

# The human form in art

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The Human Form In Art Michael Herren Art 1150. 01N 19 November 2008

The Renaissance art produced in Europe in the historical period called the Renaissance. Broadly considered, the period covers the 200 years between 1400 and 1600, although specialists disagree on exact dates. The word renaissance means " rebirth". The two principal components of Renaissance style are the following: a revival of the classical forms originally developed by the ancient Greeks and Romans, and an intensified concern with secular life-interest in humanism and assertion of the importance of the individual. The Renaissance period in art history corresponds to the beginning of the great Western age of discovery and exploration, when a general desire developed to examine all aspects of nature and the world. 3 During the Renaissance, artists were no longer regarded as mere artisans, as they had been in the medieval past, but for the first time emerged as independent personalities, comparable to poets and writers. They sought new solutions to formal and visual problems, and many of them were also devoted to scientific experimentation. In this context, mathematical or linear perspective was developed, a system in which all objects in a painting or in low-relief sculpture are related both proportionally and rationally. It was regarded as a window on the natural world, and it became the task of painters to portray this world in their art. Painters began to devote themselves more rigorously to the rendition of landscape-the careful depiction of trees, flowers, plants, distant mountains, and cloud-filled skies. They studied the effects of light out-of-doors and how the eye perceives all the diverse elements in nature. 3 Donato di Niccol'o Niccolo di Betto Bardi was one of the best artist around and an major innovator in Renaissance art.

Donatello was born in Florence Italy in 1386. In his formative years he assisted Ghiberti in Florence with the bronze doors for the baptistery. By 1406 he had begun to work on the cathedral. His marble David still echoed the gothic form, but his St. Mark and St. John the Evangelist mark a turning point toward a new humanistic expression. 1 The Statue of David depicts a young David standing nude (it is his first large-scale bronze nude statue in the renaissance) and holding in his hand Goliath's sword, above the head of the dead Giant. As to its dating there is no agreement among the scholars, the most acceptable view suggest the statue to be from the 1440's. It is the same subject as his earlier marble statue of the same scene from 1408-09, however it displays a very different David than the well-dressed victorious king. It is also different in the moment depicted because at the marble statue David still holds his slingshot, and hasn't taken up the Giant's sword in order to slay him. 4 Donatello's statue depicts a nude, with some feminine features. Having feminine body serves both as a possible explanation of Jonathan's love for him because he was so beautiful like a woman as well as to show that his accomplishment in tossing the stone at Goliath was not a result of his feminine like physic but rather of God's will. As in Michelangelo's David, it could be demonstrated that the nudity of Donatello's David is a possible interpretation of the biblical text describing the biblical hero and future king in the time of the fight with Goliath. David's nudity at the time of the battle is contrasted with Goliath's heavy armor, for the head, which is visible under the Hero's feet, is covered in the most part by an iron helmet. 4 However, Donatello's David unlike the later figure by Michelangelo, is not completely nude. David wears a hat, which has a laurel on top, and a pair of

boots on his legs. 4 This might serve, as a kind of comic response to religious minded critics who might claim it is improper nudity of the Biblical hero and ancestor of Christ. For one could response: " he is not nude at all, He has his hat and boots on". 4 Modern art was created from the 19th cent. To the mid-20th cent. By artists who veered away from the traditional concepts and techniques of painting, sculpture, and other fine arts that had been practiced since the Renaissance. The public with ridicule initially greeted nearly every phase of modern art, but as the shock wore off, the various movements settled into history, influencing and inspiring new generations of artists. 2 In the second half of the 19th cent. Painters began to revolt against the classic codes of composition, careful execution, harmonious coloring, and heroic subject matter. Patronage by the church and state sharply declined at the same time that artists' views became more independent and subjective. Such artists as Courbet, Corot and others of the Barbizon School, Manet, Degas, and Toulouse-Lautrec chose to paint scenes of ordinary daily and nocturnal life that often offended the sense of decorum of their contemporaries. 2 There were many different forms of Modern Art. For example: impressionism, cubism, and geometric abstraction to name a few. A more fanciful sort of modern art was created by Jean Arp, Marcel Duchamp, and Kurt Schwitters in the irreverent manifestations of the Dada movement. Dada artists devised " ready-mades" and collage objects from diverse bits of material. The movement was linked with Freudianism in the 1920s, producing the wild imagery of surrealism and verism, as seen in the paintings of Salvador Dali. 2 Spanish painter, Salvador Dali was born into a middle-class family; he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid, where

he mastered academic techniques. Dali also pursued his personal interest in Cubism and Futurism and was expelled from the academy for indiscipline in 1923. He formed friendships with Lorca and Bunuel, read Freud with enthusiasm and held his first one-man show in Barcelona in 1925, where he exhibited a number of seascapes. He wrote the screenplay for Bunuel's *Un CHIEN Andalou*, largely, thanks to which he was adopted by the Surrealists. In Paris he met Picasso and Breton, and his involvement from 1929 onwards, his effervescent activity, his flair for getting publicity through scandal and his vivacity, which counterbalanced the political difficulties encountered by the group, made him a particularly welcome addition. 5 Over the next few years Dali devoted himself with passionate intensity to developing his method, which he described as 'paranoiac-critical', a 'spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on the critical and systematic objectivities of delirious associations and interpretations'. It helped him demonstrate his personal obsessions and fantasies by uncovering and meticulously fashioning hidden forms within pre-existing ones, either randomly selected (postcards, bench scenes, photographic enlargements) or of an accepted artistic canon. 5 The work *Crucifixion (Corpus Hypercubus)*, Dali called this painting "metaphysical, transcendent cubism, it is based entirely on the *Treatise on Cubic Form* by Juan de Herrera, Philip the 2nd's architect, builder of the Escorial Palace: it is a treatise inspired by *Ars Magna* of the Catalonian philosopher and alchemist Raymond Lulle. The cross is formed by an octahedral hypercube. The number nine is identifiable and becomes especially consubstantial with the body of Christ. The extremely noble figure of Gala is the perfect union of the development of the hypercubic octahedron

on the human level of the cube. She is depicted in front of the Bay of Port Lligat. The noblest beings were painted by Velazquez and Zurbaran. Bronze David — Donatello [pic]Crucifixion (Corpus Hypercubus) -Salvador Dali

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