

Mannerism vs classicism

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During the sixteenth century a style of art was developed almost by accident. It was developed mainly in Italy, in the city of Florence. It was different than all the other styles, and this intrigued many. It had not had a real name until about 1921, it was called Mannerism. Mannerism is the best art form that came out of the Renaissance. During the sixteenth century while the High Renaissance was evolving two definite styles of artwork developed. The first, which was Mannerism and is also sometimes called anti-classical style, and the second was Classicism, also known as anti-mannerism.

This is some sort of hint that the two were almost opposites. 1 One response that was provoked by the upheavals of the sixteenth century was the attempt to escape reality, an effort that was echoed by some of the painters of the age, known as Mannerists. The Mannerists and their patrons cultivated artificial and esoteric images of the world; they undermined perspective, distorted human figures, and devised unnatural colors and lighting to create startling effects. 2 Mannerism broke all of the unwritten rules of painting. It created darker paintings and showed more emotion.

Mannerism can be quite easily recognized. Art was no longer boring, it was more creative; this is not to say that art before then was not creative. The artists mixed colors, creating new shades. Classicism however was almost totally different. Classicism, attempted to recapture the aesthetic values and the strict forms that had been favored in ancient Greece and Rome. Classicism aimed for grandiose effects, through restraint and discipline within a formal structure. 3 A classicist painter was restricted in the ways

that he painted. There were unwritten and written codes on how to paint in the classic style.

There was not as much creativity in the painting. The classicist painters used traditional shades and lighting effects, while mannerists experimented with them. Mannerism tore away from the traditional bounds that held the rest of the art world in. Mannerism produced many new ways of painting.

Mannerism breaks apart from the formal principles established during this period. Michael Angelo, with his tormented figures, seems to have shown the road. Symmetry disappears in favor of diagonal compositions; balance and measure give room to movement and expression.

The games played by light and shadow become as dramatic as the faces. 4 Many new shades of color and lighting effects were developed and this helped to set the mood that the artist wanted you to feel. They began to use acidic colors and painted new scenes not seen before. This got the people interested. They had seen the scenes that the classicist painters were painting, and that got boring. It s the same with things now. People always want the new, and not the old. The Mannerist artist has the right or duty to employ any possible method of observation.

Thus, creating new and exciting paintings. Some of the best painters of all time came out of the Mannerist style. If one removes from an account of sixteenth century art in Rome Raphael and all Michealangelo s works then little is left. Only Sebastiano del Piombo and Giulio Romano remain as major painters. 6 Although these are the major painters of the Mannerist style, there were others, such as, Vasari, Ammanati, and Salviati. Mannerism was

first definable by Raphael's pupil Giulio Romano. 7 Mannerism as a style had many influences in later art, such as with baroque.

Baroque tried to do the same as the Mannerist style, only on a more grandeur scale. 8 Caravaggio who grew up in Rome around the evolving styles of art, mannerism influenced him the greatest. One of his greatest paintings, *The Supper at Emmaus*, is a great example of how mannerism was blended into a painting, although it cannot be placed under the same category. Mannerism doesn't only produce brilliant and rebel artists, it also produces schools which imitate it. 9 This sparked a whole new movement in art because individual artists shape their own styles, developing new ones, which people imitate and so on.

Also, it wasn't just a period of art like classicism, people later in history painted in this style. Painting was not the only form of art that mannerism was used for. Architecture was also a form of art that was widely used in Europe. The Sistine Chapel is perhaps one of the greatest examples of mannerism used in architecture. The handling of decoration and space seen in Michelangelo's plans for the Laurentian Library is also Mannerist. 10 Mannerism used in architecture however was mainly used in the northern parts of Europe, but the most famous are in Italy.

The architecture of the Classicism movement was all straightforward and Gothic-like. The mannerists found new ways to design manneristic architecture. The figures of the rhythmic anti-classical painter and or architect function otherwise, for in themselves they express neither an established rule of nature, nor any unambiguous rationally understood

space. In a word, for them the problem of three-dimensional space vanishes, or can do so. ¹¹ The Classical painter or architect would stay with many two dimensional figures and not let the building give a true three-dimensional look and feel, mannerists did this.

In conclusion, Mannerism is definitely the best art style that came out of the Renaissance period. Not only did it find new and exciting ways to paint and sculpt, but also new ways to build buildings. Some of the greatest artists of all time were mannerists. The mannerist style influenced many painters and architects of later time. Mannerism, unlike other art styles was not so much a rebellion against older styles as a deliberate cultivation. ¹² Therefore mannerism is the best art form that was developed during the renaissance.