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Leonardo Da Vinci

Leonardo Da Vinci is one of the world's most recognized artist (and scientist). His works of art are stamps of the Renaissance period and of the themes that characterized those times. Da Vinci's style, however, had its unique traits, that made him stand out from the rest of his period colleagues and give way to new art movements inside this History period.

He used oil painting in ways that would emphasize and embellish details, like luminosity and transparency on the skin, higher shine of depicted jewelry and silkiness on hair. On his painting he has also perfected the art of the “vanishing point” – the creation of depth and a three-dimension feel on the canvas, by the use of strong diagonal lines, drawn intersecting in the background. This technique was exceptionally well used in one of his most known Renaissance masterpieces – The Last Supper.

This Da Vinci's painting was done with a mixture of oil and tempera and on a dry wall, to better capture the look of an oil painting. Through the “vanishing point” technique he made the room where Jesus and the apostles were to appear as an extension of the background, in the mentioned three-dimensional effect. The outside landscape is painted in dimmed and dull colors, following an aerial perspective for further depth. Christ seats in the center with his arms open in a shape of a triangle, symbolizing number three and the idea of the Holy Trinity.

Besides the geometrical arrangement of elements for the three-dimensional sense when looking at the painting, there is also a deep psychological content in it. It is a representation of the night before Christ's capture and posterior death on the crucifix – Christ's Passion and Death. Furthermore, is

was the moment when Christ announced the betrayal by one of the apostles and strong emotions may be observed in all the apostles faces and hand movements. All but Judas, who is partially hidden and keeping his bag of coins: a depiction of his guilt.

Leonardo Da Vinci's The Last Supper has followed the Renaissance traditions of both composition and built perspective. It is exactly the psychological deep content of this painting that makes it stand out, depicting a kind of Humanism, characteristic of the Renaissance, with further emphasis on the strong emotions and sense of righteousness and virtuosity that became the beginning of the High Renaissance.

Da Vinci has preceded Michelangelo and Raphael, to major figures of the High Renaissance; so, one might say that his designs of such noble, careful and arithmetic balance, together with such strong emotion portrayal, were the foundations of such era.

Michelangelo

Michelangelo has been an artist of paintings, sculptures, architecture, poetry and whose masterpieces are a landmark and huge influence for his contemporary artists and the whole European art movement of High Renaissance. His idea of art epitome was the male nude, which he has explored in various ways and types of work, with a primary focus on the movement and its expression of emotions. This human anatomical feature is also present in Michelangelo's architectural constructions, of which elements always seem to suggest a kind of muscular tension.

Michelangelo also preferred art work that would be hard and laborious; because of it, he has done many sculpturing and fresco work, in which he

always has chosen difficult and complex poses. Going along with the Renaissance's whole theme of the classical world's rebirth, he has depicted several human figures of mythological, religious content.

He admired the classical art and his goal was to be able to surpass its detail and perfection traits. His intense dedication to such aim has made some of his works to be mistaken for true classic ones. One of his most admired and recognized works of art is the David.

David is a sculpture of massive proportions, represented by a nude male with a defined muscular physique. All the details of the human body, including veins on the arms and hands are depicted by Michelangelo. However, his head and hands seem disproportionate from the rest of the body; but, since this masterpiece was meant to be placed in a higher position and be observed from below, from where it would appear perfectly proportioned. Michelangelo has also made the left leg, located straddling the rocky base, a bit too long, so that it would accentuate the Contrapposto pose – where the figure stands most of its weight on one of the feet for further sense of dynamic movement, which was commonly used on Greek classic statues – the artist what aiming for.

Michelangelo has made David on the moment before the battle with Goliath, holding his sling, anticipating it. David's eye expression is tense, focused and full of anxiety. Not only this has to do with the Renaissance's whole theme on deep emotions and feelings, on the fight for what is just and right, but it also has to do with the hard times Florence was going through; thus, this gives David an extra trait of political and social context, becoming a symbol, at that time, of Florence fighting the dominance of countries and city-states,

the same way David has fought the mighty Goliath.

It is a Michelangelo's masterpiece that combines the Greek classical elements, such as the Contrapposto with the Renaissance's will to have the rebirth of such times' ideas and also use of materials like marble: a portrayal of the Renaissance whole theme and ideology.

Michelangelo's art is a landmark of Renaissance and, at the same time, created in it the movement of Mannerism, with its elongated figures, complex poses and refined elegance.

Renaissance Artists & Humanity Portrayal

The Renaissance, between the years 1400 and 1600, was an era in which artists and their works of art (and also in the other general areas) aimed for bringing back, as a rebirth, the ideals, beliefs, chains of thought and knowledge of the Classic Era, both Latin and Greek.

It was an era of Humanistic ideas and art, on its turn, having this as basis, wanted to represent the human being and all the traits that represent humanity, in a realistic, not so necessarily religious, natural and with a deep sense of three-dimensionality: the human emotions, strength, a sense of righteousness, grandeur and beauty.

Following the Roman and Greek, artists wanted to perfectly represent all the aspects about nature and the world, revolving around the human being and Man's emotions. Instead of seen as artisans, artists became, in the Renaissance, thinkers and portrayers of the human personality. They became very visual and their works reflected such worry about the perfect and detail depicting of man and nature, in all its proportion and rationality. Aiming to portray such perfection and depth that the human eye could

perceive, both in nature and in humanity itself, they devoted themselves to the development of new techniques to reproduce such proportions arithmetically, so that the eyes of the viewer could be filled with senses of perspective, movement, dynamics; such traits were the ones of humanity, both of its anatomical, natural side, and the profound, complex and strong traits of emotions and personality, which were shown through the perfection of facial proportionate expressions.

Renaissance, in sum, wanted to portray nature's and humanity's soul.

Conclusion

Renaissance was a time, as its name clearly states, of rebirth of the Classic era's thoughts and ways of perceiving things, a time when nature and the Man became, once again, the main focus of the artists, politicians, thinkers, etc. What is important to learn and be conscious about the Renaissance is that its dramatic shift on humanity's mind has permitted the world to experience such development in all of the possible areas, that the modern world was possible because of its ground-breaking ideas and initiatives.

What the Renaissance has made was opening up the human being's consciousness about oneself and motivate the sense of working on oneself, becoming even better in every chance and field. This is a motto that can and should, easily be adopted nowadays, for today's humanity to develop even more and, once again, break all boundaries and limits that it had already established for oneself as the maximum ones.

The Renaissance spirit should remain alive inside every one of the people in order to surpass themselves, being able to see that human kind is still

capable of many other accomplishments. Furthermore, and once again following the Renaissance's chains of thought, the close attention to human kind itself and nature, to the details of their functioning systems would allow, in terms of new creations, to further understand ourselves and our world. This " New Renaissance", where human kind would once again be devoted to their own study and improvement, together with their relation among people and nature, would allow an even more evolved expression on the human's inside area on nature and on the world.

And that could bring the digital arts, its perfection to a whole new level of detail, together with the development of cybernetic resources now much more aware of the Man's, the world's and nature's needs and concerns, making these digital times become perfected and conscious servants of the main goal that was already the one of Renaissance: the community's own good.

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