Italy: 1200-1400
Proto Renaissance
(1290-1400)
Rejection of Medieval Artistic Values

• Identify the influence of the Byzantine and classical worlds on the art and architecture.
• Notice the rejection of medieval artistic elements and the growing interest in the natural world.
• Examine the artistic interest in illusionism, spatial depth, and emotional display in the human figure.
BONAVENTURA BERLINGHIERI, panel from the *Saint Francis Altarpiece*, San Francesco, Pescia, Italy, 1235. Tempera on wood
Nave (looking west) of the upper church, San Francesco, Assisi, Italy, 1228–1253

SAINT FRANCIS MASTER, Saint Francis Preaching to the Birds, upper church, San Francesco, Assisi, Italy, ca. 1290–1300. Fresco
Nicola Pisano

- As one of the greatest sculptors of his era, Pisano welded together an extensive knowledge of Etruscan, Roman, and Greek prototypes.

- The three-lobed design of the arches in Pisano's Pulpit is a Gothic feature.

- The standing figures at the tops of the Corinthian columns and the rectangular reliefs above show the mark of antique traditions.
  - One standing figure was a nude, counterpoised Hercules figure derived from Greek sources.
  - Other panels show Etruscan influence.

Pulpit of the baptistery, Pisa, Italy, 1259–1260. Marble, 15’ high.
Fortitude and Prudence

Praxiteles, Aphrodite of Knidos, 4th BC
Hercules

Seer, from the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus, Olympia, Greece, ca. 470–456 BCE

Hercules
Annunciation, Nativity, and Adoration of the Shepherds, relief panel on the baptistery pulpit, Pisa, Italy, 1259–1260. Marble
Cimabue: known as the last great Byzantine painter.

---Was a pioneer in the move towards naturalism, as his figures were depicted with more life-like proportions and value.

CIMABUE, Madonna Enthroned with Angels and Prophets, from Santa Trinità, Florence, Italy, ca. 1280–1290. Tempera and gold leaf on wood
GIOTTO DI BONDONE, *Madonna Enthroned*, from the Church of Ognissanti, Florence, Italy, ca. 1310. Tempera and gold leaf on wood

-- Revolutionary in composition as well as in *expressive and spatial* dimensions
Giotto & the Arena Chapel

- Commissioned by Enrico degli Scrovegni to atone for the sins of his father (a moneylender - usury)

- The theme is Salvation. There is an emphasis on the Virgin Mary, as the chapel is dedicated to the Annunciation.

- It is divided into 37 scenes, arranged in 3 tiers, starting in the upper register with the story of Joachim and Anna (the parents of the Virgin) and continuing with the story of Mary. The life of Jesus occupies two registers.
Giotto di Bondone, Arena Chapel (Cappella Scrovegni; interior looking west), Padua, Italy, 1305–1306

Faux marble and grisaille figures of the Virtues
GIOTTO DI BONDONE, *Lamentation*, Arena Chapel, (Cappella Scrovegni), Padua, Italy, ca. 1305. Fresco

First artist to show natural realism: figures overlap in space, use of emotional expressions, figures have a feeling of weight.
Lamentation (details)

Nativity (detail)

Last Judgment (detail)
GIOTTO DI BONDONE, *Entry into Jerusalem*, Arena Chapel (Cappella Scrovegni), Padua, Italy, ca. 1305. Fresco
GIOTTO DI BONDONE, 
Betrayal of Jesus (left) Last Supper (right), Arena Chapel (Cappella Scrovegni), Padua, Italy, ca. 1305
International (Gothic) Style

• Developed in Burgundy, France and northern Italy in the late 14th century and early 15th century

• Characteristics:
  – Brilliant colors
  – Expansive areas of gold leaf
  – Minute detail
  – Slender, often wan appearing figures to create lyrical, ornate panels such as this Annunciation.

SIMONE MARTINI AND LIPPO MEMMI(?), *Annunciation*, altarpiece, from Siena Cathedral, Siena, Italy, 1333 (frame reconstructed in the 19th century). Tempera and gold leaf on wood, center panel
DUCCIO DI BUONINSENGNA, *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints*, principal panel of the *Maestà* altarpiece, from the Siena Cathedral, Siena, Italy, 1308–1311. Tempera and gold leaf on wood
DUCCIO DI BUONINSEGNA, *Life of Jesus*, 14 panels from the back of the *Maestà* altarpiece, from Siena Cathedral, Siena, Italy, 1308–1311. Tempera and gold leaf on wood.
Jesus’ adult life and miracles

Childhood of Jesus
DUCCIO DI BUONINSEGNA, *Betrayal of Jesus*, detail from the back of the *Maestà* altarpiece, from Siena Cathedral, Siena, Italy, 1309–1311. Tempera and gold leaf on wood, detail
GIOTTO DI BONDONE, *Entry into Jerusalem*, Arena Chapel (Cappella Scrovegni), Padua, Italy, ca. 1305. Fresco

DUCCIO DI BUONINSEGNA, *Entry into Jerusalem*, panel from the back of the *Maestà* altarpiece, from Siena Cathedral, Siena, Italy, 1308–1311. Tempera and gold leaf on wood

COMPARE + CONTRAST
Spatial Illusion

- Lorenzetti was more interested in spatial matters than precious decoration.
- His *Birth of the Virgin* is a successful attempt at combining Giotto's heavy bodied figures with Duccio's spacious architectural interiors.

Siena vs. Florence in the 14th c

• Civic pride created a rivalry between these two cities
• Both supported a school of painting during 14th century
• Byzantine influence =“Greek manner”= maniera greca
  – Byzantine style as it developed in Italy; storytelling and symbols vs. optical realism
  – Dramatic pathos and complex iconography (elongated figures, exaggerated, iconic gestures, stylized features, gold for drapery folds, contrasts of highlights and shadows
Siena Cathedral (looking northeast), Siena, Italy, begun ca. 1226; nave vaults, ca. 1260–1270; lower west facade designed by GIOVANNI PISANO, 1284–1299; enlarged and completed, 1355–1386
Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Peaceful City*, detail from *Effects of Good Government in the City and in the Country*, Sala della Pace, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, Italy, 1338–1339
AMBROGIO LORENZETTI, Allegory of Good Government, north (left) and east (right) walls of the Sala della Pace, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, Italy, 1338–1339. Fresco
Ambrogio Lorenzetti, *Peaceful Country*, detail from *Effects of Good Government in the City and in the Country*, Sala della Pace, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena, Italy, 1338–1339. Fresco
ARNOLFO DI CAMBIO and others, Florence Cathedral (aerial view looking northeast), Florence, Italy, begun 1296.
Giotto designed the Campanile which stands like a tower beside the facade.

In fact Giotto's Campanile is not entirely as he designed it. Only the lower story of the bell tower was realized from Giotto's design.

The design of the original 21 reliefs very probably came from Giotto. They were executed by Andrea Pisano (1290-1348), Giotto's successor.
The number 8 is a symbol of regeneration in Christianity, signifying the six days of creation, the Day of Rest, and a day of re-creation through the Sacrament of Baptism.

ANDREA PISANO, south doors of the Baptistery, Florence, Italy, 1330–1336. Gilded bronze (The door frames date to the mid-15th century.)
Detail, Baptistry Doors, Florence

Subject: scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist
Churches in Florence

ANDREA ORCAGNA, tabernacle, Or San Michele, Florence, Italy, 1355–1359. Inset painting by BERNARDO DADDI, Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints, 1346–1347.

Nave of Santa Maria Novella, Florence, Italy, ca. 1246-1470
Gothic in Italy?

What aspects of this building illustrate Gothic influence?

Would you call this a Gothic cathedral?

facade of Orvieto Cathedral, Orvieto, Italy, begun 1310
Milan Cathedral, Milan, Italy, begun 1386.
Brunelleschi’s dome (octagonal), Duomo, begun 1419, took until 1469 to complete
(Cathedral began in 1296 – 173 years to complete!)