

A TIMELINE OF Western Art History



Prehistoric (30,000 BC - 2500 BC)

Known for art created before the invention of written language and record-keeping, such as cave paintings and rock carvings.

Greek Classical (500 BC - 300 BC)

Known for idealized images of the human form, red-figure and black-figure pottery, sculpture, and architecture.

Byzantine (500 - 1200)

Known for mosaics and stylized, symbolic artwork that depicted Christian themes.

Romanesque (1000 - 1300)

Known for art funded by religious patrons, lack of realism, high relief sculpture and stained glass.

Renaissance (1400 - 1525)

Known for a revival of classic Greek and Roman aesthetics, biblical and mythological subject matter, and realistic paintings and sculptures.

Dutch Realism (1600 - 1700)

Known for small scale works often showing symbolic images and/or daily activities of common people.

Rococo (1730 - 1800)

Known for works with a highly-decorative and frivolous feel, soft colors, and lighthearted subject matter.

Ancient Egyptian (3,000 BC - 300 AD)

Known for stylized portrayals of people and for objects that were used for religious and ceremonial purposes such as sarcophagi, canopic jars, and cartouches.

Roman Classical (500 BC - 450 AD)

Known for narrative art that realistically depicts figures and architecture.

Celtic, Saxon, and Viking Art (600 - 900)

Known for illuminated manuscripts and intricate and ornate metalwork.

Gothic (1100 - 1500)

Known for religious sculpture, stained glass, and distinctive architecture that used such elements as pointed arches, flying buttresses, and rose windows.

Mannerism (1520 - 1600)

Known for exaggerated, distorted figures and complicated subject matter.

Baroque (1600 - 1700)

Known for similar themes as the Renaissance but depicted with more movement, color, and drama.



Information based on Cumming, Robert. Art: A Visual History. DK Publishing (Dorling Kindersley), 2015 and <http://www.theartstory.org>