

Roman art college



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Romans were collectors and admirers of Greek art. Art from Greece was brought to Rome, copied, and also changed by the Romans. As a result, Roman art is somewhat based on Greek art. However, Roman art is not merely a continuation of Greek art. For an amateur it is difficult to determine between the two art forms because neither the Romans nor the Greeks wrote down the history of their own art.

The characteristics pertaining to each particular type of art are known to some extent, so the experts are relatively accurate in determining the separation of the two types of art. Roman art is divided into four categories: portrait sculptures, paintings and mosaics, relief sculptures, and statues. Each of these has its own characteristics. Portrait sculptures, designed by the Romans, shows the desire of the Romans for literalness; it records even the homeliest features. This is demonstrated in the sculpture, Head of A Roman, made of marble in 80 B. C. The artist painstakingly reported each rise and fall and each bulge and fold of the entire facial surface. It was as if the artist was acting like a map maker, trying not to miss the slightest detail. The end product was a blunt, bald record of features. Idealism nor improvement of features was done causing the feeling of superrealism. Paintings and mosaics were influenced by the architecture of the Romans . Their architecture consisted of buildings containing a small number of doors and windows, thus leaving considerably large stretches of wall space suitable for decoration. The quality was determined by the importance and the wealth of the patron. The walls were used for two things in Roman art. First, they were used as a barrier. Secondly, they were used to visually open the wall and enhance the space of the room. Only certain colors were used.

These were deep red, yellow, green, violet and black. Two methods were used to prepare walls for painting. In one, plaster was compounded with marble dust, then laid directly on the wall in several layers. It was eventually beaten smooth with a trowel until it became dense. Finally, it was polished to a marble finish. The wall was then ready to be painted with water colors or encaustic paints. The other method, called panel painting, consisted of stucco being applied to boards of cypress, pine, lime, oak, and larch. Then water colors, obtained from minerals and animal dyes were applied. The painting was then mounted to cover a wall. These methods were used throughout the years to produce paintings. Although the style of the paintings on the walls changed during the years, the methods used to prepare the walls basically stayed the same. There are four styles of painting

Incrustation, the first style, was used from 200 to 60 B. C. Walls were divided into bright polychrome panels of solid colors with an occasional textural contrast. In the years 60 to 20 B. C. the second style, the architectural style, was used. This method made a wall look as if it extended beyond the room, but it wasn't systematically perspective. In the years 20 B. C. to A. D. 60, the third style, the ornate style, was used. This method subdivided a wall into a number of panels by means of vertical and horizontal bands. The fourth and final style of painting took place in A. D. 60 to A. D. 79. It was called the intricate style. Each wall contained a great number of separate paintings not relating to each other. It made people feel as if they were walking through an art gallery looking at a variety of different paintings. Art of Rome wasn't limited to that of walls. Romans also had murals, painted glass, illustrated books, and easel paintings. Relief sculptures, carved into large pieces of stone, were used to decorate pediments, cella walls of temples, and the

interior and exterior of various buildings. The size of a relief was dependent upon the purpose, location and treatment of the monument. There are two types of relief sculptures. One is a pictorial frieze, which is an unbroken representation of one or more mythological or historical events. The other is an image. It consists of a self-contained representation of an act, an occurrence, or event relating to the deeds of military figures. A relief was not treated as a wall, but rather, as a space in which figures disappeared or emerged from all in accordance to the laws of perspective. Reliefs varied by the method in which they were executed. Some were densely packed while other were loosely dispersed. Sculptures were one form of art in which the Romans copied the Greeks to a great extent. Statues of Greek gods were taken and copied. Then wings and portrait heads were added along with draping clothing. The Romans favorite subjects for nude statues were powerful, muscular, male bodies. As a result, a vast majority of nude statues are exactly that, muscular men. Many statues of people were made into an ideal form, although some represented a person's characteristics. For example, a small head was symbolic of a person with little intelligence.

In conclusion, art in Rome influenced the people's religion, mythology, and architecture. The styles and technics of ancient Roman art are still evident today, to a small or great extent in modern sculptures, statues, and paintings.

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