

# Tullio lombardo high renaissance art essay

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An Antiquity of Imagination: Tullio (Tullio) Lombardo and the Venetian High Renaissance Sculpture at NGA Paper One: An Antiquity of Imagination: Tullio (Tullio) Lombardo and the Venetian High Renaissance Sculpture at NGA Tullio Lombardo, one of the most gifted sculptors of all time, brought his art alive by integrating classical antiquity and contemporary Renaissance Venice in all his works. People appreciated his creativity because he took the risk of stepping out from the culture of paintings, which were popular at his time, and emerged the art of sculpture into the world. While observing his magnificent works in the National Gallery of Art, it was clear that he used many influences of classical antiquity in his sculptures.

It was evident that Lombardo was passionate about the cultures of Greece and Rome in terms of classical antiquity. The use of vine-leaf garlands, curly hair, use of drapery, and symbolic icons are all examples of classical antiquity in the sculptures. For instance, in "Bacchus and Ariadne" the use of a vine-leaf garland resembles that of a god with his bride Ariadne beside him. Ariadne with her immaculate hair pulled back in a headdress brings a classical feel into the sculpture. The framed border seemed like Lombardo was not only competing with ancient sculpture, but also with contemporary painters.

The couple gave me a feeling as if they were poetic ideals and not just regular human beings. Most of his sculptures resembled perfection and flawless individuals. Therefore, their god-like features were very much noticeable. Lombardo did a great job of emulating works of the ancients and even strived to surpass them by adding his contemporary touch of 16th

century Venice. He had a very poetic approach to classical antiquity, which was highly appreciated while I was observing the sculptures in NGA.

Lombardo's early life influenced his work of classical antiquity as it gave him the ability to go beyond his expectations. He worked as his father's assistant and used classical approaches by collecting and copying antique sculptures, reading Greek history, poetry, and followed archaeological news of Rome where excavations were bringing staggering objects to light. [1] He worked in collaboration with his father and brother Antonio in order to become the first sculptor in Venice who achieved convincing classical proportions. For instance, in Venice, the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo (Zanipolo) has two sculptural works of Tullio: the Monument to Doge Pietro Mocenigo, made with his father and brother, and the Monument to Doge Andrea Vendramin, an evocation of a Roman triumphal arch encrusted with decorative figures that are presented in Lombardo's work. " While traditional demand for sculpture in Renaissance Venice centered on projects for churches, public monuments, and architectural decoration, Tullio created new forms of private art. " Lombardo was able to take what he learned in his early life and integrated that into his later works, making him one of the most talented sculptors of all time. Tullio Lombardo adhered to many influences in his art.

For instance, subject matter is presented in all his works. He was essentially a strong believer in story telling, therefore, his works always entailed a purpose and were symbolic in many ways. Most of his sculptures were telling stories about individuals, their joys and struggles in life. For example, one of my favorite double portraits in high relief, A Couple, seems to share with the audience a tragic love story of a married couple. They seem very

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disconnected as they were not making any eye contact and their bodies ultimately lacked unity and embrace. Iconography is used in Grieving Heroine, as Lombardo used a medallion to represent a famous ancient gem, and this ultimately gave a deeper meaning to the sculpture. As far as form is concerned, all of Lombardo's sculptures are three-dimensional figures. In respect to composition, Lombardo uses white-on-white marble, and usually the figures are cut off beneath the bust creating a portrait-like sculpture.

In contrary, in Peace Establishing Her Reign, the bronze relief is most probably made in clay. According to my observations, the texture is evidently smoothed, polished, and shiny. When describing space, mass and volume, it would be correct to articulate that indeed, they are once again using three-dimensional space and are solid, marble statues. Lombardo's statues seem very proportionate in size. For instance, the head is proportioned with the rest of the body as it exemplifies the flawless, god/goddess type of beauty.

In terms of scale, my observations allow me to come to the conclusion that all the body parts were seemingly calculated in advance to achieve the highest form of perfection. Overall, Lombardo evidently adhered to relief sculptures. The High- Relief sculptures were where the subjects project boldly. According to the textbook, these sculptures are produced either by carving or casting. [2] Lombardo used modifications and expansions upon influences to create a new, more "modern" representation than that of classical antiquity. During the period of contemporary Renaissance Venice, Lombardo along with sculptors of his time stepped away from the Gothic era

and embraced each other in creating sculptures that represented modern life.

The person's appearance mirrored their soul. Physical beauty indicated morality and virtue. For example, Bacchus and Ariadne introduced this theme of beauty with dramatic effect. Also, many of the objects expose the bust carved in ultra-high relief. The figures' lips are barely parted while they reveal some teeth.

[3] The use of portraits conveyed a message about the world around him. It played a vital role in every aspect of human life, from childhood to marriage and old age. Use of symbolism in sculptures played a crucial function in Renaissance life as well. The sculpture figures came about during a phase of Venetian painting at the end of 15th century and the beginning of 16th century. Lombardo introduced a neo-classical style from Florence and brought Venice up to speed. Lombardo's work influenced his peers and it was great to see their works next to his in the exhibition. Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione, Cima da Conegliano, and Titian were all people he may have influenced during his time. For example, Saint Helena (oil on panel), by Cima da Conegliano, one of the leading painters, is a great example of how one was influenced by Lombardo.

The breastplate on the dress, folds of her cloak, upward "pensive" gaze are all admirations for Lombardo's statues. Ironically, in the beginning Tullio was influenced by these painters, and sure enough, within time, his peers were learning from him. Tullio Lombardo's pioneering talent transformed the culture of art and brought unity within classical antiquity and contemporary

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