with that of the aloof, mysterious Leonardo or the tormented and obstinate Michelangelo (so depicted in *School of Athens*).

The pope was not Raphael's sole patron. Agostino Chigi (1465–1520), an immensely wealthy banker who managed the papal state's financial affairs, commissioned Raphael to decorate his palace on the Tiber River with scenes from classical mythology. Outstanding among the frescoes Raphael painted in the small but splendid Villa Farnesina is *Galatea* (FIG. 22-10), which Raphael based on *Stanzas for the Joust of Giuliano de' Medici* by the poet Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494). In Raphael's fresco, Galatea flees on a shell drawn by leaping dolphins as she escapes from her uncouth lover, the Cyclops Polyphemus (painted on another wall by a different artist). Sea creatures and playful cupids surround her. The painting erupts in unrestrained pagan joy and exuberance, an exultant song in praise of human beauty and zestful love. Compositionally, Raphael enhanced the liveliness of the image by arranging the sturdy figures around Galatea in bounding and dashing movements that always return to her as the energetic center. The cupids, skillfully foreshortened, repeat the circling motion. Raphael conceived his figures sculpturally, and Galatea's body—supple, strong, and vigorously in motion—contrasts with Botticelli's delicate, hovering, almost dematerialized Venus (FIG. 21-28) while suggesting the spiraling compositions of Hellenistic statuary (FIG. 5-80). In *Galatea*, pagan myth—presented here in monumental form, in vivacious movement, and in

a spirit of passionate delight—resurrects the naturalistic art and poetry of the classical world.

**BALDASSARE CASTIGLIONE** Raphael also excelled at portraiture. His subjects were the illustrious scholars and courtiers who surrounded Leo X, among them the pope's close friend Count Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1529), the author of a handbook on genteel behavior. In *Book of the Courtier*, Castiglione enumerated the attributes of the perfect Renaissance courtier: impeccable character, noble birth, military achievement, classical education, and knowledge of the arts. Castiglione then described a way of life based on cultivated rationality in imitation of the ancients. In Raphael's portrait of the count (FIG. 22-11), Castiglione, splendidly yet soberly garbed, looks directly at the viewer with a philosopher's grave and benign expression, clear-eyed and thoughtful. The figure is in half-length (the lower part with the hands was later cut off) and three-quarter view, a pose Leonardo made popular with *Mona Lisa* (FIG. 22-5). Both portraits exhibit the increasing attention High Renaissance artists paid to the subject's personality and psychic state. The muted and low-keyed tones befit the temper and mood of this reflective middle-aged man—the background is entirely neutral, without the usual landscape or architecture. The head and the hands wonderfully reveal the man, who himself had written so eloquently in *Courtier* of enlightenment through the love of beauty. This kind of love animated Raphael, Castiglione, and other artists and writers of their age, and Michelangelo's poetry suggests he shared in the widespread appreciation for the beauty found in the natural world.



**22-11** RAPHAEL, *Baldassare Castiglione*, ca. 1514. Oil on canvas, 2' 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  $\times$  2' 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Louvre, Paris.

Raphael's painting of the famed courtier Count Baldassare Castiglione typifies High Renaissance portraiture in the increasing attention the artist paid to the subject's personality and psychic state.

## Leonardo and Michelangelo on Painting versus Sculpture

Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo each produced work in a variety of artistic media, earning enviable reputations not just as painters and sculptors but as architects and draftsmen as well. The two disagreed, however, on the relative merits of the different media. In particular, Leonardo, with his intellectual and analytical mind, preferred painting to sculpture, which he denigrated as manual labor. In contrast, Michelangelo, who worked in a more intuitive manner, regarded himself primarily as a sculptor. Two excerpts from their writings reveal their positions on the relationship between the two media.

Leonardo da Vinci wrote the following in his so-called *Treatise on Painting*:

Painting is a matter of greater mental analysis, of greater skill, and more marvelous than sculpture, since necessity compels the mind of the painter to transform itself into the very mind of nature, to become an interpreter between nature and art. Painting justifies by reference to nature the reasons of the pictures which follow its laws: in what ways the images of objects before the eye come together in the pupil of the eye; which, among objects equal in size, looks larger to the eye; which, among equal colors, will look more or less dark or more or less bright; which, among things at the same depth, looks more or less low; which, among those objects placed at equal height, will look more or less high, and why, among objects placed at various distances, one will appear less clear than the other.

This art comprises and includes within itself all visible things such as colors and their diminution which the poverty of sculpture cannot include. Painting represents transparent objects but the sculptor will show you the shapes of natural objects without artifice. The painter will show you things at different distances with variation of color due to the air lying between the objects and the eye; he shows you mists through which visual images penetrate with difficulty; he shows you rain which discloses within it clouds with mountains

and valleys; he shows the dust which discloses within it and beyond it the combatants who stirred it up; he shows streams of greater or lesser density; he shows fish playing between the surface of the water and its bottom; he shows the polished pebbles of various colors lying on the washed sand at the bottom of rivers, surrounded by green plants; he shows the stars at various heights above us, and thus he achieves innumerable effects which sculpture cannot attain.\*

In response, although decades later, Michelangelo wrote these excerpts in a letter to Benedetto Varchi (1502–1565), a Florentine poet best known for his 16-volume history of Florence:

I believe that painting is considered excellent in proportion as it approaches the effect of relief, while relief is considered bad in proportion as it approaches the effect of painting.

I used to consider that sculpture was the lantern of painting and that between the two things there was the same difference as that between the sun and the moon. But . . . I now consider that painting and sculpture are one and the same thing.

Suffice that, since one and the other (that is to say, both painting and sculpture) proceed from the same faculty, it would be an easy matter to establish harmony between them and to let such disputes alone, for they occupy more time than the execution of the figures themselves. As to that man [Leonardo] who wrote saying that painting was more noble than sculpture, if he had known as much about the other subjects on which he has written, why, my serving-maid would have written better!†

\* Leonardo da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, 51, in Robert Klein and Henri Zerner, *Italian Art 1500–1600: Sources and Documents* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1966), 7–8.

† Michelangelo to Benedetto Varchi, Rome, 1549; in Klein and Zerner, 13–14.

### Michelangelo

Pope Julius II had a keen eye for talent and during his decade-long papacy also entrusted highly coveted commissions to MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI (1475–1564). Although Michelangelo was an architect, sculptor, painter, poet, and engineer, he thought of himself first as a sculptor, regarding that calling as superior to that of a painter because the sculptor shares in something like the divine power to “make man” (see “Leonardo and Michelangelo on Painting versus Sculpture,” above). Drawing a conceptual parallel to Plato’s ideas, Michelangelo believed that the image the artist’s hand produces must come from the idea in the artist’s mind. The idea, then, is the reality that the artist’s genius has to bring forth. But artists are not the creators of the ideas they conceive. Rather, they find their ideas in the natural world, reflecting the absolute idea, which, for the artist, is beauty. One of Michelangelo’s best-known observations about sculpture is that the artist must proceed by finding the idea—the image locked in the stone. By removing the excess stone, the sculptor extricates the idea from the block (FIG. I-16), bringing forth the living form. The artist, Michelangelo felt, works many years at this unceasing process of revelation and “arrives late at novel and lofty things.”<sup>4</sup>

Michelangelo did indeed arrive “at novel and lofty things,” for he broke sharply from the lessons of his predecessors and contemporaries in one important respect. He mistrusted the application of mathematical methods as guarantees of beauty in proportion. Measure and proportion, he believed, should be “kept in the eyes.” Vasari quoted Michelangelo as declaring that “it was necessary to have the compasses in the eyes and not in the hand, because the hands work and the eye judges.”<sup>5</sup> Thus, Michelangelo set aside the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius, Alberti, Leonardo, and others who tirelessly sought the perfect measure, asserting that the artist’s inspired judgment could identify other pleasing proportions. In addition, Michelangelo argued that the artist must not be bound, except by the demands made by realizing the idea. This insistence on the artist’s own authority was typical of Michelangelo and anticipated the modern concept of the right to a self-expression of talent limited only by the artist’s judgment. The artistic license to aspire far beyond the “rules” was, in part, a manifestation of the pursuit of fame and success that humanism fostered. In this context, Michelangelo created works in architecture, sculpture, and painting that departed from High Renaissance regularity. He put in its stead a style of vast, expressive



**22-12** MICHELANGELO  
BUONARROTI, *Pietà*, ca. 1498–1500.  
Marble, 5' 8½" high. Saint Peter's,  
Vatican City, Rome.

Michelangelo's representation of Mary cradling Christ's corpse brilliantly captures the sadness and beauty of the young Virgin but was controversial because the Madonna seems younger than her son.

strength conveyed through complex, eccentric, and often titanic forms that loom before the viewer in tragic grandeur. Michelangelo's self-imposed isolation, creative furies, proud independence, and daring innovations led Italians to speak of the dominating quality of the man and his works in one word—*terribilità*, the sublime shadowed by the awesome and the fearful.

As a youth, Michelangelo was an apprentice in the studio of the painter Domenico Ghirlandaio, whom he left before completing his training. Although Michelangelo later claimed that in his art he owed nothing to anyone, he made detailed drawings in the manner of the great Florentines Giotto and Masaccio. Early on, he came to the attention of Lorenzo the Magnificent and studied sculpture under one of Lorenzo's favorite artists, Bertoldo di Giovanni (ca. 1420–1491), a former collaborator of Donatello. When the Medici fell in 1494, Michelangelo fled from Florence to Bologna, where the sculptures of the Siennese artist Jacopo della Quercia (1367–1438) impressed him.

**PIETÀ** Michelangelo's wanderings took him to Rome, where, around 1498, still in his early 20s, he produced his first masterpiece, a *Pietà* (FIG. 22-12), for the French cardinal Jean de Bilhères La-

graulas (1439–1499). The cardinal commissioned the statue to adorn the chapel in Old Saint Peter's (FIG. 11-9) in which he was to be buried. (The work is now on view in the new church that replaced the fourth-century basilica.) The theme—Mary cradling the dead body of Christ in her lap—was a staple in the repertoire of French and German artists (FIG. 18-51), and Michelangelo's French patron doubtless chose the subject. The Italian, however, rendered the Northern theme in an unforgettable manner. Michelangelo transformed marble into flesh, hair, and fabric with a sensitivity for texture that is almost without parallel. The polish and luminosity of the exquisite marble surface cannot be captured fully in photographs and can be appreciated only in the presence of the original. Breathing-taking too is the tender sadness of the beautiful and youthful Mary as she mourns the death of her son. In fact, her age—seemingly less than that of Christ—was a subject of controversy from the moment of the unveiling of the statue. Michelangelo explained Mary's ageless beauty as an integral part of her purity and virginity. Beautiful too is the son whom she holds. Christ seems less to have died than to have drifted off into peaceful sleep in Mary's maternal arms. His wounds are barely visible.



**22-13** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *David*, from Piazza della Signoria, Florence, Italy, 1501–1504. Marble, 17' high. Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

In this colossal statue, Michelangelo represented David in heroic classical nudity, capturing the tension of Lysippan athletes (FIG. 5-65) and the emotionalism of Hellenistic statuary (FIGS. 5-80 and 5-81).

**DAVID** Michelangelo returned to Florence in 1501, seven years after the exile of the Medici (see Chapter 21). In 1495 the Florentine Republic had ordered the transfer of Donatello's *David* (FIG. 21-12) from the Medici palace to the Palazzo della Signoria to join Verrocchio's *David* (FIG. 21-13) there. The importance of David as a civic symbol led the Florence Cathedral building committee to invite Michelangelo to work a great block of marble left over from an earlier aborted commission into still another statue of *David* (FIG. 22-13). The colossal statue—Florentines referred to it as “the Giant”—Michelangelo created from that block assured his reputation then and now as an extraordinary talent. Only 40 years after *David's* completion, Vasari extolled the work, which had been set up near the



**22-14** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, head of *David* (detail of FIG. 22-13), 1501–1504. Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence.

In contrast to earlier Renaissance depictions (FIGS. 21-12 and 21-13) of this Old Testament drama, Michelangelo portrayed David *before* the battle with Goliath, as he sternly watches his gigantic foe.

west door of the Palazzo della Signoria, and claimed that “without any doubt the figure has put in the shade every other statue, ancient or modern, Greek or Roman—this was intended as a symbol of liberty for the Palace, signifying that just as David had protected his people and governed them justly, so whoever ruled Florence should vigorously defend the city and govern it with justice.”<sup>6</sup>

Despite the traditional association of David with heroism, Michelangelo chose to represent the young biblical warrior not after his victory, with Goliath's head at his feet, but turning his head (FIG. 22-14) to his left, sternly watchful of the approaching foe. *David* exhibits the characteristic representation of energy in reserve that imbues Michelangelo's later figures with the tension of a coiled spring. The anatomy of David's body plays an important part in this prelude to action. His rugged torso, sturdy limbs, and large hands and feet alert viewers to the strength to come. The swelling veins and tightening sinews amplify the psychological energy of David's pose.

Michelangelo doubtless had the classical nude in mind when he conceived his *David*. Like many of his colleagues, he greatly admired Greco-Roman statues, in particular the skillful and precise rendering of heroic physique. Without strictly imitating the antique style, the Renaissance sculptor captured in his portrayal of the biblical hero the tension of Lysippan athletes (FIG. 5-65) and the psychological

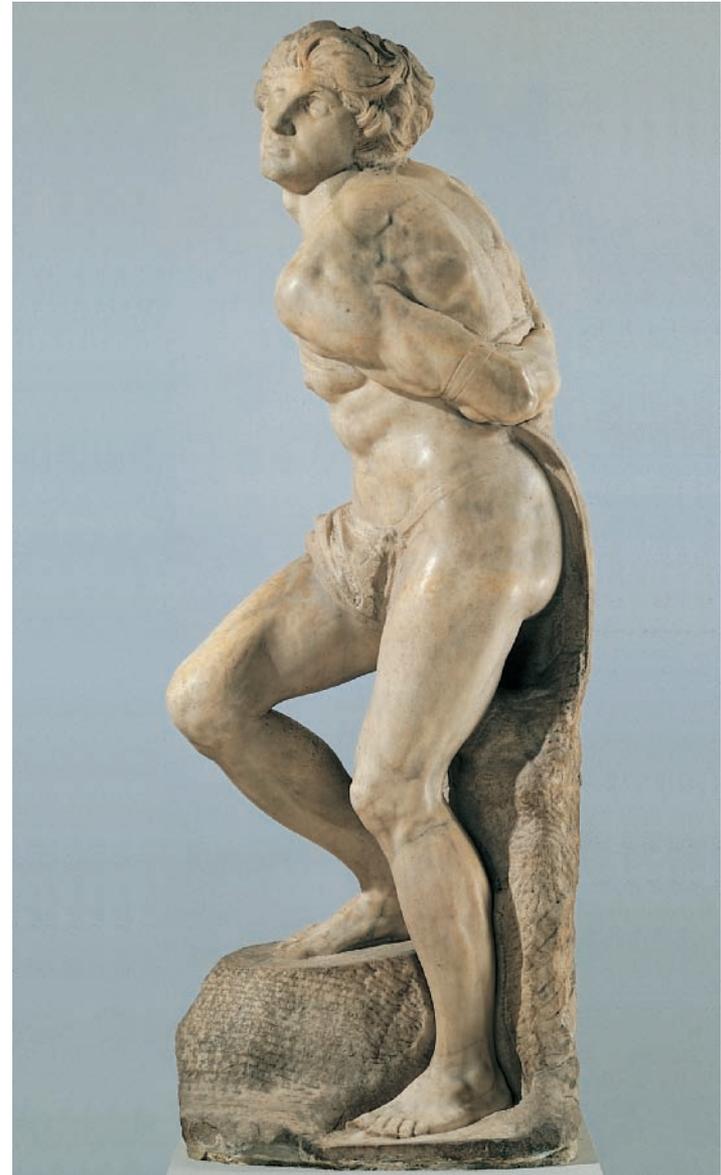


**22-15** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *Moses*, from the tomb of Pope Julius II, Rome, Italy, ca. 1513–1515. Marble, 7' 8½" high. San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome.

Not since Hellenistic times had a sculptor captured as much pent-up energy, both emotional and physical, in a seated statue as Michelangelo did in the over-life-size *Moses* he carved for Julius II's tomb.

insight and emotionalism of Hellenistic statuary (FIGS. 5-80 and 5-81). His *David* differs from those of Donatello and Verrocchio in much the same way later Hellenistic statues departed from their Classical predecessors (see Chapter 5). Michelangelo abandoned the self-contained compositions of the 15th-century *David* statues by abruptly turning the hero's head (FIG. 22-14) toward his gigantic adversary. This *David* is compositionally and emotionally connected to an unseen presence beyond the statue, a feature also of Hellenistic sculpture (FIG. 5-85). As early as 1501, then, Michelangelo invested his efforts in presenting towering, pent-up emotion rather than calm, ideal beauty. He transferred his own doubts, frustrations, and passions into the great figures he created or planned.

**TOMB OF JULIUS II** The formal references to classical antiquity in *David* surely appealed to Julius II, who associated himself with



**22-16** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *Bound Slave (Rebellious Captive)*, from the tomb of Pope Julius II, Rome, Italy, ca. 1513–1516. Marble, 7' 5/8" high. Louvre, Paris.

For Pope Julius II's grandiose tomb, Michelangelo planned a series of statues of captives or slaves in various attitudes of revolt and exhaustion. This defiant figure exhibits a violent contrapposto.

the humanists and with Roman emperors. Thus, this sculpture and the fame that accrued to Michelangelo on its completion called the artist to the pope's attention, leading shortly thereafter to major papal commissions. The first project Julius II commissioned from Michelangelo was the pontiff's own tomb, to be placed in Old Saint Peter's. The original 1505 design called for a freestanding two-story structure with some 28 statues (FIGS. 22-15 and 22-16). This colossal monument would have given Michelangelo the latitude to sculpt numerous human figures while providing Julius II with a grandiose memorial that would associate the 16th-century pope with the first pope, Peter himself. Shortly after Michelangelo began work on this project, the pope, for unknown reasons, interrupted the commission, possibly because funds had to be diverted to the rebuilding of Saint Peter's. After Julius II's death in 1513, Michelangelo reluctantly reduced the scale of the project step-by-step until, in 1542, a final contract specified a simple wall tomb with fewer than one-third of the originally planned figures. Michelangelo completed the tomb in

1545 and saw it placed in San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome, where Julius II had served as a cardinal before his accession to the papacy. Given Julius's ambitions, it is safe to say that had he seen the final design of his tomb, or known where it would eventually be located, he would have been bitterly disappointed.

The spirit of the tomb may be summed up in *Moses* (FIG. 22-15), which Michelangelo completed during one of his sporadic resumptions of the work. Meant to be seen from below and to be balanced with seven other massive forms related to it in spirit, *Moses* in its final comparatively paltry setting does not convey the impact originally intended. Michelangelo depicted the Old Testament prophet seated, the Tablets of the Law under one arm and his hands gathering his voluminous beard. The horns that appear on Moses's head were a convention in Christian art (based on a mistranslation of the Hebrew word for "rays") and helped Renaissance viewers identify the prophet (compare FIGS. 17-36 and 20-2). Here again, Michelangelo used the turned head, which concentrates the expression of awful wrath that stirs in the mighty frame and eyes. The muscles bulge, the veins swell, and the great legs seem to begin slowly to move. Not since Hellenistic times had a sculptor captured so much pent-up energy—both emotional and physical—in a seated statue (FIG. 5-85).

Originally, Michelangelo intended the tomb to have some 20 statues of captives, popularly known as slaves, in various attitudes of revolt and exhaustion. One is *Bound Slave*, or *Rebellious Captive* (FIG. 22-16). Another is shown in FIG. 1-16. Considerable scholarly uncertainty exists about these statues. Although art historians have traditionally connected them with Julius's tomb, some now doubt the association. Some scholars even reject their identification as "slaves" or "captives." Despite these unanswered questions, the statues, like *David* and *Moses*, represent definitive statements. Michelangelo created figures that do not so much represent an abstract concept, as in medieval allegory, as they embody powerful emotional states associated with oppression. Indeed, Michelangelo communicated his expansive imagination through every plane and hollow of the stone. In *Bound Slave*, the defiant figure's violent contrapposto is the image of frantic but impotent struggle. Michelangelo based his whole art on his conviction that whatever can be said greatly through sculpture and painting must be said through the human figure.

**TOMB OF GIULIANO DE' MEDICI** Following the death of Julius II, Michelangelo, like Raphael, went into the service of the Medici popes, Leo X and his successor Clement VII (r. 1523–1534). These Medici chose not to perpetuate their predecessor's fame by let-

ting Michelangelo complete Julius's tomb. Instead, they (Pope Leo X and the then-cardinal Giulio de' Medici) commissioned him in 1519 to build a funerary chapel, the New Sacristy, in San Lorenzo in Florence. At opposite sides of the New Sacristy stand Michelangelo's sculpted tombs of Giuliano (1478–1516), duke of Nemours (south of Paris), and Lorenzo (1492–1519), duke of Urbino, son and grandson of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Giuliano's tomb (FIG. 22-17) is compositionally the twin of Lorenzo's. Michelangelo finished neither tomb. Most scholars believe he intended to place pairs of recumbent river gods at the bottom of the sarcophagi, balancing the pairs of figures that rest on the sloping sides, but Michelangelo's grand design for the tombs remains a puzzle.

The traditional interpretation is that the arrangement Michelangelo planned, but never completed, mirrors the soul's ascent through the levels of the Neo-Platonic universe. Neo-Platonism, a school of thought based on Plato's idealistic, spiritualistic philosophy, experienced a renewed popularity in the 16th-century humanist community. The lowest level of the tomb, which the river gods represent, would have signified the Underworld of brute matter, the source of evil. The two statues on the sarcophagi would symbolize the realm of time—the specifically human world of the cycles of dawn, day, evening, and night. Humanity's state in this world of time was one of pain and anxiety, of frustration and exhaustion. At left, the female figure of Night and, at right, the male figure of Day ap-



**22-17** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, tomb of Giuliano de' Medici, New Sacristy (Medici Chapel), San Lorenzo, Florence, Italy, 1519–1534. Marble, central figure 5' 11" high.

Michelangelo's portrait of Giuliano de' Medici clad in ancient Roman armor depicts the deceased as the model of the active and decisive man. Below are the anguished and twisting figures of Night and Day.

pear to be chained into never-relaxing tensions. Both exhibit that anguished twisting of the body's masses in contrary directions, seen also in Michelangelo's *Bound Slave* (FIG. 22-16) and in his Sistine Chapel paintings (FIG. 22-19). This contortion is a staple of Michelangelo's figural art. Day, with a body the thickness of a great tree and the anatomy of Hercules (or of a reclining Greco-Roman river god that may have inspired Michelangelo's statue), strains his huge limbs against each other, his unfinished visage rising menacingly above his shoulder. Night, the symbol of rest, twists as if in troubled sleep, her posture wrenched and feverish. The artist surrounded her with an owl, poppies, and a hideous mask symbolic of nightmares. Some scholars argue, however, that the personifications Night and Day allude not to humanity's pain but to the life cycle and the passage of time leading ultimately to death.

On their respective tombs, sculptures of Lorenzo and Giuliano appear in niches at the apex of the structures. Transcending worldly existence, they represent the two ideal human types—the contemplative man (Lorenzo) and the active man (Giuliano). Giuliano (FIG. 22-17) sits clad in the armor of a Roman emperor and holds a commander's baton, his head turned alertly as if in council (he looks toward the statue of the Virgin at one end of the chapel). Across the room, Lorenzo appears wrapped in thought, his face in deep shadow. Together, they symbolize the two ways human beings might achieve union with God—through meditation or through the active

life fashioned after that of Christ. In this sense, they are not individual portraits. Indeed, Michelangelo declined to make likenesses of Lorenzo and Giuliano. Who, he asked, would care what the two dukes looked like in a thousand years? This attitude is consistent with Michelangelo's interests. Throughout his career he demonstrated less concern for facial features and expressions than for the overall human form. The rather generic visages of the two Medici captains of the Church attest to this. For the artist, more important was the contemplation of what lies beyond the corrosion of time.

**SISTINE CHAPEL CEILING** When Julius II suspended work on his tomb, the pope gave the bitter Michelangelo the commission to paint the ceiling (FIG. 22-1) of the Sistine Chapel (FIG. 22-18) in 1508. The artist, insisting that painting was not his profession (a protest that rings hollow after the fact, but Michelangelo's major works until then had been in sculpture, and painting was of secondary interest to him), assented in the hope that the tomb project could be revived. Michelangelo faced enormous difficulties in painting the Sistine ceiling. He had to address the ceiling's dimensions (some 5,800 square feet), its height above the pavement (almost 70 feet), and the complicated perspective problems the vault's height and curve presented, as well as his inexperience in the fresco technique. (The first section Michelangelo completed had to be redone because of faulty preparation of the intonaco; see "Fresco Painting," Chapter 19, page 504.) Yet, in less than four years, Michelangelo produced an unprecedented work—a monumental fresco incorporating his patron's agenda, Church doctrine, and the artist's interests. Depicting the most august and solemn themes of all, the creation, fall, and redemption of humanity—themes most likely selected by Julius II with input from Michelangelo and a theological adviser, probably Cardinal Marco Vigerio della Rovere (1446–1516)—Michelangelo spread a colossal decorative scheme across the vast surface. He succeeded in weaving together more than 300 figures in an ultimate grand drama of the human race.

A long sequence of narrative panels describing the creation, as recorded in Genesis, runs along the crown of the vault, from *God's Separation of Light and Darkness* (above the altar) to *Drunkenness of Noah* (nearest the entrance to the chapel). Thus, as viewers enter the chapel, look up, and walk toward the altar, they review, in reverse order, the history of the fall of humankind. The Hebrew prophets and pagan sibyls who foretold the coming of Christ appear seated in large thrones on both sides of the central row of scenes



**22-18** Interior of the Sistine Chapel (looking east), Vatican City, Rome, Italy, built 1473.

Michelangelo reluctantly agreed to paint the ceiling (FIG. 22-1) of the Sistine Chapel for Pope Julius II. He had to overcome the complicated perspective problems that the height and curve of the vault presented.



**22-19** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *Creation of Adam*, detail of the ceiling (FIG. 22-1) of the Sistine Chapel, Vatican City, Rome, Italy, 1511–1512. Fresco, 9' 2" × 18' 8".

Life leaps to Adam like a spark from the extended hand of God in this fresco, which recalls the communication between gods and heroes in the classical myths Renaissance humanists admired so much.

from Genesis, where the vault curves down. In the four corner *pendentives*, Michelangelo placed four Old Testament scenes with David, Judith, Haman, and Moses and the Brazen Serpent. Scores of lesser figures also appear. The ancestors of Christ fill the triangular compartments above the windows, nude youths punctuate the corners of the central panels, and small pairs of putti in *grisaille* (monochrome painting using shades of gray to imitate sculpture) support the painted cornice surrounding the entire central corridor. The overall conceptualization of the ceiling's design and narrative structure not only presents a sweeping chronology of Christianity but also is in keeping with Renaissance ideas about Christian history. These ideas included interest in the conflict between good and evil and between the energy of youth and the wisdom of age. The conception of the entire ceiling was astounding in itself, and the articulation of it in its thousands of details was a superhuman achievement.

Unlike Andrea Mantegna's decoration of the Camera Picta (FIGS. 21-47 and 21-48) in Mantua, the strongly marked unifying architectural framework in the Sistine Chapel does not produce "picture windows" enframing illusions just within. Rather, the viewer focuses on figure after figure, each sharply outlined against the neutral tone of the architectural setting or the plain background of the panels. Here, as in his sculpture, Michelangelo relentlessly concentrated his expressive purpose on the human figure. To him, the body was beautiful not only in its natural form but also in its spiritual and philosophical significance. The body was the manifestation of the soul or of a state of mind and character. Michelangelo represented the body in its most simple, elemental aspect—in the nude or simply draped, with no background and no ornamental embellishment. He always painted with a sculptor's eye for how light and shadow communicate volume and surface. It is no coincidence that many of the figures seem to be tinted reliefs or freestanding statues.

**CREATION OF ADAM** One of the ceiling's central panels is *Creation of Adam* (FIG. 22-19). Michelangelo did not paint the traditional representation but instead produced a bold humanistic interpretation of the momentous event. God and Adam confront each other in a primordial unformed landscape of which Adam is still a material part, heavy as earth. The Lord transcends the earth, wrapped in a billowing cloud of drapery and borne up by his powers. Life leaps to Adam as if a spark flashed from the extended, mighty hand of God. The communication between gods and heroes, so familiar in classical myth, is here concrete. This blunt depiction of the Lord as ruler of Heaven in the Olympian pagan sense indicates how easily High Renaissance thought joined classical and Christian traditions. Yet the classical trappings do not obscure the essential Christian message.

Beneath the Lord's sheltering left arm is a female figure, apprehensively curious but as yet uncreated. Scholars traditionally believed her to represent Eve, but many now think she is the Virgin Mary (with the Christ Child at her knee). If the second identification is correct, it suggests that Michelangelo incorporated into his fresco one of the essential tenets of Christian faith—the belief that Adam's Original Sin eventually led to the sacrifice of Christ, which in turn made possible the redemption of all humankind.

As God reaches out to Adam, the viewer's eye follows the motion from right to left, but Adam's extended left arm leads the eye back to the right, along the Lord's right arm, shoulders, and left arm to his left forefinger, which points to the Christ Child's face. The focal point of this right-to-left-to-right movement—the fingertips of Adam and the Lord—is dramatically off-center. Michelangelo replaced the straight architectural axes found in Leonardo's compositions with curves and diagonals. For example, the bodies of the two great figures are complementary—the concave body of Adam fitting the convex body and billowing "cloak" of God. Thus, motion directs

## Restoring Renaissance Paintings

The year 1989 marked the culmination of a 12-year project to clean the Sistine Chapel ceiling (FIG. 22-1). Cleaning of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* (FIG. 22-21) behind the altar followed during the next five years. Restorers removed centuries of accumulated grime, overpainting, and protective glue, uncovering much of Michelangelo's original form, color, style, and procedure.

The before-and-after details (FIG. 22-20) of one of the lunettes over the windows reveal the stark contrast in the appearance of the frescoes in 1977 and today. In these semicircular spaces, Michelangelo painted figures representing the ancestors of Christ (Matt. 1:1–17). After computer assessment of the damage (including use of infrared and ultraviolet lights), the restorers worked carefully and slowly to clean the fresco of soot, dirt, dissolved salts, and various types of gums and varnishes made of animal glues. Over the centuries, restorers had used various varnishes to brighten the darkening fresco. Unfortunately, over time the varnishes deteriorated, darkening the painting even more. For the latest cleaning effort, the restorers first wet a small section of the fresco with distilled, deionized water. The application of a cleaning solution made of bicarbonates of sodium and ammonium and supplemented with an antibacterial, antifungal agent followed. Adding carboxymethyl cellulose and water to this solution created a gel that clung to the ceiling fresco. After three minutes, restorers removed the gel.

Michelangelo's figures, once thought purposefully dark, now show brilliant colors of high intensity, brushed on with an astonishing freedom and verve. The fresh, luminous hues, boldly joined in unexpected harmonies, seemed uncharacteristically dissonant to some experts when first revealed and aroused brisk controversy. Some scholars believed that the restorers removed Michelangelo's

work along with the accumulated layers and that the apparently strident coloration could not possibly be his. Most art historians, however, now agree that the restoration effort has revealed to modern eyes the artist's real intentions and effects—and that in the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo already had paved the way for the Mannerist reaction to the High Renaissance, examined later in this chapter.

The restoration of Leonardo's *Last Supper* (FIG. 22-4), which took more than two decades, presented conservators with an even greater challenge. Leonardo had mixed oil and tempera, applying much of it *a secco* (to dried, rather than wet, plaster) in order to create a mural that more closely approximated oil painting on canvas or wood instead of fresco. But because the wall did not absorb the pigment as in the *buon fresco* technique, the paint quickly began to flake (see "Fresco Painting," Chapter 19, page 504). Milan's humidity further accelerated the deterioration. Restoration efforts, completed in May 1999, were painstaking and slow, as were those in the Sistine Chapel, and involved extensive scholarly, chemical, and computer analysis. Like other restorations, this one was not without controversy. One scholar has claimed that 80 percent of what is visible today is the work of the modern restorers, not Leonardo. The controversies surrounding the cleanings of the Sistine Chapel ceiling and Santa Maria delle Grazie have not put a damper on other restoration projects. After the cleaning of *Last Judgment*, the Vatican continued the restoration of the remaining frescoes in the Sistine Chapel (FIG. 22-18), including Perugino's *Christ Delivering the Keys of the Kingdom to Saint Peter* (FIG. 21-40), completing the project in December 1999. Restorers have also cleaned the frescoes in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican Apartments in Rome, including Raphael's *School of Athens* (FIG. 22-9).



**22-20** Detail of the Azor-Sadoch lunette over one of the Sistine Chapel windows (FIG. 22-18) at the beginning (*left*) and final stage (*right*) of the restoration process.

The 1977–1989 restoration of the frescoes on the Sistine Chapel ceiling removed centuries of accumulated grime and revealed the original bright and luminous colors of Michelangelo's figures.

not only the figures but also the whole composition. The reclining positions of the figures, the heavy musculature, and the twisting poses are all intrinsic parts of Michelangelo's style.

The photographs of the Sistine Chapel reproduced here record the appearance of Michelangelo's frescoes after the completion of a 12-year cleaning project (1977–1989). The painstaking restoration

(FIG. 22-20) elicited considerable controversy because it revealed vivid colors that initially shocked art historians, producing accusations that the restorers were destroying Michelangelo's masterpieces (see "Restoring Renaissance Paintings," above). That reaction, however, was largely attributable to the fact that for centuries no one had ever seen Michelangelo's frescoes except covered with soot and grime.

## Religious Art in Counter-Reformation Italy

Both Catholics and Protestants took seriously the role of devotional imagery in religious life. However, their views differed dramatically. Whereas Catholics deemed art as valuable for cultivating piety, Protestants believed visual imagery could produce idolatry and could distract the faithful from their goal—developing a personal relationship with God (see “Protestantism and Iconoclasm,” Chapter 23, page 632). As part of the Counter-Reformation effort, Pope Paul III convened the Council of Trent in 1545 to review controversial Church doctrines. At its conclusion in 1563, the Council issued the following edict:

The holy council commands all bishops and others who hold the office of teaching and have charge of the *cura animarum* [literally, “cure of souls”—the responsibility of laboring for the salvation of souls], that in accordance with the usage of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, received from the primitive times of the Christian religion, and with the unanimous teaching of the holy Fathers and the decrees of sacred councils, they above all instruct the faithful diligently in matters relating to intercession and invocation of the saints, the veneration of relics, and the legitimate use of images. . . . Moreover, that the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other saints are to be placed and retained especially in the churches, and that due honor and veneration is to be given them; . . . because the honor which is shown them is referred to the prototypes which they represent, so that by means of the images which we kiss

and before which we uncover the head and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ and venerate the saints whose likeness they bear. That is what was defined by the decrees of the councils, especially of the Second Council of Nicaea, against the opponents of images.

Moreover, let the bishops diligently teach that by means of the stories of the mysteries of our redemption portrayed in paintings and other representations the people are instructed and confirmed in the articles of faith, which ought to be borne in mind and constantly reflected upon; also that great profit is derived from all holy images, not only because the people are thereby reminded of the benefits and gifts bestowed on them by Christ, but also because through the saints the miracles of God and salutary examples are set before the eyes of the faithful, so that they may give God thanks for those things, may fashion their own life and conduct in imitation of the saints and be moved to adore and love God and cultivate piety. . . .

That these things may be the more faithfully observed, the holy council decrees that no one is permitted to erect or cause to be erected in any place or church, howsoever exempt, any unusual image unless it has been approved by the bishop.\*

\* *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, December 3–4, 1563, in Robert Klein and Henri Zerner, *Italian Art 1500–1600: Sources and Documents* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1966), 120–121.

**THE COUNTER-REFORMATION** Paul III (r. 1534–1549) succeeded Clement VII as pope in 1534 at a time of widespread dissatisfaction with the leadership and policies of the Roman Catholic Church. Led by clerics such as Martin Luther (1483–1546) and John Calvin (1509–1564) in the Holy Roman Empire, early-16th-century reformers directly challenged papal authority, especially regarding secular issues. Disgruntled Catholics voiced concerns about the sale of *indulgences* (pardons for sins, reducing the time a soul spent in Purgatory), about nepotism (the appointment of relatives to important positions), and about how high Church officials were pursuing personal wealth. This Reformation movement resulted in the establishment of Protestantism, with sects such as Lutheranism and Calvinism (see Chapter 23). Central to Protestantism was a belief in personal faith rather than adherence to decreed Church practices and doctrines. Because the Protestants believed that the only true religious relationship was the personal relationship between an individual and God, they were, in essence, eliminating the need for Church intercession, which is central to Catholicism.

The Catholic Church, in response, mounted a full-fledged campaign to counteract the defection of its members to Protestantism. Led by Paul III, this response, the Counter-Reformation, consisted of numerous initiatives. The Council of Trent, which met intermittently from 1545 through 1563, was a major element of this effort. Composed of cardinals, archbishops, bishops, abbots, and theologians, the Council of Trent dealt with issues of Church doctrine, including many the Protestants contested. Many papal commissions during this period can be viewed as an integral part of the Counter-Reformation effort. Popes long had been aware of the power of visual imagery to

construct and reinforce ideological claims, and 16th-century popes exploited this capability (see “Religious Art in Counter-Reformation Italy,” above).

**LAST JUDGMENT** Among Paul III’s first papal commissions was an enormous (48 feet tall) fresco for the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo agreed to paint the *Last Judgment* fresco (FIG. 22-21) on the chapel’s altar wall. Here, the artist depicted Christ as the stern judge of the world—a giant who raises his mighty right arm in a gesture of damnation so broad and universal as to suggest he will destroy all creation. The choirs of Heaven surrounding him pulse with anxiety and awe. Crowded into the space below are trumpeting angels, the ascending figures of the just, and the downward-hurling figures of the damned. On the left, the dead awake and assume flesh. On the right, demons, whose gargoyle masks and burning eyes revive the demons of Romanesque tympana (FIG. 1-6), torment the damned.

Michelangelo’s terrifying vision of the fate that awaits sinners goes far beyond even Signorelli’s gruesome images (FIG. 21-41). Martyrs who suffered especially agonizing deaths crouch below the Judge. One of them, Saint Bartholomew, who was skinned alive, holds the flaying knife and the skin, its face a grotesque self-portrait of Michelangelo. The figures are huge and violently twisted, with small heads and contorted features. Although this immense fresco impresses on viewers Christ’s wrath on Judgment Day, it also holds out hope. A group of saved souls—the elect—crowd around Christ, and on the far right appears a figure with a cross, most likely the Good Thief (crucified with Christ) or a saint martyred by crucifixion, such as Saint Andrew.



**22-21** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, *Last Judgment*, altar wall of the Sistine Chapel (FIG. 22-18), Vatican City, Rome, Italy, 1536–1541. Fresco, 48' × 44'.

Michelangelo completed his fresco cycle in the Sistine Chapel with this terrifying vision of the fate that awaits sinners. Near the center, he placed his own portrait on the flayed skin Saint Bartholomew holds.

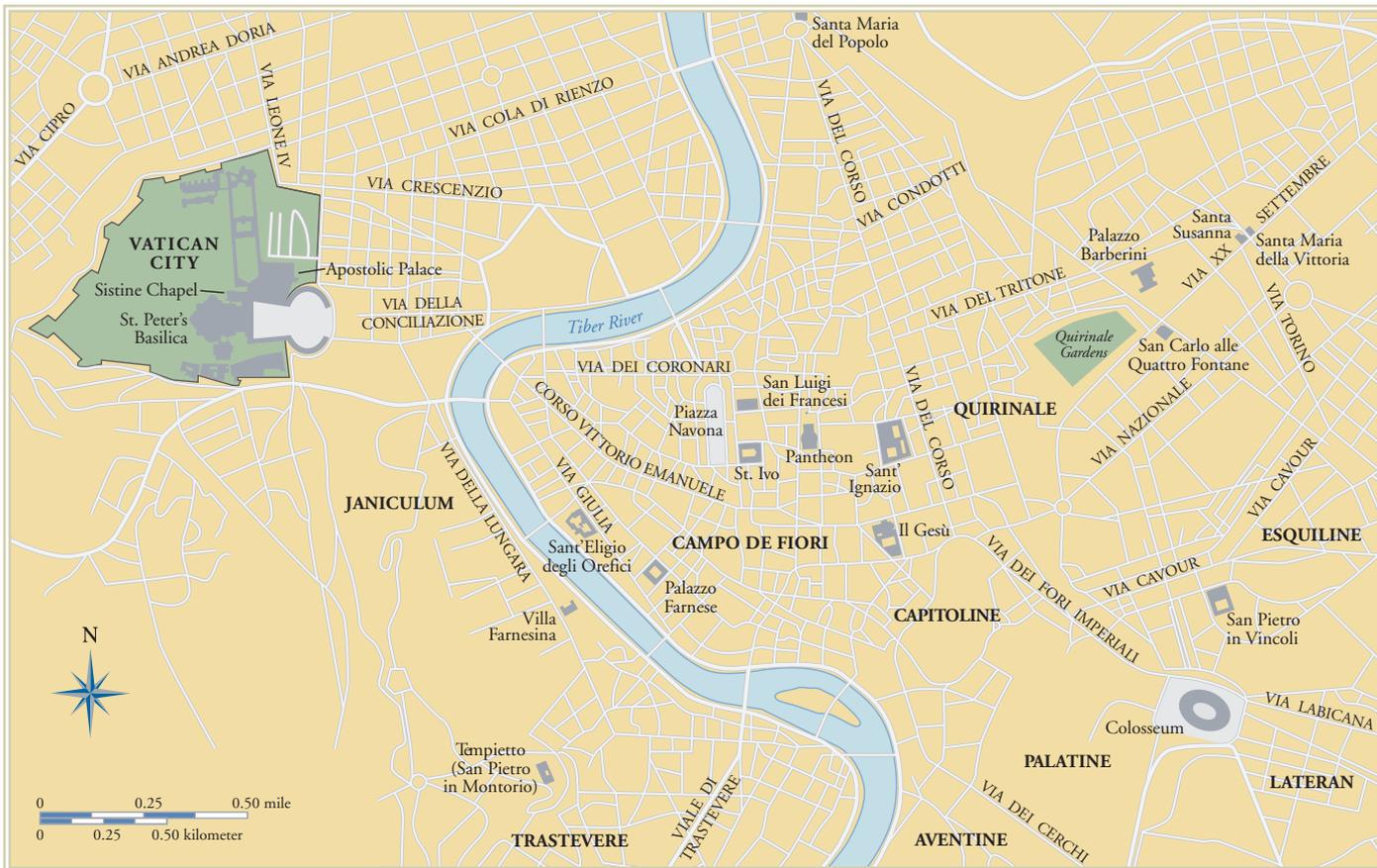
### Architecture: Rome

The Sistine Chapel was but a small part of the vast Vatican palace complex on the west side of the Tiber River (MAPS 22-1 and 24-1), construction of which began under Constantine with the erection of a church over the site of Saint Peter's burial place (Old Saint Peter's, FIG. 11-9). By the 15th century, it was obvious that the millennium-old basilica was insufficient for the needs and aspirations of the Renaissance papacy. Rebuilding the fourth-century church would occupy some of the leading architects of Italy for more than a century.

**BRAMANTE** The first in the distinguished line of architects of the new Saint Peter's was DONATO D'ANGELO BRAMANTE (1444–1514). Born in Urbino and trained as a painter (perhaps by Piero della Francesca), Bramante went to Milan in 1481 and, like Leonardo, stayed there until the French arrived in 1499. In Milan, he abandoned painting to become one of his generation's most renowned architects. Under the influence of Filippo Brunelleschi, Leon Battista Alberti, and perhaps Leonardo, all of whom strongly favored the art

and architecture of classical antiquity, Bramante developed the High Renaissance form of the central-plan church.

**TEMPIETTO** The architectural style Bramante championed was, consistent with the humanistic values of the day, based on ancient Roman models. This style is on display in the small architectural gem known as the Tempietto (FIG. 22-22) on the Janiculum hill overlooking the Vatican. The building received its name because, to contemporaries, it had the look of a small ancient temple. "Little Temple" is, in fact, a perfect nickname for the structure, because the round temples of Roman Italy (FIG. 10-4) directly inspired Bramante's design. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain commissioned the Tempietto to mark the presumed location of Saint Peter's crucifixion. The patrons asked Bramante to undertake the project in 1502, but work may not have commenced until the end of the decade. Today the Tempietto stands inside the rectangular cloister alongside the church of San Pietro in Montorio, but Bramante planned, although never executed, a circular colonnaded courtyard



**MAP 22-1** Rome with Renaissance and Baroque monuments.

to frame the “temple.” His intent was to coordinate the Tempietto and its surrounding portico by aligning the columns of the two structures.

At first glance, the Tempietto (FIG. 22-22) may seem severely rational with its sober circular *stylobate* (stepped temple platform) and the austere *Tuscan* style of the *colonnade*, neither feature giving any indication of the placement of an interior altar or of the entrance. However, Bramante achieved a truly wonderful balance and harmony in the relationship of the parts (dome, drum, and base) to one another and to the whole. Conceived as a tall, domed cylinder projecting from the lower, wider cylinder of its colonnade, this small building incorporates all the qualities of a sculptured monument. Bramante’s sculptural eye is most evident in the rhythmical play of light and shadow seen around the columns and balustrade and across the deep-set rectangular windows alternating with shallow shell-capped niches in the *cella* (central room of a temple), walls, and drum. Although the Tempietto, superficially at least, may resemble a Greek *tholos* (a circular shrine; FIG. 5-72), and although antique models provided the inspiration for all its details, the combination of parts and details was new and original. (Classical tholoi, for instance, had neither drum nor balustrade.)

**22-22** DONATO D’ANGELO BRAMANTE, Tempietto, San Pietro in Montorio, Rome, Italy, 1502(?).

Contemporaries celebrated Bramante as the first to revive the classical style in architecture. Roman round temples (FIG. 10-4) inspired this “little temple,” but Bramante combined the classical parts in new ways.



One of the main differences between the Early and High Renaissance styles of architecture is the former's emphasis on detailing flat wall surfaces versus the latter's sculptural handling of architectural masses. Bramante's *Tempietto* initiated the High Renaissance era. Andrea Palladio, a brilliant theorist as well as a major later 16th-century architect (FIGS. 22-29 and 22-32), included the *Tempietto* in his survey of ancient temples because Bramante was "the first to bring back to light the good and beautiful architecture that from antiquity to that time had been hidden."<sup>7</sup> Round in plan and elevated on a base that isolates it from its surroundings, the *Tempietto* conforms to Alberti's and Palladio's strictest demands for an ideal church.

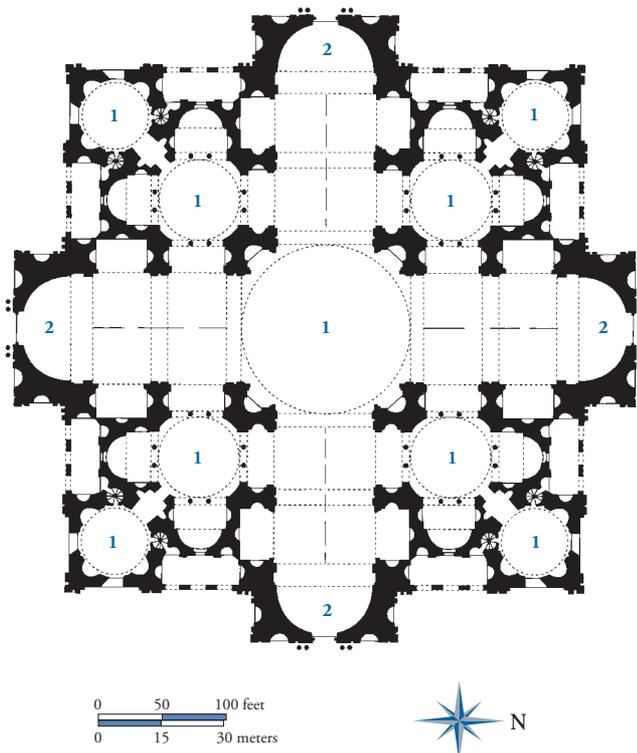
**NEW SAINT PETER'S** As noted, Bramante was the architect Julius II selected to design a replacement for the Constantinian basilican church of Old Saint Peter's (FIG. 11-9). The earlier building had fallen into considerable disrepair and, in any event, did not suit this ambitious pope's taste for the colossal. Julius wanted to gain control over the whole of Italy and to make the Rome of the popes reminiscent of (if not more splendid than) the Rome of the caesars. As the symbolic seat of the papacy, Saint Peter's represented the history of the Church.

Bramante originally designed the new Saint Peter's (FIG. 22-23) to consist of a cross with arms of equal length, each terminating in an apse. Julius II intended the new building to serve as a *martyrium* to mark Saint Peter's grave and also hoped to have his own tomb in it. A large dome would have covered the crossing, and smaller domes over subsidiary chapels would have covered the diagonal axes of the roughly square plan. Thus, Bramante's ambitious design called for a

boldly sculptural treatment of the walls and piers under the dome. His organization of the interior space was complex in the extreme, with the intricate symmetries of a crystal. It is possible to detect in the plan some nine interlocking crosses, five of them supporting domes. The scale was titanic. According to sources, Bramante boasted he would place the dome of the Pantheon (FIGS. 10-49 to 10-51) over the Basilica Nova (FIG. 10-78).

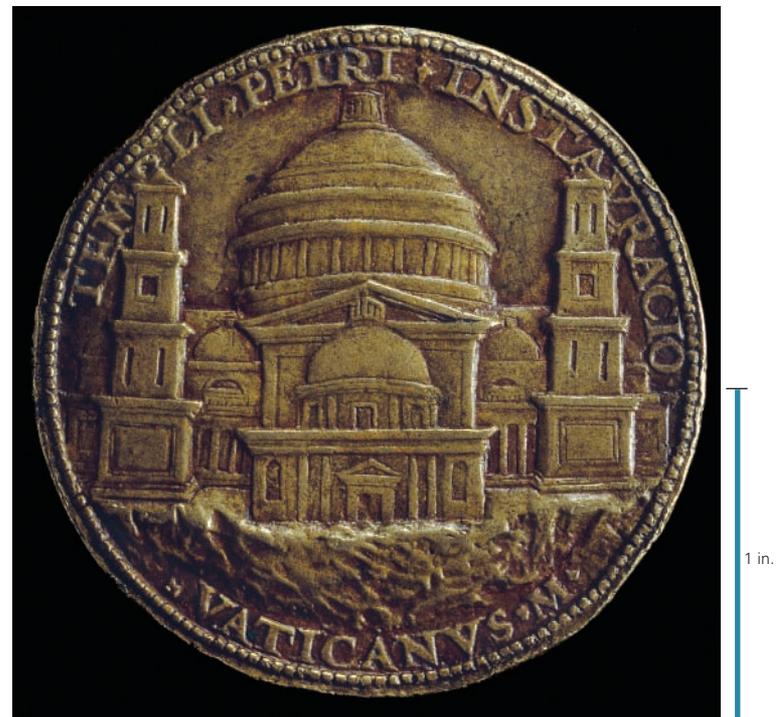
A commemorative medal (FIG. 22-24) by CRISTOFORO FOPPA CARADOSSO (ca. 1452–1526) shows how Bramante's scheme would have attempted to do just that. The dome is hemispherical, as is that of the Pantheon, but the massive unity of that building is broken up here by two towers and a medley of domes and porticos. In light of Julius II's interest in the Roman Empire, using the Pantheon as a model was entirely appropriate. That Bramante's design for the new Saint Peter's was commemorated on a medal is in itself significant. Such medals proliferated in the 15th century, reviving the ancient Roman practice of placing images of important imperial building projects on the reverses of Roman coins and portraits of the emperors who commissioned them on the coins' fronts. Julius II appears on the front of the Caradosso medal.

During Bramante's lifetime, the actual construction of the new Saint Peter's did not advance beyond the building of the crossing piers and the lower choir walls. After his death, the work passed from one architect to another and, in 1546, to Michelangelo. With the Church facing challenges to its supremacy, Pope Paul III surely felt a sense of urgency about the completion of this project. Michelangelo's work on Saint Peter's became a long-term show of dedication, thankless and without pay. Among Michelangelo's difficulties was his struggle to preserve and carry through Bramante's original plan



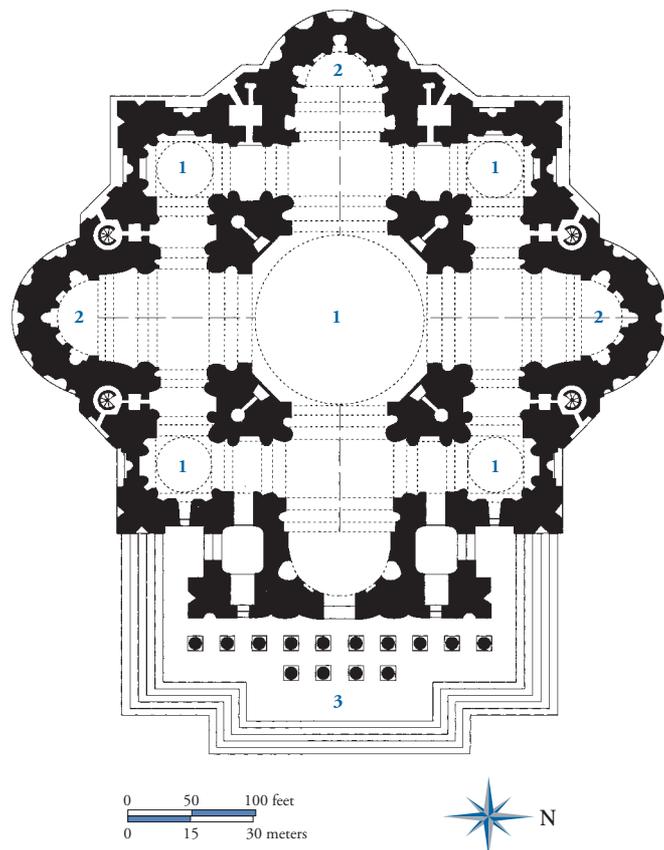
**22-23** DONATO D'ANGELO BRAMANTE, plan for the new Saint Peter's, the Vatican, Rome, Italy, 1505. (1) dome, (2) apse.

Bramante's design for the new church to replace the Constantinian basilica of Saint Peter's (FIG. 11-9) featured a central plan consisting of a cross with arms of equal length, each terminating in an apse.



**22-24** CRISTOFORO FOPPA CARADOSSO, medal showing Bramante's design for the new Saint Peter's, 1506. Bronze,  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter. British Museum, London.

Bramante's unexecuted 1506 design for Saint Peter's called for a large dome over the crossing, smaller domes over the subsidiary chapels, and a boldly sculptural treatment of the walls and piers.



**22-25** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, plan for Saint Peter's, Vatican City, Rome, Italy, 1546. (1) dome, (2) apse, (3) portico.

In his modification of Bramante's plan (FIG. 22-23), Michelangelo reduced the central component from a number of interlocking crosses to a compact domed Greek cross inscribed in a square.

(FIG. 22-23), which he praised and chose to retain as the basis for his own design (FIG. 22-25). Michelangelo shared Bramante's conviction that a central plan was the ideal form for a church. Always a sculptor first and foremost, Michelangelo carried his obsession with human form over to architecture and reasoned that buildings should follow the form of the human body. This meant organizing their

**22-26** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, Saint Peter's (looking northeast), Vatican City, Rome, Italy, 1546–1564. Dome completed by GIACOMO DELLA PORTA, 1590.

The west end of Saint Peter's offers the best view of Michelangelo's intentions. The giant pilasters of his colossal order march around the undulating wall surfaces of the central-plan building.



units symmetrically around a central and unique axis, as the arms relate to the body or the eyes to the nose. "For it is an established fact," he wrote, "that the members of architecture resemble the members of man. Whoever neither has been nor is a master at figures, and especially at anatomy, cannot really understand architecture."<sup>8</sup>

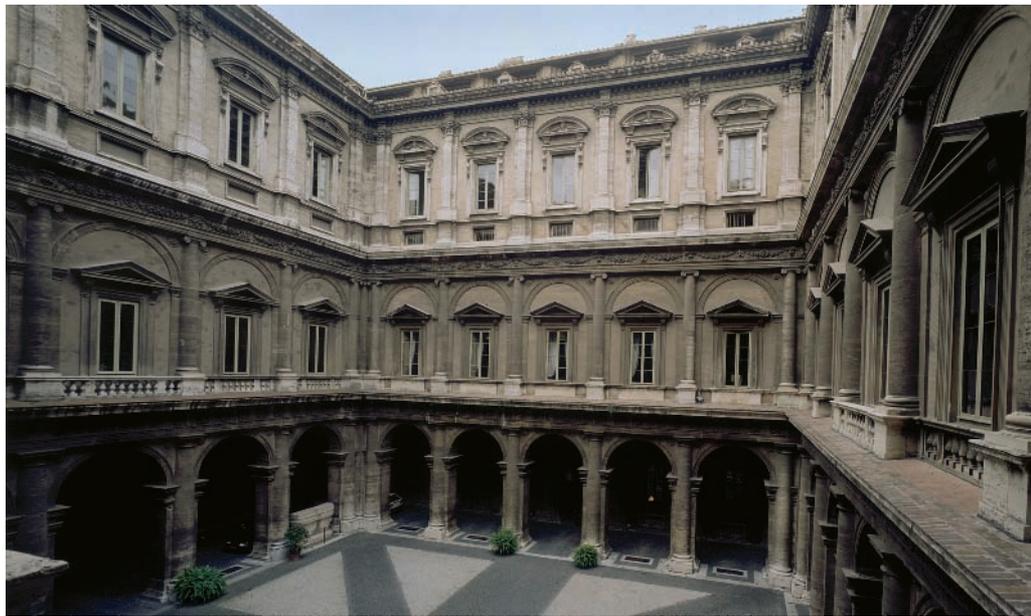
In his modification of Bramante's plan, Michelangelo reduced the central component from a number of interlocking crosses to a compact domed Greek cross inscribed in a square and fronted with a double-columned portico. Without destroying the centralizing features of Bramante's plan, Michelangelo, with a few strokes of the pen, converted its snowflake complexity into massive, cohesive unity. His treatment of the building's exterior further reveals his interest in creating a unified and cohesive design. Because of later changes to the front of the church, the west (apse) end (FIG. 22-26) offers the best view of his style and intention. Michelangelo's design incorporated the colossal order, the two-story pilasters first seen in more reserved fashion in Alberti's Mantuan church of Sant'Andrea (FIG. 21-44). The giant pilasters seem to march around the undulating wall surfaces, confining the movement without interrupting it. The architectural sculpturing here extends up from the ground through the attic stories and into the drum and the dome (FIG. 24-4), unifying the whole building from base to summit. Baroque architects later learned much from this kind of integral design, which Michelangelo based on his conviction that architecture is one with the organic beauty of the human form.

The domed west end—as majestic as it is today and as influential as it has been on architecture throughout the centuries—is not quite as Michelangelo intended it. Originally, he had planned a dome with an ogival section, like that of Florence Cathedral (FIG. 19-18). But in his final version he decided on a hemispherical dome to temper the verticality of the design of the lower stories and to establish a balance between dynamic and static elements. However, when GIACOMO DELLA PORTA (ca. 1533–1602) executed the dome (FIG. 24-4) after Michelangelo's death, he restored the earlier high design, ignoring Michelangelo's later version. Giacomo's reasons were probably the same ones that had impelled Brunelleschi to use an ogival section for his Florentine dome—greater stability and ease of construction. The result is that the dome seems to rise from its base, rather than rest firmly on it—an effect Michelangelo might not have approved. Nevertheless, Saint Peter's dome is probably the most impressive in the world.



**22-27** ANTONIO DA SANGALLO THE YOUNGER, Palazzo Farnese (looking southeast), Rome, Italy, 1517–1546; completed by MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, 1546–1550.

Pope Paul III's decision to construct a lavish private palace in Rome reflects his ambitions for his papacy. The facade features a rusticated central doorway and alternating triangular and segmental pediments.



**22-28** ANTONIO DA SANGALLO THE YOUNGER, courtyard of the Palazzo Farnese, Rome, Italy, ca. 1517–1546. Third story and attic by MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, 1546–1550.

The interior courtyard of the Palazzo Farnese set the standard for later Italian palaces. It fully expresses the classical order, regularity, simplicity, and dignity of the High Renaissance style in architecture.

**PALAZZO FARNESE** Another architectural project Michelangelo took over at the request of Paul III was the construction of the lavish private palace the pope had commissioned when he was still Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. The future pope had selected ANTONIO DA SANGALLO THE YOUNGER (1483–1546) to design the Palazzo Farnese (FIG. 22-27) in Rome. (At Antonio's death in 1546, Michelangelo assumed control of the building's completion.) Antonio, the youngest of a family of architects, went to Rome around 1503 and became Bramante's draftsman and assistant. He is the perfect example of the professional architect. Indeed, his family constituted an architectural firm, often planning and drafting for other architects.

The broad, majestic front of the Palazzo Farnese asserts to the public the exalted station of a great family. This impressive facade encapsulates the aristocratic epoch that followed the stifling of the nascent middle-class democracy of European cities (especially the Italian cities) by powerful rulers heading centralized states. It is thus significant that Paul chose to enlarge greatly the original rather modest palace to its present form after his accession to the papacy in 1534, reflecting his ambitions both for his family and for the papacy. Facing a spacious paved square, the facade is the very essence of princely dignity in architecture. The *quoins* (rusticated building corners) and cornice firmly anchor the rectangle of the smooth front,

and lines of windows (the central row with alternating triangular and segmental pediments, in Bramante's fashion) mark a majestic beat across it. The window frames are not flush with the wall, as in the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi (FIG. 21-36), but project from its surface, so instead of being a flat, thin plane, the facade is a spatially active three-dimensional mass. The rusticated doorway and second-story balcony, surmounted by the Farnese coat of arms, emphasize the central axis and bring the design's horizontal and vertical forces into harmony. This centralizing feature, absent from the palaces of Michelozzo (FIG. 21-36) and Alberti (FIG. 21-38), is the external opening of a central corridor axis that runs through the entire building and continues in the garden beyond. Around this axis, Antonio arranged the rooms with strict regularity.

The interior courtyard (FIG. 22-28) displays stately column-enframed arches on the first two levels, as in the Roman Colosseum (FIG. 10-1). On the third level, Michelangelo incorporated his sophisticated variation on that theme (based in part on the Colosseum's fourth-story Corinthian pilasters), with overlapping pilasters replacing the weighty columns of Antonio's design. The Palazzo Farnese set the standard for Italian Renaissance palaces and fully expresses the classical order, regularity, simplicity, and dignity of the High Renaissance.

**22-29** ANDREA PALLADIO, Villa Rotonda (formerly Villa Capra), near Vicenza, Italy, ca. 1550–1570.

Andrea Palladio's Villa Rotonda has four identical facades, each one resembling a Roman temple with a columnar porch. In the center is a great dome-covered rotunda modeled on the Pantheon (FIG. 10-49).

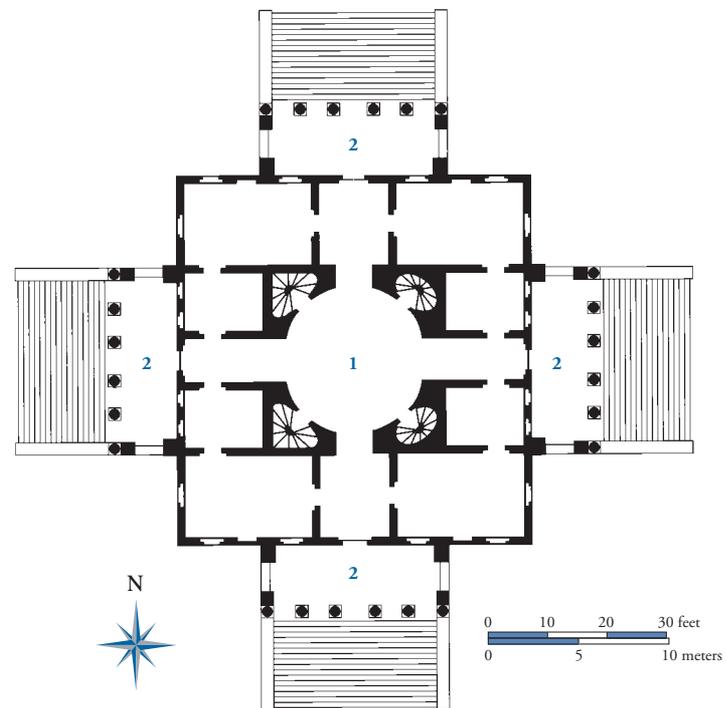


### Architecture: Venice

Venice long had been a major Mediterranean coastal port and served as the gateway to the Orient. Reaching the height of its commercial and political power during the 15th century, the city saw its fortunes decline in the 16th century. Even so, Venice and the Papal States were the only Italian sovereignties to retain their independence during the century of strife. Either France or Spain dominated all others. Although the discoveries in the New World and the economic shift from Italy to areas such as the Netherlands were largely responsible for the decline of Venice, even more immediate and pressing events drained its wealth and power. After their conquest of Constantinople, the Turks began to vie with the Venetians for control of the eastern Mediterranean. The Ottoman Empire evolved into a constant threat to Venice. Early in the century, the European powers of the League of Cambrai also attacked the Italian port city. Formed and led by Pope Julius II, who coveted Venetian holdings on Italy's mainland, the league included Spain, France, and the Holy Roman Empire, in addition to the Papal States. Despite these challenges, Venice developed a flourishing, independent, and influential school of artists.

**ANDREA PALLADIO** The chief architect of the Venetian Republic from 1570 until his death a decade later was Andrea di Pietro, known as ANDREA PALLADIO (1508–1580). (The surname derives from Pallas Athena, Greek goddess of wisdom, an appropriate reference for an architect schooled in the classical tradition of Alberti and Bramante.) Palladio began his career as a stonemason and decorative sculptor in Vicenza, but at age 30 he turned to architecture, the ancient literature on architecture, engineering, topography, and military science. In order to study the ancient buildings firsthand, Palladio made several trips to Rome. In 1556 he illustrated Daniele Barbaro's edition of Vitruvius's *De architectura* and later wrote his own treatise on architecture, *I quattro libri dell'architettura* (*The Four Books of Architecture*), originally published in 1570. That work had a wide-ranging influence on succeeding generations of architects throughout Europe. Palladio's influence outside Italy, most significantly in England and in colonial America (see Chapter 29), was stronger and more lasting than that of any other architect.

Palladio accrued his significant reputation from his many designs for villas, built on the Venetian mainland. Nineteen still stand, and they especially influenced later architects. The same spirit that prompted the



**22-30** ANDREA PALLADIO, plan of the Villa Rotonda (formerly Villa Capra), near Vicenza, Italy, ca. 1550–1570. (1) dome, (2) porch.

Palladio published an influential treatise on architecture in 1570. Consistent with his design theories, all the parts of the Villa Rotonda relate to one another in terms of calculated mathematical ratios.

ancient Romans to build villas in the countryside motivated a similar villa-building boom in 16th-century Venice, which, with its very limited space, was highly congested. But a longing for the countryside was not the only motive. Declining fortunes prompted the Venetians to develop their mainland possessions with new land investment and reclamation projects. Citizens who could afford it set themselves up as aristocratic farmers and developed swamps into productive agricultural land. Wealthy families could look on their villas as providential investments. The villas were thus aristocratic farms surrounded by service outbuildings (like the much later American plantations, which emulated many aspects of Palladio's architectural style). Palladio generally

arranged the outbuildings in long, low wings branching out from the main building and enclosing a large rectangular court area.

**VILLA ROTONDA** Palladio's most famous villa, Villa Rotonda (FIG. 22-29), near Vicenza, is exceptional because the architect did not build it for an aspiring gentleman farmer but for a retired monsignor who wanted a villa for social events. Palladio planned and designed Villa Rotonda, located on a hilltop, as a kind of *belvedere* (literally "beautiful view"; in architecture, a structure with a view of the countryside or the sea), without the usual wings of secondary buildings. It has a central plan (FIG. 22-30) with four identical facades and projecting porches oriented to the four compass points. Each facade of the Villa Rotonda resembles a Roman Ionic temple. In placing a traditional temple porch in front of a dome-covered interior, Palladio doubtless had the Pantheon (FIG. 10-49) in mind as a model. But, as Bramante did in his Tempietto (FIG. 22-22), Palladio transformed his model into a new design that has no parallel in antiquity. Each of the villa's four porches can be used as a platform for enjoying a different

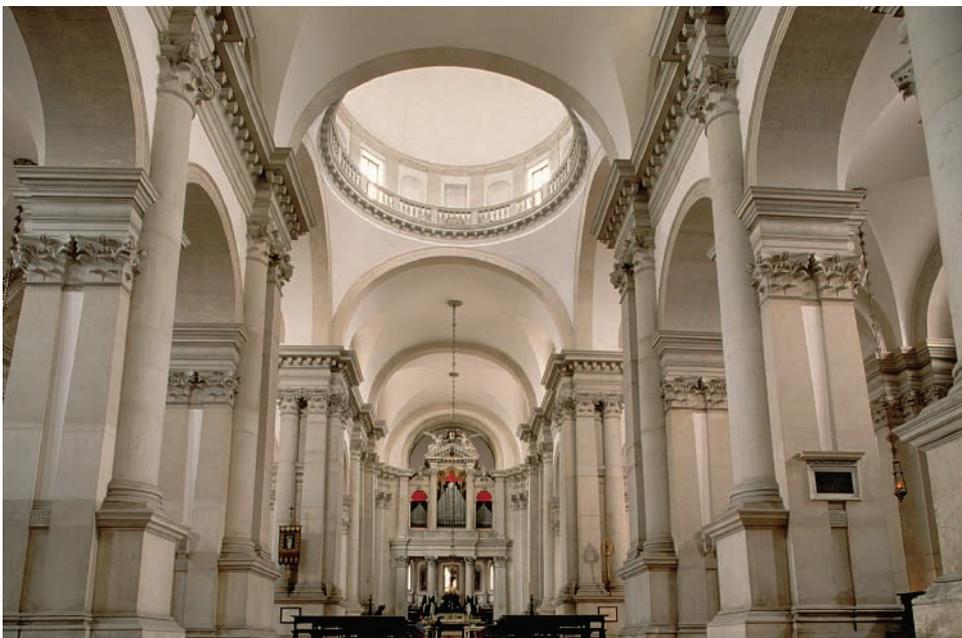
view of the surrounding landscape. In this design, the central dome-covered rotunda logically functions as a kind of circular platform from which visitors may turn in any direction for the preferred view. The result is a building with functional parts systematically related to one another in terms of calculated mathematical relationships. Villa Rotonda embodies all the qualities of self-sufficiency and formal completeness most Renaissance architects sought.

**SAN GIORGIO MAGGIORE** One of the most dramatically placed buildings in Venice is San Giorgio Maggiore (FIG. 22-31), directly across the Grand Canal from Piazza San Marco. Dissatisfied with earlier solutions to the problem of integrating a high central nave and lower aisles into a unified facade design, Palladio solved it by superimposing a tall and narrow classical porch on a low broad one. This solution reflects the building's interior arrangement (FIG. 22-32) and in that sense is strictly logical, but the intersection of two temple facades is irrational and ambiguous, consistent with contemporaneous developments in Mannerist architecture, discussed



**22-31** ANDREA PALLADIO, aerial view of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, Italy, begun 1566.

Dissatisfied with earlier solutions to the problem of integrating a high central nave and lower aisles into a unified facade, Palladio superimposed a tall and narrow classical porch on a low broad one.



**22-32** ANDREA PALLADIO, interior of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, Italy, begun 1566.

In contrast to the somewhat irrational intersection of two temple facades on the exterior of San Giorgio Maggiore, Palladio's interior is strictly logical, consistent with classical architectural theory.

later. Palladio's design also created the illusion of three-dimensional depth, an effect intensified by the strong projection of the central columns and the shadows they cast. The play of shadow across the building's surfaces, its reflection in the water, and its gleaming white against sea and sky create a remarkably colorful effect. The interior of the church lacks the ambiguity of the facade and exhibits strong roots in High Renaissance architectural style. Light floods the interior and crisply defines the contours of the rich wall decorations, all beautifully and "correctly" profiled—the exemplar of what classical architectural theory meant by "rational" organization.

## Venetian Painting

In the 16th century the Venetians developed a distinctive painting style. Artists in the maritime republic showed a special interest in recording the effect of Venice's soft-colored light on figures and landscapes, and Venetian paintings of the High and Late Renaissance are easy to distinguish from contemporaneous works in Florence and Rome.

**GIOVANNI BELLINI** One artist who contributed significantly to creating the High Renaissance painting style in Venice was GIOVANNI BELLINI (ca. 1430–1516). Trained in the International

Style (see Chapter 19) by his father Jacopo, a student of Gentile da Fabriano, Bellini worked in the family shop and did not develop his own style until after his father's death in 1470. His early independent works show the dominant influence of his brother-in-law Andrea Mantegna. But in the late 1470s, he came into contact with the work of the Sicilian-born painter Antonello da Messina (ca. 1430–1479). Antonello received his early training in Naples, where he must have become familiar with Flemish painting and mastered using mixed oil (see "Tempera and Oil Painting," Chapter 20, page 523). This more flexible medium is wider in coloristic range than either tempera or fresco. Antonello arrived in Venice in 1475 and during his two-year stay introduced his Venetian colleagues to the possibilities the new oil technique offered. As a direct result of contact with Antonello, Bellini abandoned Mantegna's harsh linear style and developed a sensuous coloristic manner that was to characterize Venetian painting for a century.

**SAN ZACCARIA ALTARPIECE** Bellini earned great recognition for his many Madonnas, which he painted both in half-length (with or without accompanying saints) on small devotional panels and in full-length on large, monumental altarpieces of the *sacra conversazione* (holy conversation) type. In the *sacra conversazione*, which gained great popularity as a theme for religious paintings from the middle of the 15th century on, saints from different epochs occupy the same space and seem to converse either with each other or with the audience. (Raphael employed much the same conceit in his *School of Athens*, FIG. 22-9, where he gathered Greek philosophers of different eras.) Bellini carried on the tradition in one of his earliest major commissions, the *San Zaccaria Altarpiece* (FIG. 22-33). As was conventional, the Virgin Mary sits enthroned, holding the Christ Child, with saints flanking her. Bellini placed the group in a carefully painted shrine. Attributes aid the identification of all the saints: Saint Lucy holding a tray with her plucked-out eyes displayed on it; Saint Peter with his key and book; Saint Catherine with the palm of martyrdom and the broken wheel; and Saint Jerome with a book (representing his translation of the Bible into Latin). At the foot of the throne sits an angel playing a viol. The painting radiates a feeling of serenity and spiritual calm. Viewers derive this sense less from the figures (no interaction occurs among them) than from Bellini's harmonious and balanced presentation of color and light. Line is not the chief agent of form, as it generally is in paintings produced in Rome and Florence. Indeed, outlines dissolve in light and shadow. Glowing color produces a soft radiance that envelops the forms with an atmospheric haze and enhances their majestic serenity.



**22-33** GIOVANNI BELLINI, *San Zaccaria Altarpiece*, 1505. Oil on wood transferred to canvas, 16' 5½" × 7' 9". San Zaccaria, Venice.

In this *sacra conversazione* uniting saints from different eras, Bellini created a feeling of serenity and spiritual calm through the harmonious and balanced presentation of color and light.



**22-34** GIOVANNI BELLINI and TITIAN, *Feast of the Gods*, from the Camerino d'Alabastro, Palazzo Ducale, Ferrara, Italy, 1529. Oil on canvas, 5' 7" × 6' 2". National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Widener Collection).

In *Feast of the Gods*, based on Ovid's *Fasti*, Bellini developed a new kind of mythological painting in which the Olympian deities appear as peasants enjoying a picnic in the soft afternoon light.

**FEAST OF THE GODS** In painting *Feast of the Gods* (FIG. 22-34), Bellini drew from the work of one of his students, Giorgione da Castelfranco (discussed next), who developed his master's landscape backgrounds into poetic Arcadian reveries. Derived from Arcadia, a region in southern Greece, the term *Arcadian* referred, by the time of the Renaissance, to an idyllic place of rural, rustic peace and simplicity. After Giorgione's premature death, Bellini embraced his student's interests and, in *Feast of the Gods*, developed a new kind of mythological painting. The duke of Ferrara, Alfonso d'Este, commissioned this work for a room in the Palazzo Ducale. Although Bellini drew some of the figures from the standard repertoire of Greco-Roman art—most notably, the nymph carrying a vase on her head and the sleeping nymph in the lower right corner—the Olympian gods appear as peasants enjoying a picnic in a shady glade. Bellini's source was Ovid's *Fasti*, which describes a banquet of the gods. The artist spread the figures across the foreground. Satyrs attend the gods, nymphs bring jugs of wine, a child draws from a keg, couples engage in love play, and the sleeping nymph with exposed breast receives amorous attention. The mellow light of a long afternoon glows softly

around the gathering, caressing the surfaces of colorful fabrics, smooth flesh, and polished metal. Here, Bellini communicated the delight the Venetian school took in the beauty of texture revealed by the full resources of gently and subtly harmonized color. Behind the warm, lush tones of the figures, a background of cool green tree-filled glades extends into the distance. At the right, a screen of trees creates a verdant shelter. The atmosphere is idyllic, a lush countryside providing a setting for the never-ending pleasure of the immortal gods.

With Bellini, Venetian art became the great complement of the schools of Florence and Rome. The Venetians' instrument was color, that of the Florentines and Romans sculptural form. Scholars often distill the contrast between these two approaches down to *colorito* (colored or painted) versus *disegno* (drawing and design). Whereas most central Italian artists emphasized careful design preparation based on preliminary drawing (see "Renaissance Drawings," page 581), Venetian artists focused on color and the process of paint application. In addition, the general thematic focus of their work differed. Venetian artists painted the poetry of the senses and delighted in nature's beauty and the pleasures of humanity. Artists in Florence and

**22-35** GIORGIONE DA CASTELFRANCO (and/or TITIAN), *Pastoral Symphony*, ca. 1508–1510. Oil on canvas, 3' 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  $\times$  4' 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Louvre, Paris.

Venetian art is often described as poetic. In this painting, Giorgione so eloquently evoked the pastoral mood that the uncertainty about the picture's meaning is not distressing. The mood and rich color are enough.



**22-36** GIORGIONE DA CASTELFRANCO, *The Tempest*, ca. 1510. Oil on canvas, 2' 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ "  $\times$  2' 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice.

The subject of this painting set in a lush landscape beneath a stormy sky has never been identified. The uncertainty contributes to the painting's enigmatic quality and intriguing air and may have been intentional.



Rome gravitated toward more intellectual themes—the epic of humanity, the masculine virtues, the grandeur of the ideal, and the lofty conceptions of religion involving the heroic and sublime. Much of the history of later Western art involves a dialogue between these two traditions.

Describing Venetian art as “poetic” is particularly appropriate, given the development of *poesia*, or painting meant to evoke moods in a manner similar to poetry. Both classical and Renaissance poetry inspired Venetian artists, and their paintings focused on the lyrical and sensual. Thus, in many Venetian artworks, discerning concrete narratives or subjects (in the traditional sense) is virtually impossible.

**GIORGIONE** The Venetian artist who deserves much of the credit for developing this poetic manner of painting was GIORGIONE DA CASTELFRANCO (ca. 1477–1510). Giorgione’s so-called *Pastoral Symphony* (FIG. 22-35; many scholars believe it is an early work of his student Titian) exemplifies *poesia* and surely inspired the late Arcadian scenes by Bellini, his teacher. Out of dense shadow emerge the soft forms of figures and landscape. Giorgione cast a mood of tranquil reverie and dreaminess over the entire scene, evoking the landscape of a lost but never-forgotten paradise. The theme is as enigmatic as the lighting. Two nude women, accompanied by two clothed young men, occupy the rich, abundant landscape through which a shepherd passes. In the distance, a villa crowns a hill. The artist so eloquently evoked the pastoral mood that the viewer does not find the uncertainty about the picture’s precise meaning distressing. The mood is enough. The shepherd symbolizes the poet. The pipes and lute symbolize his poetry. The two women accompanying the young men may be thought of as their invisible inspiration, their muses. One turns to lift water from the sacred well of poetic inspiration. The voluptuous bodies of the women, softly modulated by the smoky shadow, became the standard in Venetian art. The fullness of their figures contributes to their effect as poetic personifications of nature’s abundance. As a pastoral poet in the pictorial medium and one of the greatest masters in the handling of light and color, Giorgione praised the beauty of nature, music, women, and pleasure. Vasari reported that Giorgione was an accomplished lutenist and singer, and adjectives from poetry and music seem well suited for describing the pastoral air and muted chords of his painting.

*The Tempest* (FIG. 22-36) displays this same interest in the poetic qualities of the natural landscape inhabited by humans. Dominating the scene is a lush landscape. Stormy skies and lightning in the middle background threaten the tranquility of the pastoral setting. Pushed off to both sides are the human figures—a young woman nursing a baby in the right foreground and a man carrying a *halberd* (a combination spear and battle-ax) on the left. Although the attribution of this work to Giorgione seems secure, much scholarly debate has centered on the painting’s subject, fueled by the fact that X-rays of the canvas have revealed that a nude woman originally stood where Giorgione subsequently placed the man. This flexibility in subject has led many art historians to believe that Giorgione did not intend the painting to have a definitive narrative, which is appropriate for a Venetian poetic rendering. Other scholars have suggested mythological and biblical narratives. This uncertainty about the subject contributes to the painting’s enigmatic quality and intriguing air.

**TITIAN** Giorgione’s Arcadianism passed not only to his much older yet constantly inquisitive master, Bellini, but also to Tiziano Vecelli, called TITIAN (ca. 1490–1576) in English. Titian was a supreme colorist and the most extraordinary and prolific of the great Venetian painters. His remarkable coloristic sense and ability



22-37 TITIAN, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1516–1518. Oil on wood, 22' 7½" × 11' 10". Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice.

Titian won renown for his ability to convey light through color. In this dramatic depiction of the Virgin Mary’s ascent to Heaven, the golden clouds seem to glow and radiate light into the church.

to convey light through color emerge in a major altarpiece, *Assumption of the Virgin* (FIG. 22-37), painted in oils for the main altar of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice. Commissioned by the prior of this Franciscan basilica, the monumental altarpiece (close to 23 feet high) depicts the glorious ascent of the Virgin’s body to Heaven on a great white cloud borne aloft by putti. Above, golden clouds, so luminous they seem to glow and radiate light into the church, envelop the Virgin. God the Father appears above, awaiting Mary with open arms. Below, apostles gesticulate wildly as they witness this momentous event. Through vibrant color, Titian infused the image with a drama and intensity that assured his lofty reputation, then and now.

**22-38** TITIAN, *Madonna of the Pesaro Family*, 1519–1526. Oil on canvas, 15' 11" × 8' 10". Pesaro Chapel, Santa Maria dei Frari, Venice.

In this dynamic composition presaging a new kind of pictorial design, Titian placed the figures on a steep diagonal, positioning the Madonna, the focus of the composition, well off the central axis.

**PESARO MADONNA** Trained by both Bellini and Giorgione, Titian learned so well from them that even today scholars cannot concur about the degree of his participation in their later works. However, it is clear that Titian completed several of Bellini's and Giorgione's unfinished paintings, including the background of Bellini's *Feast of the Gods* (FIG. 22-34). On Bellini's death in 1516, the Republic of Venice appointed Titian its official painter. Shortly thereafter, Bishop Jacopo Pesaro commissioned him to paint *Madonna of the Pesaro Family* (FIG. 22-38) and presented it to the church of the Frari, which already housed Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*. This new work, with its rich surface textures and dazzling display of color in all its nuances, furthered Titian's reputation and established his personal style.

Pesaro, bishop of Paphos in Cyprus and commander of the papal fleet, had led a successful expedition in 1502 against the Turks during the Venetian-Turkish war and commissioned this painting in gratitude. In a stately sunlit setting in what may be the Madonna's palace in Heaven, Mary receives the commander, who kneels dutifully at the foot of her throne. A soldier (Saint George?) behind the commander carries a banner with the *escutcheons* (shields with coats of arms) of the Borgia (Pope Alexander VI) and of Pesaro. Behind him is a turbaned Turk, a prisoner of war of the Christian forces. Saint Peter appears seated on the steps of the throne, and Saint Francis introduces other Pesaro family members (all male—Italian depictions of donors in this era typically excluded women and children), who kneel solemnly in the right foreground. Thus, Titian entwined the human and the heavenly, depicting the Madonna and saints honoring the achievements of a specific man in this particular world. A quite worldly transaction takes place (albeit beneath a heavenly cloud bearing angels) between a queen and her court and loyal servants. Titian constructed this tableau in terms of Renaissance protocol and courtly splendor.

A prime characteristic of High Renaissance painting is the massing of monumental figures, singly and in groups, within a weighty and majestic architecture. But here Titian did not compose a horizontal and symmetrical arrangement, as did Leonardo in *Last Supper* (FIG. 22-4) and Raphael in *School of Athens* (FIG. 22-9). Rather, he placed the figures on a steep diagonal, positioning the Madonna, the focus of the composition, well off the central axis. Titian drew attention to her with the perspective lines, the inclination of the figures, and the directional lines of gaze and gesture. The banner inclining toward the left beautifully brings the design into equilibrium, balancing the rightward and upward tendencies of its main direction. This kind of composition is more dynamic than most High Renaissance examples and presaged a new kind of pictorial design—one built on movement rather than repose.



**BACCHUS AND ARIADNE** In 1511 the duke of Ferrara, Alfonso d'Este (r. 1505–1534), asked Titian to produce a painting for his Camerino d'Alabastro (small room of alabaster). The patron had requested one bacchanalian scene each from Titian, Bellini, Raphael, and Fra Bartolommeo. Both Raphael and Fra Bartolommeo died before fulfilling the commission, and Bellini painted only one scene (FIG. 22-34), leaving Titian to produce three. One of these three paintings is *Meeting of Bacchus and Ariadne* (FIG. 22-39). Bacchus, accompanied by a boisterous and noisy group, arrives in a leopard-drawn chariot to save Ariadne, whom Theseus abandoned on the island of Naxos. In this scene, Titian revealed his debt to classical art. He derived one of the figures, entwined with snakes, from the recently unearthed *Laocoön* (FIG. 5-88), which also made an indelible impression on Michelangelo and many others. Titian's rich and luminous colors (see "Palma il Giovane on Titian," page 609) add greatly to the sensuous appeal of this painting, making it perfect for Alfonso's "pleasure chamber."

### Palma il Giovane on Titian

An important change occurring in Titian's time was the almost universal adoption of canvas, with its rough-textured surface, in place of wood panels for paintings. Titian's works (FIGS. 22-38 to 22-41) established oil color on canvas as the typical medium of the Western pictorial tradition thereafter. One of Titian's students and collaborators was Jacopo Negretti, known as Palma il Giovane (ca. 1548–1628), or "Palma the Younger." He wrote a valuable account of his teacher's working methods and described how he used the new medium to great advantage:

Titian [employed] a great mass of colors, which served . . . as a base for the compositions. . . I too have seen some of these, formed with bold strokes made with brushes laden with colors, sometimes of a pure red earth, which he used, so to speak, for a middle tone, and at other times of white lead; and with the same brush tinted with red, black and yellow he formed a highlight; and observing these princi-

ples he made the promise of an exceptional figure appear in four brushstrokes. . . Having constructed these precious foundations he used to turn his pictures to the wall and leave them there without looking at them, sometimes for several months. When he wanted to apply his brush again he would examine them with the utmost rigor . . . to see if he could find any faults. . . In this way, working on the figures and revising them, he brought them to the most perfect symmetry that the beauty of art and nature can reveal. . . [T]hus he gradually covered those quintessential forms with living flesh, bringing them by many stages to a state in which they lacked only the breath of life. He never painted a figure all at once and . . . in the last stages he painted more with his fingers than his brushes.\*

\* Quoted in Francesco Valcanover, "An Introduction to Titian," in Susanna Biadene and Mary Yakush, eds., *Titian: Prince of Painters* (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 1990), 23–24.



**22-39** TITIAN, *Meeting of Bacchus and Ariadne*, from the Camerino d'Alabastro, Palazzo Ducale, Ferrara, Italy, 1522–1523. Oil on canvas, 5' 9" × 6' 3". National Gallery, London.

Titian's rich and luminous colors add greatly to the sensuous appeal of this mythological painting in which he based one of the figures on the recently unearthed ancient statue of *Laocoön* (FIG. 5-88).



**22-40** TITIAN, *Venus of Urbino*, 1538. Oil on canvas, 3' 11" × 5' 5". Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Titian established oil-based pigments on canvas as the preferred painting medium in Western art. Here, he also set the standard for representations of the reclining female nude, whether divine or mortal.

**VENUS OF URBINO** In 1538, at the height of his powers, Titian painted the so-called *Venus of Urbino* (FIG. 22-40) for Guidobaldo II, who became the duke of Urbino the following year (r. 1539–1574). The title (given to the painting later) elevates to the status of classical mythology what is actually a representation of an Italian woman in her bedchamber. Indeed, no evidence suggests that Guidobaldo intended the commission as anything more than a female nude for his private enjoyment—the embodiment of womanly beauty and of the qualities he sought in a bride. Whether the subject is divine or mortal, Titian based his version on an earlier (and pioneering) painting of Venus (not illustrated) by Giorgione. Here, Titian established the compositional elements and the standard for paintings of the reclining female nude, regardless of the many variations that ensued. This “Venus” reclines on the gentle slope of her luxurious pillowed couch, the linear play of the draperies contrasting with her body’s sleek continuous volume. At her feet is a pendant (balancing) figure—in this case, a slumbering lapdog. Behind her, a simple drape both places her figure emphatically in the foreground and indicates a vista into the background at the right half of the picture. Two servants bend over a chest, apparently searching for garments (Renaissance households stored clothing in carved wooden chests called *cassoni*) to clothe “Venus.” Beyond them, a smaller vista opens into a landscape. Titian masterfully constructed the view backward into space and the division of the space into progressively smaller units.

As in other Venetian paintings, color plays a prominent role in *Venus of Urbino*. The red tones of the matron’s skirt and the muted reds of the tapestries against the neutral whites of the matron’s sleeves and the kneeling girl’s gown echo the deep Venetian reds set

off against the pale neutral whites of the linen and the warm ivory gold of the flesh. The viewer must study the picture carefully to realize the subtlety of color planning. For instance, the two deep reds (in the foreground cushions and in the background skirt) play a critical role in the composition as a gauge of distance and as indicators of an implied diagonal opposed to the real one of the reclining figure. Here, Titian used color not simply to record surface appearance but also to organize his placement of forms.

**ISABELLA D’ESTE** Titian was also a highly esteemed portraitist and in great demand. More than 50 portraits by his hand survive. Among the best is *Isabella d’Este* (FIG. 22-41), Titian’s portrait of one of the most prominent women of the Renaissance (see “Women in the Renaissance Art World,” page 611). Isabella was the daughter of the duke of Ferrara. At 16, she married Francesco Gonzaga, marquis of Mantua, and through her patronage of art and music, she was instrumental in developing the Mantuan court into an important cultural center. Portraits by Titian generally emphasize his psychological reading of the subject’s head and hands. Thus, Titian sharply highlighted Isabella’s face, whereas her black dress fades into the undefined darkness of the background. The unseen light source also illuminates Isabella’s hands, and Titian painted her sleeves with incredible detail to further draw viewers’ attention to her hands. This portrait reveals not only Titian’s skill but the patron’s wish as well. Painted when Isabella was 60 years old, at her request it depicts her in her 20s. Titian used an earlier portrait of her as his guide, but his portrait is no copy. Rather, it is a distinctive portrayal of his poised and self-assured patron that owes little to its model.

## Women in the Renaissance Art World

The Renaissance art world was decidedly male-dominated. Few women could become professional artists because of the obstacles they faced. In particular, for centuries, art-training practices mandating residence at a master's house (see "Artists' Guilds," Chapter 19, page 506) precluded women from acquiring the necessary experience. In addition, social proscriptions, such as those preventing women from drawing from nude models, further hampered an aspiring female artist's advancement through the accepted avenues of artistic training.

Still, there were determined women who surmounted these barriers and were able to develop not only considerable bodies of work but enviable reputations as well. One was Sofonisba Anguissola (FIG. 22-46), who was so accomplished that she can be considered the first Italian woman to have ascended to the level of international art celebrity. Lavinia Fontana (1552–1614) also achieved notable success, and her paintings constitute the largest surviving body of work by any woman artist before 1700. Fontana learned her craft from her father, a leading Bolognese painter. (Paternal training was the norm for aspiring women artists.) She was in demand as a portraitist and received commissions from important patrons, including members of the dominant Habsburg family. She even spent time as an official painter to the papal court in Rome.

Perhaps more challenging for women than the road to becoming a professional painter was the mastery of sculpture, made more difficult by the physical demands of the medium. Yet Properzia de' Rossi (ca. 1490–1530) established herself as a professional sculptor and was the only woman artist that Giorgio Vasari included in his comprehensive publication, *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*. Active in the early 16th century, she died of the plague in 1530, bringing her promising career to an early end.

Beyond the realm of art production, Renaissance women had a significant impact as art patrons. Scholars only recently have begun to explore systematically the role of women as patrons. As a result, current knowledge is sketchy at best but suggests that women played a much more extensive role than previously acknowledged. Among the problems researchers face in their quest to clarify women's participation as patrons is that women often wielded their influence and decision-making power behind the scenes. Many of them acquired their positions through marriage. Their power was thus indirect and provisional, based on their husbands' wealth and status. Thus, documentation of the networks within which women patrons operated and of the processes they used to exert power in a male-dominated society is less substantive than that available for male patrons.

One of the most important Renaissance patrons, male or female, was Isabella d'Este (1474–1539), marchioness of Mantua. Brought up in the cultured princely court of Ferrara (southwest of Venice), Isabella married Francesco Gonzaga (1466–1519), marquis of Mantua, in 1490. The marriage gave Isabella access to the position and wealth necessary to pursue her interest in becoming a major art patron. An avid collector, she enlisted the aid of agents who scoured Italy for appealing objects. Isabella did not limit her collection to painting and sculpture but included ceramics, glassware, gems, cameos, medals, classical texts, musical manuscripts, and musical instruments.

Isabella was undoubtedly a proud and ambitious woman well aware of how art could boost her fame and reputation. Accordingly, she commissioned several portraits of herself from the most esteemed artists of her day—Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea Mantegna, and Titian



**22-41** TITIAN, *Isabella d'Este*, 1534–1536. Oil on canvas, 3' 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 2' 1 $\frac{3}{16}$ ". Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Isabella d'Este was one of the most powerful women of the Renaissance era. When, at age 60, she commissioned Titian to paint her portrait, she insisted that the artist depict her in her 20s.

(FIG. 22-41). The detail and complexity of many of her contracts with artists reveal her insistence on control over the artworks.

Other Renaissance women positioned themselves as serious art patrons. One was Caterina Sforza (1462–1509), daughter of Galeazzo Maria Sforza (heir to the duchy of Milan), who married Girolamo Riario in 1484. The death in 1488 of her husband, lord of Imola and count of Forlì, gave Caterina Sforza access to power denied most women. Another female art patron was Lucrezia Tornabuoni (married to Piero di Cosimo de' Medici), one of many Medici, both men and women, who earned reputations as unparalleled art patrons. Further archival investigation of women's roles in Renaissance Italy undoubtedly will produce more evidence of how women established themselves as patrons and artists and the extent to which they contributed to the flourishing of Renaissance art.



**22-42** JACOPO DA PONTORMO, *Entombment of Christ*, Capponi Chapel, Santa Felicità, Florence, Italy, 1525–1528. Oil on wood, 10' 3" × 6' 4".

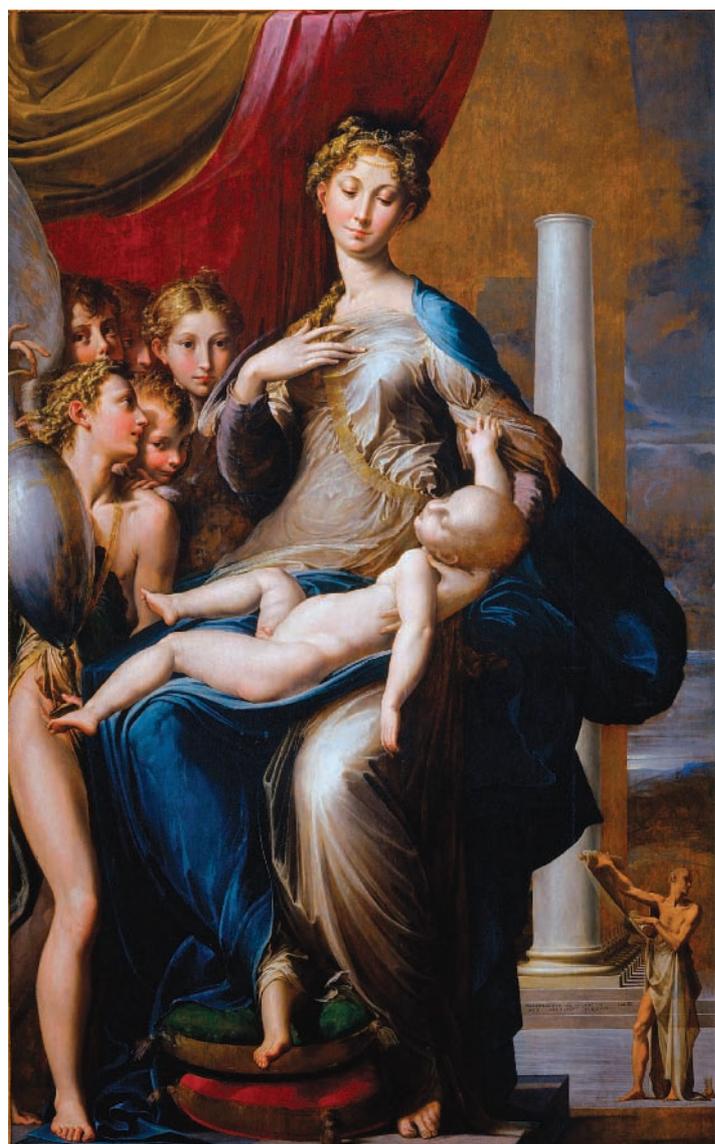
Mannerist paintings such as this one represent a departure from the compositions of the earlier Renaissance. Instead of concentrating masses in the center of the painting, Pontormo left a void.

## MANNERISM

The Renaissance style of Rome, Florence, and Venice dominated Italian painting, sculpture, and architecture for most of the 16th century, but already in the 1520s another style—Mannerism—emerged in reaction to it. *Mannerism* is a term derived from the Italian word *maniera*, meaning “style” or “manner.” In the field of art history, the term *style* usually refers to a characteristic or representative mode, especially of an artist or period (for example, Leonardo’s style or Gothic style). Style also can refer to an absolute quality of fashion (for example, someone has “style”). Mannerism’s style (or representative mode) is characterized by style (being stylish, cultured, elegant).

### Painting

Among the features most closely associated with Mannerism is artifice. Of course, all art involves artifice, in the sense that art is not



**22-43** PARMIGIANINO, *Madonna with the Long Neck*, from the Baiardi Chapel, Santa Maria dei Servi, Parma, Italy, 1534–1540. Oil on wood, 7' 1" × 4' 4". Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

Parmigianino’s Madonna displays the stylish elegance that was a principal aim of Mannerism. Mary has a small oval head, a long slender neck, attenuated hands, and a sinuous body.

“natural”—it is a representation of a scene or idea. But many artists, including High Renaissance painters such as Leonardo and Raphael, chose to conceal that artifice by using such devices as perspective and shading to make their art look natural. In contrast, Mannerist painters consciously revealed the constructed nature of their art. In other words, Renaissance artists generally strove to create art that appeared natural, whereas Mannerist artists were less inclined to disguise the contrived nature of art production. This is why artifice is a central feature of discussions about Mannerism, and why Mannerist works can seem, appropriately, “mannered.” The conscious display of artifice in Mannerism often reveals itself in imbalanced compositions and unusual complexities, both visual and conceptual. Ambiguous space, departures from expected conventions, and unique presentations of traditional themes also surface frequently in Mannerist art.

**PONTORMO** *Entombment of Christ* (FIG. 22-42) by JACOPO DA PONTORMO (1494–1557) exhibits almost all the stylistic features char-



**22-44** BRONZINO, *Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time*, ca. 1546. Oil on wood, 5' 1" × 4' 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". National Gallery, London.

In this painting of Cupid fondling his mother Venus, Bronzino demonstrated a fondness for learned allegories with lascivious undertones. As in many Mannerist paintings, the meaning here is ambiguous.

tions (for example, the torso of the foreground figure bends in an anatomically impossible way), elastic elongation of the limbs, and heads rendered as uniformly small and oval. The contrasting colors, primarily light blues and pinks, add to the dynamism and complexity of the work. The painting represents a departure from the balanced, harmoniously structured compositions of the High Renaissance.

**PARMIGIANINO** Girolamo Francesco Maria Mazzola of Parma, known as PARMIGIANINO (1503–1540), achieved in his best-known work, *Madonna with the Long Neck* (FIG. 22-43), the elegant stylishness that was a principal aim of Mannerism. In Parmigianino's hands, this traditional, usually sedate, religious subject became a picture of exquisite grace and precious sweetness. The Madonna's small oval head, her long and slender neck, the otherworldly attenuation and delicacy of her hand, and the sinuous, swaying elongation of her frame—all are marks of the aristocratic, sumptuously courtly taste of a later phase of Mannerism. Parmigianino amplified

acteristic of Mannerism's early phase in painting. Christ's descent from the cross and subsequent entombment had frequently been depicted in art (see "The Life of Jesus in Art," Chapter 11, pages 296–297, or pages xxvi–xxvii in Volume II), and Pontormo exploited the familiarity that 16th-century viewers would have had by playing off their expectations. For example, he omitted from the painting both the cross and Christ's tomb, so that scholars continue to debate whether he meant to represent the *Descent from the Cross* or the *Entombment*. And instead of presenting the action as occurring across the perpendicular picture plane, as artists such as Raphael and Rogier van der Weyden (FIG. 20-8) had done in their paintings of these episodes from Christ's Passion, Pontormo rotated the conventional figural groups along a vertical axis. As a result, the Virgin Mary falls back (away from the viewer) as she releases her dead son's hand. Unlike High Renaissance artists, who had concentrated their masses in the center of the painting, Pontormo left a void. This emptiness accentuates the grouping of hands that fill that hole, calling attention to the void—symbolic of loss and grief. The artist enhanced the painting's ambiguity with the curiously anxious glances the figures cast in all directions. (The bearded young man at the upper right who looks out at the viewer is probably a self-portrait of Pontormo.) Athletic bending and twisting characterize many of the figures, with distortions

this elegance by expanding the Madonna's form as viewed from head to toe. On the left stands a bevy of angelic creatures, melting with emotions as soft and smooth as their limbs. On the right, the artist included a line of columns without capitals and an enigmatic figure with a scroll, whose distance from the foreground is immeasurable and ambiguous—the antithesis of rational Renaissance perspectival diminution of size with distance.

Although the elegance and sophisticated beauty of the painting are due in large part to the Madonna's attenuated limbs, that exaggeration is not solely decorative in purpose. *Madonna with the Long Neck* takes its subject from a simile in medieval hymns that compared the Virgin's neck to a great ivory tower or column, such as that which Parmigianino depicted to the right of the Madonna. Thus, the work contains religious meaning in addition to the power derived from its beauty alone.

**BRONZINO** *Venus, Cupid, Folly, and Time* (FIG. 22-44), by Agnolo di Cosimo, called BRONZINO (1503–1572), also displays all the chief features of Mannerist painting. A pupil of Pontormo, Bronzino was a Florentine and painter to the first grand duke of Tuscany, Cosimo I de' Medici (r. 1537–1574). In this painting, which Cosimo I commissioned as a gift for King Francis I of France,



**22-45** BRONZINO, *Portrait of a Young Man*, ca. 1530–1545. Oil on wood, 3' 1½" × 2' 5½". Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (H. O. Havemeyer Collection, bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929).

This depiction of a young intellectual with a calculated attitude of nonchalance is typical of Mannerist portraiture. Bronzino recorded the rank and station but not the personality of his subject.

Bronzino demonstrated the Mannerists' fondness for learned allegories that often had lascivious undertones, a shift from the simple and monumental statements and forms of the High Renaissance. Bronzino depicted Cupid fondling his mother Venus, while Folly prepares to shower them with rose petals. Time, who appears in the upper right corner, draws back the curtain to reveal the playful incest in progress. Other figures in the painting represent other human qualities and emotions, including Envy. The masks, a favorite device of the Mannerists, symbolize deceit. The picture seems to suggest that love—accompanied by envy and plagued by inconstancy—is foolish and that lovers will discover its folly in time. But as in many Mannerist paintings, the meaning here is ambiguous, and interpretations of the painting vary. Compositionally, Bronzino placed the figures around the front plane, and they almost entirely block the space. The contours are strong and sculptural, the surfaces of enamel smoothness. Of special interest are the heads, hands, and feet, for the Mannerists considered the extremities the carriers of grace, and the clever depiction of them as evidence of artistic skill.

Mannerist painters most often achieved in portraiture the sophisticated elegance they sought. Bronzino's *Portrait of a Young Man* (FIG. 22-45) exemplifies Mannerist portraiture. The subject is a

**22-46**  
SOFONISBA  
ANGUISSOLA,  
*Portrait of the  
Artist's Sisters  
and Brother*,  
ca. 1555. Oil on  
panel, 2' 5¼" ×  
3' 1½". Methuen  
Collection,  
Corsham Court,  
Wiltshire.

Anguissola was the leading female artist of her time. Her contemporaries greatly admired her use of relaxed poses and expressions in intimate and informal group portraits like this one of her own family.





**22-47** TINTORETTO, *Last Supper*, 1594. Oil on canvas, 12' × 18' 8". San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice.

Tintoretto adopted many Mannerist pictorial devices to produce oil paintings imbued with emotional power, depth of spiritual vision, glowing Venetian color schemes, and dramatic lighting.

proud youth—a man of books and intellectual society, rather than a merchant or lowly laborer. His cool demeanor seems carefully affected, a calculated attitude of nonchalance. This staid and reserved formality is a standard component of Mannerist portraits. It asserts the rank and station but not the personality of the subject. In Bronzino's portrait, the haughty poise, the graceful long-fingered hands, the book, the carved faces of the furniture, and the severe architecture all suggest the traits and environment of the highbred, disdainful patrician. The somber black of the young man's Spanish doublet and cap and the room's slightly acid, olive-green walls make for a deeply restrained color scheme. Bronzino created a muted background for the man's sharply defined, asymmetrical silhouette that contradicts his impassive pose.

**SOFONISBA ANGISSOLA** The aloof formality of Bronzino's portrait is much relaxed in the portraiture of SOFONISBA ANGISSOLA (ca. 1532–1625). A northern Italian from Cremona, Anguissola introduced a new kind of group portrait of irresistible charm, characterized by an informal intimacy and subjects that are often moving, conversing, or engaged in activities. Like many of the other works she did before moving to Spain in 1559, the portrait illustrated here (FIG. 22-46) represents members of her family. Against a neutral ground, Anguissola placed her two sisters and brother in an affectionate pose meant not for official display but for private showing. The sisters, wearing matching striped gowns, flank their brother, who caresses a lapdog. The older sister (at the left) summons the dignity required

for the occasion, while the boy looks quizzically at the portraitist with an expression of naive curiosity, and the other girl diverts her attention toward something or someone to the painter's left.

Anguissola's use of relaxed poses and expressions, her sympathetic personal presentation, and her graceful treatment of the forms did not escape the attention of her contemporaries, who praised her highly (see "Women in the Renaissance Art World," page 611). Her recognized talents allowed her to consort with esteemed individuals. She knew and learned from the aged Michelangelo, was court painter to Philip II (r. 1556–1598) of Spain, and, at the end of her life, gave advice on art to a young admirer of her work, Anthony Van Dyck, the great Flemish master (see Chapter 25).

**TINTORETTO** Venetian painting of the later 16th century built on established High Renaissance ideas but incorporated many elements of the Mannerist style. Jacopo Robusti, known as TINTORETTO (1518–1594), claimed to be a student of Titian and aspired to combine Titian's color with Michelangelo's drawing, but art historians consider Tintoretto the outstanding Venetian representative of Mannerism. He adopted many Mannerist pictorial devices, which he employed to produce works imbued with dramatic power, depth of spiritual vision, and glowing Venetian color schemes.

Toward the end of Tintoretto's life, his art became spiritual, even visionary, as solid forms melted away into swirling clouds of dark shot through with fitful light. In Tintoretto's *Last Supper* (FIG. 22-47), painted for the right wall next to the high altar in Andrea Palladio's



**22-48** PAOLO VERONESE, *Christ in the House of Levi*, from the refectory of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, Italy, 1573. Oil on canvas, 18' 3" × 42'. Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice.

Veronese's paintings feature superb color and majestic classical settings. The Catholic Church accused him of impiety for including dogs and dwarfs near Christ in this work originally titled *Last Supper*.

church of San Giorgio Maggiore (FIG. 22-32), the figures appear in a dark interior illuminated by a single light in the upper left of the image. The shimmering halos establish the biblical nature of the scene. The ability of this dramatic scene to engage viewers was well in keeping with Counter-Reformation ideals (see "Religious Art in Counter-Reformation Italy," page 596) and the Catholic Church's belief in the didactic nature of religious art.

*Last Supper* incorporates many Mannerist elements, including an imbalanced composition and visual complexity. In terms of design, the contrast with Leonardo's *Last Supper* (FIG. 22-4) is both extreme and instructive. Leonardo's composition, balanced and symmetrical, parallels the picture plane in a geometrically organized and closed space. The figure of Christ is the tranquil center of the drama and the perspectival focus. In Tintoretto's painting, Christ is above and beyond the converging perspective lines that race diagonally away from the picture surface, creating disturbing effects of limitless depth and motion. The viewer locates Tintoretto's Christ via the light flaring, beaconlike, out of darkness. The contrast of the two works reflects the direction Renaissance painting took in the 16th century, as it moved away from architectonic clarity of space and neutral lighting toward the dynamic perspectives and dramatic chiaroscuro of the coming Baroque.

**VERONESE** Among the great Venetian masters was Paolo Caliari of Verona, called PAOLO VERONESE (1528–1588). Whereas Tintoretto gloried in monumental drama and deep perspectives, Veronese specialized in splendid pageantry painted in superb color and set within majestic classical architecture. Like Tintoretto, Veronese painted on a huge scale and often produced canvases as large as 20 by 30 feet or more for the refectories of wealthy monasteries. He painted *Christ in*

*the House of Levi* (FIG. 22-48), originally called *Last Supper*, for the dining hall of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice. In a great open loggia framed by three monumental arches, Christ sits at the center of the splendidly garbed elite of Venice. In the foreground, with a courtly gesture, the very image of gracious grandeur, the chief steward welcomes guests. Robed lords, their colorful retainers, dogs, and dwarfs crowd into the spacious loggia. Painted during the Counter-Reformation, this depiction prompted criticism from the Catholic Church. The Holy Office of the Inquisition accused Veronese of impiety for painting such creatures so close to the Lord, and it ordered him to make changes at his own expense. Reluctant to do so, he simply changed the painting's title, converting the subject to a less solemn one. As Palladio looked to the example of classically inspired High Renaissance architecture, so Veronese returned to High Renaissance composition, its symmetrical balance, and its ordered architectonics. His shimmering colors span the whole spectrum, although he avoided solid colors for half shades (light blues, sea greens, lemon yellows, roses, and violets), creating veritable flower beds of tone.

The Venetian Republic employed both Tintoretto and Veronese to decorate the grand chambers and council rooms of the Doge's Palace (FIG. 19-21). A great and popular decorator, Veronese revealed himself a master of imposing illusionistic ceiling compositions, such as *Triumph of Venice* (FIG. 22-49). Here, within an oval frame, he presented Venice, crowned by Fame, enthroned between two great twisted columns in a balustraded loggia, garlanded with clouds, and attended by figures symbolic of its glories. Unlike Mantegna's *di sotto in sù* (FIG. 21-48) perspective, Veronese's projection is not directly up from below but at a 45-degree angle to spectators, a technique many later Baroque decorators used (see Chapter 24).



1 ft.

**22-49** PAOLO VERONESE, *Triumph of Venice*, ca. 1585. Oil on canvas, 29' 8" × 19'. Ceiling of the Hall of the Grand Council, Doge's Palace, Venice.

Within an immense oval frame, Veronese presented an illusionistic tableau of Venice crowned by Fame amid columns, clouds, and personifications. Baroque painters adopted this 45-degree view from the ground.

**22-50** CORREGGIO, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1526–1530. Fresco, 35' 10" × 37' 11". Parma Cathedral, Parma.

Working long before Veronese, Correggio, the teacher of Parmigianino, won little fame in his day, but his illusionistic ceiling designs, like this one in Parma Cathedral, inspired many 17th-century painters.

**CORREGGIO** One painter who developed a unique personal style that is almost impossible to classify was Antonio Allegri, known as CORREGGIO (ca. 1489–1534) from his birthplace, near Parma. The teacher of Parmigianino, Correggio, working more than a half century before Veronese, pulled together many stylistic trends, including those of Leonardo, Raphael, and the Venetians. Correggio's most enduring artistic contribution was his development of illusionistic ceiling perspectives. In Parma Cathedral, he painted away the entire dome with his *Assumption of the Virgin* (FIG. 22-50). Opening up the *cupola*, Correggio showed worshipers a view of the sky, with concentric rings of clouds where hundreds of soaring figures perform a wildly pirouetting dance in celebration of the Assumption. Versions of these angelic creatures became permanent tenants of numerous Baroque churches in later centuries. Correggio was also an influential painter of religious panels, anticipating in them many other Baroque compositional devices. Correggio's contemporaries expressed little appreciation for his art. Later, during the 17th century, Baroque painters recognized him as a kindred spirit.

### Sculpture

Mannerism extended beyond painting. Artists translated its principles into sculpture and architecture as well.

**BENVENUTO CELLINI** Among those who made their mark as Mannerist sculptors was BENVENUTO CELLINI (1500–1571), the author of a fascinating autobiography. It is difficult to imagine a medieval artist composing an autobiography. Only in the Renaissance, with the birth of the notion of individual artistic genius, could a work such as Cellini's (or Vasari's *Lives*) have been conceived and written. Cellini's literary self-portrait presents him not only as a highly accomplished artist, but also as a statesman, soldier, and lover, among many other roles. He was, first of all, a goldsmith, but only one of his major



works in that medium survives, the saltcellar (FIG. 22-51) he made for Francis I (FIG. 23-10), who had hired Cellini with a retainer of an annual salary, supplemented by fees for the works he produced. The price paid for this luxurious gold-and-enamel item destined for the French royal table was almost 50 percent greater than Cellini's salary for the year. Neptune and Tellus (or, as Cellini named them, the Sea—the source of salt—and the Land) recline atop an ebony base decorated with relief figures of Dawn, Day, Twilight, Night, and the four winds—some based on Michelangelo's statues in the Medici Chapel (FIG. 22-17) in San Lorenzo. The boat next to Neptune's right leg contained the salt, and the triumphal arch (compare FIG. 10-75) next to the right leg of the earth goddess, the pepper. The elongated proportions of the figures, especially the slim, small-breasted figure of Tellus, whom ancient artists always represented as a matronly woman (FIG. 10-30), reveal Cellini's Mannerist approach to form.

**GIOVANNI DA BOLOGNA** The lure of Italy drew a brilliant young Flemish sculptor, Jean de Boulogne, to Italy, where he practiced his art under the equivalent Italian name of GIOVANNI DA BOLOGNA (1529–1608). Giovanni's *Abduction of the Sabine Women*



**22-51** **BENVENUTO CELLINI**, *Saltcellar of Francis I*, 1540–1543. Gold, enamel, and ebony,  $10\frac{1}{4}'' \times 1' 1\frac{1}{8}''$ . Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Famed as a master goldsmith, Cellini fashioned this costly saltcellar for the table of Francis I of France. The elongated proportions of the figures clearly reveal Cellini's Mannerist approach to form.

(FIG. 22-52) exemplifies Mannerist principles of figure composition. Drawn from the legendary history of early Rome, the group received its present title—relating how the Romans abducted wives for themselves from the neighboring Sabines—only after its exhibition. Earlier, it was *Paris Abducting Helen*, among other mythological titles. In fact, Giovanni had no interest in depicting any particular subject. He created the group as a demonstration piece. His goal was to achieve a dynamic spiral figural composition involving an old man, a young man, and a woman, all nude in the tradition of ancient statues portraying mythological figures. Although Giovanni would have known Antonio Pollaiuolo's *Hercules and Antaeus* (FIG. 21-14), whose Greek hero lifts his opponent off the ground, he turned directly to ancient sculpture for inspiration. *Abduction of the Sabine Women* includes references to *Laocoön* (FIG. 5-88)—once in the crouching old man and again in the woman's up-flung arm. The three bodies interlock on a vertical axis, creating an ascending spiral movement.

To appreciate the sculpture fully, the viewer must walk around it, because the work changes radically according to the viewing point. One factor contributing to the shifting imagery is the prominence of open spaces that pass through the masses (for example, the space between an arm and a body), giving the spaces an effect equal to that of the solids. This sculpture was the first large-scale group since classical antiquity designed to be seen from multiple viewpoints, in striking contrast to Pollaiuolo's group, which the artist intended to be seen from the angle shown in FIG. 21-14. Giovanni's figures do not break out of this spiral vortex but remain as if contained within a cylinder. Nonetheless, they display athletic flexibility and Michelangesque potential for action.

**22-52** **GIOVANNI DA BOLOGNA**, *Abduction of the Sabine Women*, Loggia dei Lanzi, Piazza della Signoria, Florence, Italy, 1579–1583. Marble,  $13' 5\frac{1}{2}''$  high.

This sculpture was the first large-scale group since classical antiquity designed to be seen from multiple viewpoints. The three bodies interlock to create a vertical spiral movement.





**22-53** GIULIO ROMANO, interior courtyard facade of the Palazzo del Tè, Mantua, Italy, 1525–1535.

The Mannerist divergences from architectural convention, for example, the slipping triglyphs, are so pronounced in the Palazzo del Tè that they constitute a parody of Bramante's classical style.

## Architecture

Mannerist architects used classical architectural elements in a highly personal and unorthodox manner, rejecting the balance, order, and stability that were the hallmarks of the High Renaissance style with the specific aim of revealing the contrived nature of architectural design.

**GIULIO ROMANO** Applying that anticlassical principle was the goal of GIULIO ROMANO (ca. 1499–1546) when he designed the Palazzo del Tè (FIG. 22-53) in Mantua and, with it, formulated almost the entire architectural vocabulary of Mannerism. Giulio became Raphael's chief assistant in decorating the Vatican stanze. After Raphael's premature death in 1520, Giulio served as his master's artistic executor, completing Raphael's unfinished frescoes and panel paintings. In 1524, he went to Mantua, where he found a patron in Duke Federigo Gonzaga (r. 1530–1540), for whom Giulio built and decorated the Palazzo del Tè between 1525 and 1535. Gonzaga intended the Palazzo del Tè to serve as both suburban summer palace and stud farm for the duke's famous stables. Originally planned as a relatively modest country villa, Giulio's building so pleased his patron that Gonzaga soon commissioned the architect to enlarge the structure. In a second building campaign, Giulio expanded the villa to a palatial scale by adding three wings, which he placed around a square central court. This once-paved court, which functions both as a passage and as the focal point of the design, has a nearly urban character. Its surrounding buildings form a self-enclosed unit with a large garden, flanked by a stable, attached to it on the east side.

Giulio exhibited his Mannerist style in the facades that face the palace's interior courtyard (FIG. 22-53), where the divergences from architectural convention are quite pronounced. Indeed, they consti-

tute an enormous parody of Bramante's classical style, thereby announcing the artifice of the palace design. In a building laden with structural surprises and contradictions, the design of these facades is the most unconventional of all. The *keystones* (central *voussoirs*), for example, either have not fully settled or seem to be slipping from the arches—and, more eccentric still, Giulio even placed *voussoirs* in the pediments over the rectangular niches, where no arches exist. The massive Tuscan columns that flank these niches carry incongruously narrow *architraves*. That these architraves break midway between the columns stresses their apparent structural insufficiency, and they seem unable to support the weight of the *triglyphs* of the *Doric frieze* above (see “Doric and Ionic Orders,” Chapter 5, page 110, or page xxviii in Volume II), which threaten to crash down on the head of anyone foolish enough to stand below them. To be sure, appreciating Giulio's witticism requires a highly sophisticated audience, and recognizing some quite subtle departures from the norm presupposes a thorough familiarity with the established rules of classical architecture. It speaks well for the duke's sophistication that he accepted Giulio's form of architectural inventiveness.

**LAURENTIAN LIBRARY** Although he personifies the High Renaissance artist, Michelangelo, like Giulio Romano, also experimented with architectural designs that flouted most of the classical rules of order and stability. Michelangelo's restless genius is on display in the vestibule (FIG. 22-54) he designed for the Medici library adjoining the Florentine church of San Lorenzo. The Laurentian Library had two contrasting spaces that Michelangelo had to unite: the long horizontal of the library proper and the vertical of the vestibule. The need to place the vestibule windows up high (at the level of



**22-54** MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, vestibule of the Laurentian Library, Florence, Italy, 1524–1534; staircase, 1558–1559.

With his customary independence of spirit, Michelangelo, working in a Mannerist mode in the vestibule of the Laurentian Library, disposed willfully of almost all the rules of classical architecture.

the reading room) determined the narrow verticality of the vestibule's elevation and proportions. Much taller than it is wide, the vestibule gives the impression of a vertically compressed, shaftlike space. Anyone schooled exclusively in the classical architecture of Bramante and the High Renaissance would have been appalled by Michelangelo's indifference here to classical norms in the use of the orders and in proportion. He used columns in pairs and sank them into the walls, where they perform no supporting function. He also split columns in halves around corners. Elsewhere, he placed scroll corbels on the walls beneath columns. They seem to hang from the moldings, holding up nothing. He arbitrarily broke through pediments as well as through cornices and stringcourses. He sculpted pilasters that taper downward instead of upward. In short, the High

Renaissance master, working in a Mannerist mode, disposed willfully and abruptly of classical architecture. Moreover, in the vast, flowing stairway (the latest element of the vestibule) that protrudes tongue-like into the room from the "mouth" of the doorway to the library, Michelangelo foreshadowed the dramatic movement of Baroque architecture (see Chapter 24). With his customary trailblazing independence of spirit, Michelangelo created an interior space that conveyed all the strains and tensions found in his statuary and in his painted figures. Michelangelo's art began in the style of the 15th century, developed into the epitome of High Renaissance art, and, at the end, moved toward Mannerism. He was 89 when he died in 1564, still hard at work on Saint Peter's and other projects. Few artists, then or since, could escape his influence.



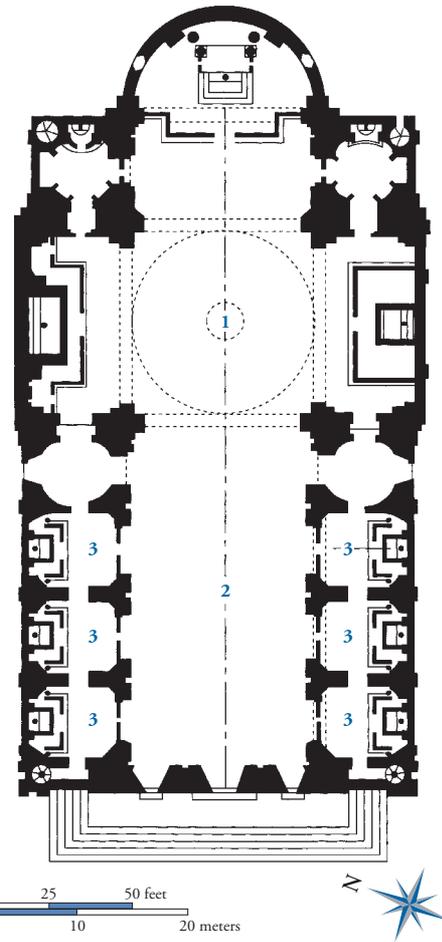
**22-55** GIACOMO DELLA PORTA, facade of Il Gesù, Rome, Italy, ca. 1575–1584.

In Giacomo della Porta's innovative design, the march of pilasters and columns builds to a dramatic climax at the central bay. Many 17th-century Roman church facades are architectural variations of Il Gesù.

**IL GESÙ** Probably the most influential building of the second half of the 16th century was the mother church of the Jesuit order. The activity of the Society of Jesus, known as the Jesuits, was an important component of the Counter-Reformation. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), a Spanish nobleman who dedicated his life to the service of God, founded the Jesuit order. He attracted a group of followers, and in 1540 Pope Paul III formally recognized this group as a religious order. The Jesuits were the papacy's invaluable allies in its quest to reassert the supremacy of the Catholic Church. Particularly successful in the field of education, the order established numerous schools. In addition, its members were effective missionaries and carried the message of Catholicism to the Americas, Asia, and Africa.

As a major participant in the Counter-Reformation, the Jesuit order needed a church appropriate to its new prominence. Because Michelangelo was late in providing the plans for this church, called Il Gesù, or Church of Jesus, in 1568 the Jesuits turned to Giacomo della Porta, who was responsible for the facade (FIG. 22-55)—and later designed the dome of Saint Peter's (FIG. 24-3)—and GIACOMO DA VIGNOLA (1507–1573), who designed the ground plan (FIG. 22-56).

The plan of Il Gesù reveals a monumental expansion of Alberti's scheme for Sant'Andrea (FIGS. 21-45 and 21-46) in Mantua. In the new Jesuit church, the nave takes over the main volume of space, making the structure a great hall with side chapels. A dome empha-



**22-56** GIACOMO DA VIGNOLA, plan of Il Gesù, Rome, Italy, 1568. (1) dome, (2) nave, (3) chapel.

Giacomo da Vignola's plan for Il Gesù, with its exceptionally wide nave with side chapels instead of aisles, won wide acceptance in the Catholic world. It is an ideal space for grand processions.

sizes the approach to the altar. The wide acceptance of the Gesù plan in the Catholic world, even until modern times, speaks to its ritual efficacy. The opening of the church building into a single great hall provides an almost theatrical setting for large promenades and processions (which seemed to combine social with priestly functions). Above all, the space is adequate to accommodate the great crowds that gathered to hear the eloquent preaching of the Jesuits.

The facade of Il Gesù was also not entirely original, but it too had an enormous impact on later church design. The union of the lower and upper stories, effected by scroll buttresses, harks back to Alberti's Santa Maria Novella (FIG. 21-39). Its classical pediment is familiar in Alberti's work (FIG. 21-44) as well as in that of Palladio (FIGS. 22-29 and 22-31). The paired pilasters appear in Michelangelo's design for Saint Peter's (FIG. 22-26). Giacomo della Porta skillfully synthesized these existing motifs and unified the two stories. The horizontal march of the pilasters and columns builds to a dramatic climax at the central bay, and the bays of the facade snugly fit the nave-chapel system behind them. Many Roman church facades of the 17th century are architectural variations on Giacomo della Porta's design. Chronologically and stylistically, Il Gesù belongs to the Late Renaissance, but its enormous influence on later churches marks it as a significant monument for the development of Italian Baroque church architecture, discussed in Chapter 24.

## ITALY, 1500 TO 1600

## HIGH AND LATE RENAISSANCE, 1495–1600

- During the High (1500–1520) and Late (1520–1600) Renaissance periods in Italy, artists, often in the employ of the papacy, further developed the interest in perspective, anatomy, and classical cultures that had characterized 15th-century Italian art.
- The major regional artistic centers were Florence and Rome in central Italy and Venice in the north. Whereas most Florentine and Roman artists emphasized careful design preparation based on preliminary drawing (*disegno*), Venetian artists focused on color and the process of paint application (*colorito*).
- Leonardo da Vinci was a master of chiaroscuro and atmospheric perspective. He was famous for his hazy sfumato and for his psychological insight in depicting biblical narrative (*Last Supper*) and contemporary personalities (*Mona Lisa*). His anatomical drawings are the first modern scientific illustrations.
- Raphael favored lighter tonalities than Leonardo and clarity over obscurity. His sculptural figures appear in landscapes under blue skies (*Madonna of the Meadows*) or in grandiose architectural settings rendered in perfect perspective (*School of Athens*).
- Michelangelo, a temperamental genius, was a pioneer in several media, including architecture, but his first love was sculpture. His carved (*David*, *Moses*) and painted (*Creation of Adam*) figures have heroic physiques and great emotional impact. He preferred pent-up energy to Raphael's calm, ideal beauty.
- The leading architect of the early 16th century was Bramante, who championed the classical style of the ancients. He based his pioneering design for the Tempietto on antique models, but the combination of parts was new and original.
- Andrea Palladio, an important theorist as well as architect, carried on Bramante's classical style during the Late Renaissance. Famed for his villa designs, he had a lasting impact upon later European and American architecture.
- One of the great masters of the Venetian painting school was Giorgione, who developed the concept of *poesia*, poetical painting. The subjects of his paintings (*Pastoral Symphony*, *The Tempest*) are often impossible to identify. His primary goal was to evoke a pastoral mood.
- Titian, the official painter of the Venetian Republic, won renown for his rich surface textures and dazzling display of color in all its nuances. In paintings such as *Venus of Urbino*, he established oil color on canvas as the typical medium of the Western pictorial tradition.



Michelangelo, *David*,  
1501–1504



Bramante, Tempietto, Rome,  
1502(?)



Titian, *Venus of Urbino*, 1538

## MANNERISM, 1520–1600

- Mannerism emerged in the 1520s in reaction to the High Renaissance style. A prime feature of Mannerist art is artifice. Renaissance artists generally strove to create art that appeared natural, whereas Mannerist artists were less inclined to disguise the contrived nature of art production. Ambiguous space, departures from expected conventions, and unique presentations of traditional themes are common features of Mannerist art.
- Parmigianino's *Madonna with the Long Neck* epitomizes the elegant stylishness of Mannerist painting. The elongated proportions of the figures, the enigmatic line of columns without capitals, and the ambiguous position of the figure with a scroll are the antithesis of High Renaissance classical proportions, clarity of meaning, and rational perspective.
- Mannerism was also a sculptural style. Giovanni da Bologna's *Abduction of the Sabine Women*, which does not really have a subject, is typical. The sculptor's goal was to depict elegant nude figures in a dynamic spiral composition that presaged the movement of Baroque sculpture.
- The leading Mannerist architect was Giulio Romano, who rejected the balance, order, and stability that were hallmarks of the High Renaissance style. In the Palazzo del Tè in Mantua, the divergences from architectural convention parody Bramante's classical style and include triglyphs that slip out of the Doric frieze.



Parmigianino, *Madonna with  
the Long Neck*, 1534–1540



Giulio Romano, Palazzo del Tè,  
Mantua, 1525–1535