

# Lady in her bath



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The Renaissance began in the late 15th century and spread from Italy to throughout Europe, and it was a rebirth of everything ranging from economy to art. Francois Clouet was a painter to the Kings and his work "Lady in Her Bath", embraced this new form of artistic expression. In this paper I am going to explain how the "Lady in Her Bath" painting reflects the culture and ideology of the Renaissance Era and as well, explain some of the values, influences, themes, and techniques used. I will also provide information about the social, political and religious history of the Renaissance Era that influenced its art and artists.

The Lady in her bath was painted in 1571 and is said to be the most interesting painting by Clouet; he is also said to be the first ever artist to use the bath as a setting for a portrait (Answer.com). The painting has all the classical signs of Renaissance art, and is secular in theme and emphasizes the grandeur of the individual. Clouet's painting shows the culture and ideology of the Era by showing how wealthy the woman was and that she must have come from a wealthy family. It was said at one time that the painting of the woman in this picture was one of the mistresses of Henry II, but that has now been ruled out.

She (the woman in the painting) is wearing what looks to be a couple of expensive pieces of jewelry, which in the Renaissance Era, it wasn't normal for individuals to wear jewelry because most of the people were too poor to buy things that weren't a necessity to support themselves or their families. Another sign that the woman must be wealthy or from a wealthy family is that she has a fresh bowl of fruit sitting next to her while she is bathing. To the poor, baths were to clean themselves up not for relaxation.

Some of the techniques Clouet continued to use were the conventions of the international portrait style which was prevalent throughout the courts of Europe. These techniques were passed down from Clouet's father, Jean Clouet (Answer. com). Oil painting and water color was also other techniques Clouet used. The term Renaissance is French for " rebirth", and it was the rebirth of Europe from the 14th through the early 17th centuries. Europe emerged from the economic stagnation of the Middle Ages and experienced a time of financial growth.

This Era turned artistic, social, scientific and political thoughts in new directions. The Renaissance generated three ideas that were frowned upon during the Middle Ages; secularism (the belief that religion has no place in the day to day activities), humanism (the cultural and intellectual movement that emphasized secular concerns as a result of the discovery of literature and art), and individualism (belief in the importance of the individual and the virtues of self reliance and personal independence) (Wikipedia. om). Writers and artists began to focus on the individual and their potential. During the time of the Renaissance Era, people were becoming more aware of Christianity and the Catholic religion was being pushed aside. Religious books were being rewritten and new laws were coming into order as well. The wealthy people were the ones keeping the Catholic religion alive while the poor were the ones converting to Christianity.

The " Lady in her Bath" painting by Clouet is not only a beautiful example of Europe's rebirth, but of art and the artists during that time; from the new techniques that were being used to the different types of paints from oil to water color. And most significantly, it shows the transition from religious only

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paintings to more secular paintings that depict just how beautiful the human body is; transforming embarrassment and shame to embracement.

## References

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