Baroque
1600 - 1750

Baroque

- From the Portuguese word "barocca" – pearl of irregular shape. Implies strangeness, irregularity, extravagance

- The term baroque was not a complement – it <u>originally meant</u> <u>overdone</u> – too many notes in music, too much colour in painting, and too grand in architecture

- <u>Dramatic</u>, <u>dynamic</u>, and <u>ornate</u>

Origins

- Originated in Italy

- During the Mannerism movement we saw a revolt against the Catholic Church beginning the Protestant Reformation (started by Martin Luther in 1517).

- In an <u>effort to win back their reduced numbers the Catholic Church reacted with their COUNTER REFORMATION</u>. In Catholic countries, an <u>art revival was launched to WOW them with religious splendor</u>!!! *look and see how magnificent the Catholic Church can be.*

- In <u>Catholic countries</u> was <u>often</u> <u>religious</u> (<u>Italy</u>)

- In <u>Protestant</u> <u>countries</u> was more mundane with <u>genre</u> <u>scenes</u>, <u>landscapes</u>, <u>portraits</u> and <u>still</u> <u>lifes</u> (<u>Netherlands</u>)

Style Characteristics

- Elaborate ornamentation
- Dramatic, emotional
- Naturalistic rather than ideal
- Colours were brighter than bright, darks were darker than dark
- Images are direct, obvious
- Tries to draw the viewer in to participate in the scene
- Depictions feel physically and psychologically real
- Tenebrism: dramatic contrasts between light and dark
- Common themes: grand visions, ecstasies and conversions, martyrdom and death, intense light, intense psychological moments
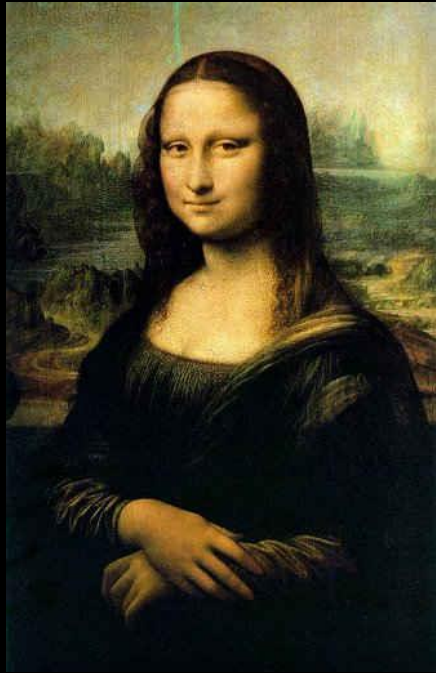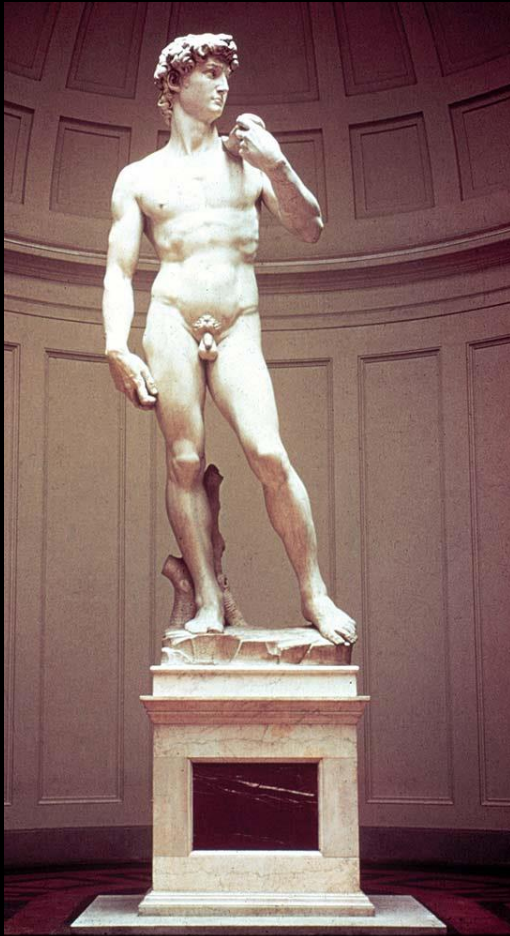
Caravaggio: Crucifixion of St. Peter

Artists

- Bernini (Italian)
- Caravaggio (Italian)
- Gentileschi (Italian)
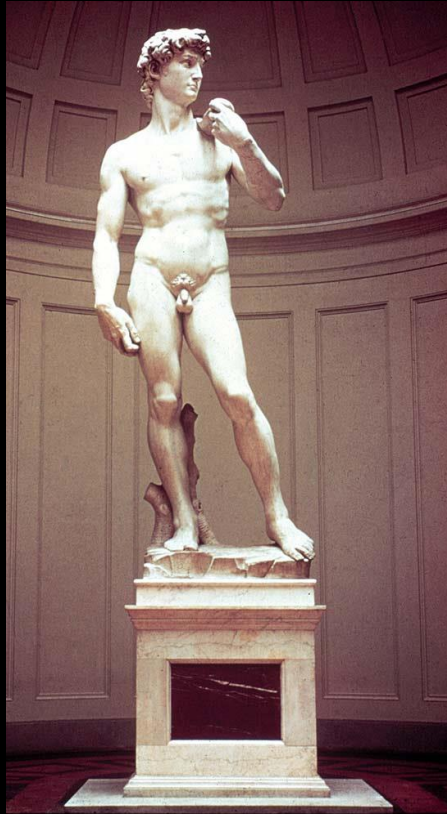- Rembrandt (Dutch)
- Vermeer (Dutch)

Renaissance

Exemplifies classical values of balance, harmony, composure, moderation, proportion, stability, and beauty

Baroque

Donatello, Early Renaissance

Michelangelo, High Renaissance

Bernini, Baroque

BERNINI – *David*, 1624, marble

- Twisting with effort
- Mid-action
- Intense determination and concentration, lips are compressed, eyebrows drawn down, jaw clenched
- No one ideal angle to be viewed from
- Dramatic
- Tension
- Naturalism vs idealism
- Full of movement and energy
- Forceful diagonals create energy and movement
- Scene is brought to life
- Forces viewer to be an active participant

BERNINI - *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa,* 1645-52

- The moment when St. Theresa experiences visions in which an angel drives a golden arrow repeatedly through her heart, causing an ecstatic spiritual-bodily pain
- Gold beams suggest an outpouring of divine grace and love of the Holy Spirit
- Her face reveals a very real physical experience
- Direct

- Matthew, a money-hungry tax collector, is called to follow Christ and give up his worldly possessions

- Christ walks in with arm outstretched

- Piercing rays of sun pointing to Matthew to show the very moment Matthew realizes he is being called

- Moment of spiritual awakening

- Christ shown in real, contemporary environment - among fraud, greed

- Spiritual/religious subject matter is brought down to every day level, more relatable and accessible now than in Renaissance (secularized)

- Hand of Jesus = hand of Adam

- Hand under cross of window

- Naturalism vs. idealism

- Tenebrism: dramatic use of chiaroscuro, light and dark

CARAVAGGIO – *The Calling of St. Matthew*, 1600

CARAVAGGIO – *David Holding the Head of Goliath,* 1610

- Extreme tenebrism
- This David does not look triumphant as they did in the Renaissance
- Looks unhappy, disgusted, guilty (reflective of Caravaggio's own life – asking pope for forgiveness)
- Head of Goliath is self-portrait of Caravaggio (villain)
- Clean sword – purity of work, unlike his own past
- David holding head out to viewers, sharing the pain, getting into our space, we are active viewers
- Viewers have no choice but to be involved in scene
- Naturalism vs idealism
- Secularized religious art
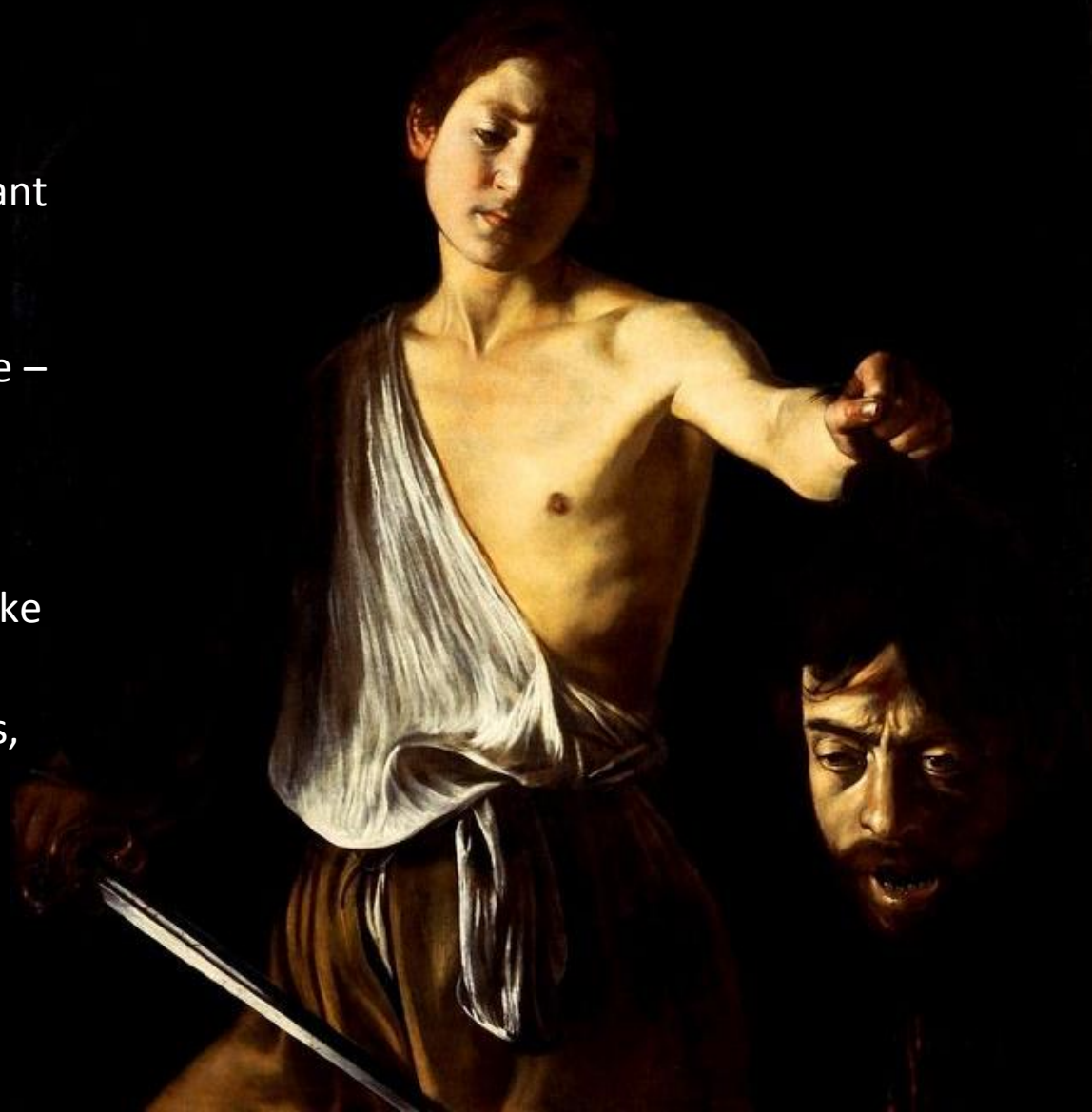
ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI – *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, 1620

- Judith, widow, whose town is besieged by invading army
- Makes false report, invited to dinner, gets general drunk, seduces him and brutally decapitates him with his sword
- Virtue overcoming evil
- Eager determination
- Reflective of Gentileschi's own life, visualizing herself as Judith, self-portrait
- Her angle and arm placement depict precision and perfection
- Immensely tangled arms are focal point
- Tenebrism

Dutch Baroque (protestant)

REMBRANDT – Self-Portraits
- First artist to paint self-portraits regularly (over 60)
- Characteristic use of tenebrism, gold light on face
- Engaging and immediate
- Dress up
- King of painting – frontal, holding scepter/painting tool

VERMEER - *Girl with a Pearl Earring,* 1665

- Turning toward or away?
- Engaging with viewer
- Intimate gaze, mysterious eyes
- Vivid, rich colouring
- Direct

VERMEER – *Young Woman with a Water Pitcher*, 1662

- Domestic life (typical genre painting)
- Delicacy
- Simple act of opening window, holding water pitcher = beauty of the every day
- Unity in colours
- Naturalism in still life and brass
- Forces us to see what we normally don't pay attention to