NEOCLASSICAL ART
## THE ENLIGHTENMENT
The majority of the art and architecture discussed in this chapter was influenced by Enlightenment philosophy, a major current in Western thought. Neoclassical art in particular showed the influence of the Enlightenment in its choice of subject matter—for example, David's *OATH OF THE HORATII*.

## NEOCLASSICISM VERSUS ROMANTICISM
One theme of this chapter is the contrast between Neoclassicism and Romanticism. By the end of the chapter, students should be able to analyze the differences between these two styles in terms of composition, choice of subject matter, proportion, color, and so on. Understanding the distinction between these two styles is especially important in French painting, where the inheritors of these artistic traditions will become the earliest modernists.

## INFLUENCE OF NAPOLEON
Students should be aware of the influence of Napoleon on French art by being able to identify which artists worked for Napoleon, which were sympathetic to his regime, and which were opposed to it. They should consider David, Ingres, Delacroix, and Goya. A central question for students to discuss is how important a role Napoleon's patronage played in the art of this period.

## THE AMERICAN IDENTITY
Artists in the new United States of America tried to capture the spirit of their fledgling republic in their art, but comparing the art of the young nation with that of its European antecedents reveals strong influences, as well as new unique forms such as naturalistic painting.
Miguel Cabrera’s posthumous portrait of sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695) is a famous depiction of the esteemed Mexican nun and writer. Considered the first feminist of the Americas, sor Juana lived as a nun of the Jeronymite order (named for St. Jerome) in seventeenth-century Mexico. Rather than marry, she chose to become a nun so she could pursue her intellectual interests. She corresponded with scientists, theologians, and other literary intellectuals in Mexico and abroad. She wrote poetry and plays that became internationally famous, and even engaged in theological debates.
Miguel Gabrera, *Portrait of Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz*. C1750, Oil on canvas.

Cabrera’s portrait differs from other nun portraits in several important ways. She looks towards us, her gaze direct and assertive, as she sits at a desk, surrounded by her library and instruments of learning. The library here includes books on philosophy, natural science, theology, mythology, and history, and so it reflects the types of works in sor Juana’s own library. Writing implements rest on the table, a clear allusion to sor Juana’s written works and intellectual pursuits. The rosary—a sign of her religious life—is juxtaposed with items signifying her intellectual life. The books, the desk, the quills and inkwell aid in conveying her intellectual status. The red curtain, common in elite portraiture of this period, also confers upon her a high status.
French Neoclassical

**FRENCH**

Jacques Louis David
Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres
Élisabeth Louise Vigée-Lebrun
Adélaïde Labille-Guiard

**ENGLISH**

Sir Joshua Reynolds
Thomas Gainsborough
Joseph Wright of Derby

**AMERICAN**

Benjamin West
John Singleton Copley
Gilbert Stuart
Factors that sparked the Neoclassical movement:

Excavations of Pompeii and Herculanueum in 1738 & Lord Elgin Marbles of 1801
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The Age of Enlightenment
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The Age of Enlightenment

Reaction against the shallow elitist style of Rococo
Emphasized drawing of line (which appealed to the intellect), rather than color (which appeals to the senses)
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Brushwork was smooth and compositions were simple to avoid Rococo excessive ornamental detail
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Neoclassical figures more solid looking than French Classical Baroque

Nicolas Poussin, *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, 1640s.
French Neoclassical

Nicolas Poussin, *The Rape of the Sabine Women*, 1640s. FRENCH BAROQUE
French Neoclassical

Jacques-Louis David

*Self-Portrait*, 1794.
French Neoclassical

French Neoclassical

French Neoclassical

Jacques-Louis David, *The Lictors Bring to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons*, 1787.
Jacques-Louis David

Death of Marat, 1793.
French Neoclassical

French Neoclassical Coronation at the Palace of Versailles
French Neoclassical

Coronation at Louvre (Original)

Coronation at Palace of Versailles
The main difference in the two paintings is the pink dress.

*Coronation at Louvre (Original)*  
*Coronation at Palace of Versailles*
Jacques-Louis David  
*Napoleon Crossing St. Bernard (the Alps)*  
1801-05.
Jacques-Louis David

*Napoleon in His Study*

1812.
Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres
Master of line NEOCLASSICAL

Eugene Delacroix
Self-Portrait, 1837 ROMANTIC
French Neoclassical

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WITHIN
3 DAYS
French Neoclassical
French Neoclassical
The subject of this piece is an informative exemplum virtutis (example or model of virtue) drawn from Greek and Roman history and literature. The moralizing pictures of Hogarth and Grueze already had marked change in taste, but Kauffmann replaced the modern setting and characters of their works. The actors are clothed in Roman garb and posed in classical Roman attitudes within Roman interiors.

The theme is the virtue of Cornelia, mother of the future political leaders Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, who attempted to reform the Roman republic in the second century B.C. Cornelia’s character is revealed in this scene, which takes place after a lady visitor had shown off her fine jewelry and then haughtily requested that Cornelia show hers. Instead of rushing to get them, Cornelia brings her sons forward, presenting them as her jewels.
Angelica Kauffmann, Mother of the Gracchi (Cornelia), 1785.
Élisabeth Louise Vigée-Lebrun
Self Portrait
Uffizi, Florence, 1790

Although her mood is lighthearted and the costume’s details echo the serpentine curve beloved by Rococo artists and wealthy patrons, nothing about Vigée-Lebrun pose or her mood speaks of Rococo frivolity. Hers is the self-confident stance of a woman whose art has won her an independent role in her society.

Like many of contemporaries, Vigée-Lebrun lived a life of extraordinary personal and economic independence, working for the nobility throughout Europe. She was successful during the age of the late monarchy in France was one a few women admitted to the Academy.
French Neoclassical

Élisabeth Louise Vigée-Lebrun
*Self Portrait with Daughter*, 1789.
Élisabeth Louise Vigée-Lebrun
Marie Antoinette at age 12, 1790.
Vigee-Lebrun

Portrait of Marie Antoinette and Her Children, 1787.
French Neoclassical
Adélaïde Labille-Guiard
Self-Portrait with Two Pupils, 1785.
Napoleon liked classical models, in paintings as well as sculpture.

Napoleon’s favorite sculptor was Antonio Canova, who somewhat reluctantly left a successful art career in Italy to settle in Paris and serve the emperor.

This is a sculpture of Napoleon’s sister. She insisted on being portrayed as the goddess of love, or Venus.

She appears reclining on a divan and gracefully holding the golden apple, a symbol of the goddess’s triumph in the judgment of Paris.

Canova derived the figure from Greek art, however the artwork is not a sensuous and idealized as might be expected.

Drapery suggests a commitment to naturalism.
Antonio Canova, *Cupid and Psyche*, 1786-93.
Cupid and Psyche at the Louvre in Paris
Antonio Canova
Perseus with Head of Medusa
1804.
Perseus with Head of Medusa at the Met Museum (NYC)
Antonio Canova
*Venus and Mars*, 1816-1822.
Jean-Antoine Houdon
Neoclassical Sculptor

Houdon was a French neoclassical sculptor. Houdon is famous for his portrait busts and statues of philosophers, inventors and political figures of the Enlightenment.

Houdon’s biggest influence was the Roman bust, often used to revere political figures and statesmen in Ancient Rome.

Houdon’s daughter, Sabine Houdon.
Houdon, George Washington, 1785.

Houdon, Voltaire, 1778.
Houdon, Ben Franklin, 1789.

Houdon, Thomas Jefferson, 1789.
Jean-Antoine Houdon,
*George Washington*,
1788-1792 CE. Marble.

Based on a life mask and other measurements of George Washington taken by Houdon, it is considered one of the most accurate depictions of the subject. The original sculpture is located in the rotunda of the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond, Virginia, and has been copied extensively.

It depicts a standing life-sized Washington. In his right hand is a cane, his left arm rests on a fasces on which is slung his cape and sword, and at the back is a plow. He is shown wearing his military uniform, as Washington wished to be depicted in contemporary attire, rather than that of antiquity popular in Neo-classical sculpture.

With its selection of objects both civilian (the plow and cane) and military (the fasces, sword and uniform), the statue has been interpreted as invoking the imagery and ideal of an Ancient Roman leader. At the time of its commission, Washington had not yet served in the Constitutional Convention, and would not become President of the United States until 1789.
English Neoclassical

Sir Joshua Reynolds was the most important and influential of 18th century English painters, specializing in portraits and promoting the "Grand Style" in painting which depended on idealization of the imperfect.
Sir Joshua Reynolds

**ENGLISH NEOCLASSICAL**
English Neoclassical

Sir Joshua Reynolds
Thomas Gainsborough, Mrs. Richard Brinsley, 1787.

This portrait shows the woman, dressed informally, seated in a rustic landscape faintly reminiscent of Watteau in its soft-hued light and feathery brushwork. Gainsborough intended to match the natural landscape’s unspoiled beauty with the subject’s natural beauty.

The artist originally had planned to give the picture a “more pastoral air” by adding several sheep, but he did not live long enough to paint them in. Even without this element, Gainsborough’s deep interest in the landscape setting is evident.

Although he won greater fame in his time for his portraits, he had begun as a landscape painter and always preferred painting scenes of nature to the depiction of human likenesses.
English Neoclassical

Sir Joshua Reynolds

Thomas Gainsborough
English Neoclassical

Thomas Gainsborough  
*The Blue Boy, 1770*  
ENGLISH NEOCLASSICAL
Thomas Gainsborough
The Painter’s Daughters
Chasing a Butterfly, c1756
The Chiswick House is one example of 18th century British neo-Palladian architecture. Lord Burlington, who designed this elegant Classical villa, drew inspiration from his 'grand tours' of Italy. It was finished in 1729.
Palladio studied Vitruius' *De Architectura* book.


Villa Rotonda includes Romand and Etruscan qualities.

The building has four different vistas or views.
Andrea Palladio
*Villa Rotonda*, c1566.
**HIGH ITALIAN RENAISSANCE**

Richard Boyle (Lord Burlington)
*Chiswick House*, c1729.
**ENGLISH NEOCLASSICAL**
English Neoclassical

Octagonal dome

Thermae window

Pediment

Cornice

Temple front portico

Window with pediment

Plain wall

Box shape

Classical balustrade

Entry staircase angles to side

Center axis
English Neoclassical

How are these interiors considered NEOCLASSICAL?
American Neoclassical

John Singleton Copley,
*Portrait of Paul Revere*, 1770.

This work shows a sense of directness and faithfulness to visual fact that marked the taste for “downrightness” and plainness many visitors to America noticed during the 18th and 19th centuries. The painting doesn’t show him yet as the familiar hero of the American Revolution, but working his everyday profession as a silversmith.

Revere is seated in a plain, revealingly lit setting, bent over the teapot in progress yet taking a quick pause to turn his head and look the viewer in the eye.

The informality and sense of moment link the painting to contemporaneous English and European portraits, but the spare style and emphasis on the sitter’s down-to-earth style differentiate the American work from British and continental counterparts.
American Neoclassical

John Singleton Copley
Samuel Adams, 1772.
American Neoclassical

This work depicts the mortally wounded young English commander just after his defeat of the French in the battle of Quebec in 1759, giving Canada to Great Britain.

West chose to depict a historical event and has them all dressed in contemporary costume, although military uniforms aren’t completely accurate.

The significance is that he blended realism with the theatrical tradition of portraying historical subjects and arranged the figures complexly to suggest the death of Christ or a saint.

West wanted to present the hero’s death in service of the state as a martyrdom charged with religious emotion.

The combination of traditional heroic painting with modern realism won viewer’s hearts during that time and influenced many other historical paintings into the nineteenth century.
American Neoclassical

Is Benjamin West using the form of Wolfe’s limp body as a connection to Van Der Weyden’s *Deposition*?
Gilbert Stuart

*Portrait of George Washington (The Anthenaeum Portrait)*, 1796

AMERICAN NEOCLASSICAL

Stuart was the only painter to create portraits of the first FIVE Presidents.
Gilbert Stuart

*Portrait of George Washington (Landsdowne Portrait), 1797.*
American Neoclassical
American Neoclassical


Thomas Jefferson, the owner and designer of Monticello was attracted to classical architecture. Jefferson admired Palladio immensely and read the Italians’ Four Books of Architecture.

Later, while the minister to France, Jefferson studied the century classical architecture and city planning. Due to this new knowledge Jefferson completely remodeled Monticello, which he had first designed in an English Georgian style. In his remodeling, he emulated Palladio’s manner with a facade inspired by Robert Adam’s work.

The final version of Monticello is somewhat reminiscent of the Villa Rotonda and of Chiswick House, but its materials are local wood and brick used in Virginia.
American Neoclassical

American Neoclassical

Thomas Jefferson, Monticello, Charlottesville, VA, 1770-1806
American Neoclassical

Thomas Jefferson, Rotunda at the University of Virginia
American Neoclassical

Thomas Jefferson, Elevation of plan for Univ. of Virginia’s Rotonda
American Neoclassical

Andrea Palladio, Sketch Elevation of plan of the Pantheon
American Neoclassical

White House, begun in Washington D.C. in 1792
American Neoclassical

Photo of White House, mid-1860s.