

Renaissance

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ART BRIEF The Renaissance movement of the 13th century saw the flourishing of scientific and artistic activities. This was manifest in the re-discovery of ancient texts and their application to the scientific and artistic fields to good effect, in a manner which revitalized the European cultural scene - hence Renaissance or re-birth. Sandro Boticelli was one of many proponents of this art movement, and his painting 'Madonna and Child with Adoring Angel' (c1465 - 67) is one of the examples of this art form.

This painting by Sandro Boticelli is one of many similar paintings that have Madonna as a central theme such as 'Madonna of the Magnificat' (c1483 - 85) and 'Madonna and Child with an Angel' (c 1465 - 67), displayed at the Galleria Uffizi in Florence and the Musee Fesch respectively. All these paintings are extremely soothing as they, " appeal to both the mind and spirit" (Portrait of the Artist). These paintings reflect the artist's unique and personal style.

The painting that I have chosen, 'Madonna and Child with Adoring Angel' (Tempera on panel, Norton Simon Art Foundation), is exceptional for its three dimensional effect as obtained by the view of the country-side in the background as seen through the window arches. Equally brilliant is how the artist has captured the expressions of love, tenderness and adoration on the faces of his three subjects. The attention paid to the surroundings in the form of the pillars and arches also lend authenticity to the entire composition. All these aspects combined give depth and perspective to the painting as well as a sense of realism, which was a hallmark of art of this period.

The artist has gone in to minute detail in every aspect of the painting - be it

the main subjects, the overall setting and even the decorative aspects. For example, the depiction of the decorations on the panels and arches makes one feel as if one were actually present in the room. Similarly, the folds and creases in the clothing make the characters seem lifelike. Through all this, the painting captures the mood of the period for, "[reconciling] classical and Christian views" (Sandro Botticelli 2), and his fusion of these two apparently contradictory facets is the highlight of this painting.

The neat and clean lines of the painting also are testimony to the fact that in his life time, Sandro Botticelli was the acknowledged master of this art form, bringing it to its zenith, before it was overtaken by another art form of the renaissance period that was very classical in nature, and favored by more famous artists like Michelangelo.

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