

Describe the key themes and aspects of the romantic era

[History](#)



The Romantic Era originated in 18th century Western Europe. It was an academic, literary and artistic movement during the Industrial Revolution. This era coincided with the Enlightenment period and because of this, many ideas from Romanticism clashed with those of the Enlightenment. And so, this era highlighted strong human emotions as a source of aesthetic pleasure. It focused on intuition, imagination and emotions. Commonly, during this era, such emotions as fear, horror and extreme happiness is a very good source of inspiration for music, paintings and literature.

It gave rise to authors such as Mary Shelley and the Grimm brother's fairy tales. Van Gogh, Cezanne and Rembrandt are just few of the visual artists that became famous for their paintings during the rise of the era. Many artists such as Beethoven and Tsiakovsky contributed to the music that as now become part of history (Harris, 2006) It is believed that the Romantic Era is highly influenced by the Industrial Revolution and an aftermath of the French Revolution. Many Romantics are both sides of the coin—liberals and conservatives, revolutionaries and reactionaries, etc. The Romantic Era is a period wherein many thoughts and attitudes arose.

For the Romantics, expression was everything to—be it in music, literature, visual arts and even philosophy. Until today, many experts has varying definitions of “ Romanticism”. (Kreis, 2006) With these revolutions, many Romantics, especially painters, were greatly influenced by the growth of monarchies that is very able to show noticeable power. During this era, the Baroque way of painting is greatly used. In Baroque, elevated volumes, exaggerated decorations, colossal sculptures and huge furniture are highly

avored. Meanwhile, the dominant impressions in Baroque are sense of movement, energy and tension.

Often, strong contrasts of light and shadow are used to enhance effects. ("Baroque," 2007) The images that are most visible in Baroque paintings are those that are related to the church. This is because the Roman Catholic Church encouraged the use of Baroque to easily communicate the religious themes of the church with the people directly and should elicit emotional involvement in the person. In Rembrandt's "Christ In The Storm On The Sea Of Galilee", he played with light to create a very dramatic focal point. He used a very dark background so that the boat will be the center of attention.

On the other hand, Agostino Carraci's "The Last Communion of St. Jerome", he also played with light, particularly "bright lights" so that the expressions of the subjects will be highlighted. Also, this painting shows that volume was emphasized on the subject's clothes. And lastly, the painter used tall pillars—one of the major characteristics of a baroque art. The Romantic Era boasts a significant amount of contribution to our history—be it in ideologies, philosophy or arts. It may not have a definite meaning but one thing is for sure—that in Romanticism, expression is a common practice.

These emotions are put into music, poetry, arts and even philosophy. During the Romantic Era, Baroque paintings were very dominant because of its exaggeration of human emotion and power. It also depicted the power of the monarchy and church which were very influential institutions during the rise of the movement. It is quite easy to identify Baroque paintings if one is familiar with the characteristics and style of it. One remarkable feature of a

Baroque painting is that, it uses colossal structures and it is very particular about the volume.

And since emotions and expressions are the highlight of the era, it is inevitable that there should not be major details in the feelings or thoughts of the subject. Until now, many paintings, poems and music from the Romantic Era are used for discussions in classrooms. This only means to say that indeed, in the world of art, the Romantic Era gave way to fresh and clear ideas during the time where confusion was adamant. And it only means to say that the ideologies that sprung during those times are still worth discussing until now.