



# Rococo Art and Art Deco

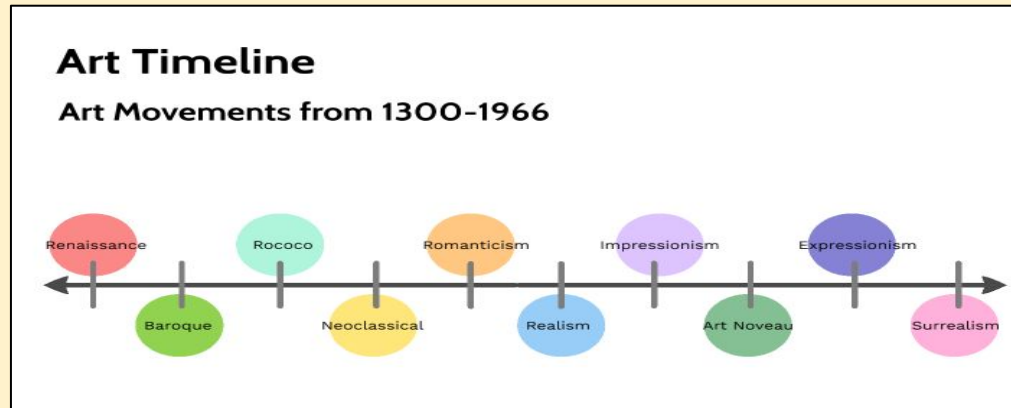
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# Rococo Art History:

- It is a style of art that emerged in France during the early 1700s. It is also known as late Baroque, or the final phase of Baroque. Baroque Art is very nuanced as it follows renaissance art and mannerisms. Baroque art has influence from the Catholic Church. It is characterized by contrast, movement, grandeur, and elegance. This style emerged at the start of the 17th century in Rome and quickly developed in other countries in Europe, one of them being France. By the 1730s, Baroque art has evolved into Rococo Art, which is seen as a more flamboyant and some may even say rebellious style.

- Rococo Art surfaced in Paris during the reign of Louis XV and thrived between about 1723 and 1759. Rococo was a reaction against the geometric, strict, and formal style of Louis XIV. Rococo differentiates from Baroque as it has this sense of playfulness, romance, lightness, freeness, and love. While Baroque is a little more serious, provocative, and dramatic. Baroque art was all about serious and realistic themes with some drama elements while Rococo is the exact opposite, as it has joyful themes of nature and love.

- The term Baroque, in the art world, describes anything that is bizarre, irregular, over exaggerated, etc



## Baroque Examples:



*Girl with a Pearl Earring* (1665)

Painting by Johannes Vermeer

- Symbolizes the life of the merchant class. It represents status, worldliness, wealth, and beauty.



*The Calling of Saint Matthew* (1599-1600)

Painting by Caravaggio

- Depicts a biblical scene and uses contrasting light and shadow to create this intense moment

# Rococo Characteristics:

- Rococo gets its name from the French word Rocaille, which means decorative rocks and shells. These rocks and shells were seen on fountains, gardens and grottoes (artificial structures/caves)
- Rococo art emphasizes on elegance, grace, and frivolity. It depicts scenes of leisure, love, and romance and reflects on the carefree lifestyle of aristocracy and of the upper classes
- Includes shapes from nature (leaves, trees, flowers, suns, etc are often hidden)
- Mythical and real world creatures
- Rococo painting and interior designs often utilize soft, pastel colors, such as pale pinks, blues, greens and yellow. These colors enhanced the delicacy and lightness of the art. These colors were commonly seen for decoration in palaces and opulent salons.
- Lots of golden decoration
- Delicate brushstrokes
- Asymmetrical
- Elaborate furniture
- Hedonistic themes (“engaged in the pursuit of pleasure; sensually self-indulgent”)

# *The Love Letter (1773):*

By: Jean-Honoré Fragonard

Fragonard (1732-1806) was a French painter during the Rococo period and was known for his exuberant and hedonistic works of art. He was active in the last decades of this period and his work became more known after he died.

- This work embodies the curiosity and freedom of those in the upper classes
- Depicts a rouged women sitting at her desk that's covered with papers
- The women is facing the audience and the golden light is placed directly on her face and bodily stance, making the audience first notice her coy smirk and the letter in her hand
- The bottom of the painting almost seems unfinished - giving the audience more reason to stare at the women and her secretive actions - represents the carefree culture of France
- Frilly dress, dog by her side, ornate desk all represents the type of luxuries and ambience that the elite were surrounded with
- The lighting also emphasizes that she may have received the bouquet and letter from a potential lover (loose morals/romantic ideals of Rococo)
- Pleasure-seeking ways/self-indulgent
- Soft, pastel colors



# *The Swing* (1767):

By: Jean-Honoré Fragonard

- A woman is wearing a big frilly pastel color dress
- Most likely getting pushed by her husband while she is flirting with another man
- As she gets pushed, she flings her heel off, and it goes flying near a statue of cupid (in Greek mythology, Cupid is known as the God of desire, erotic love, attraction and affection)
- Her husband is practically hidden in the shadows while the man on the bottom left is hiding in the bushes, smiling
- This represents salacious, and illicit love that went on during French society during this time; the man looks up her skirt
- Lots of elements of fantasy: Curved, asymmetrical lines in the trees, foliage and nature



# Video:



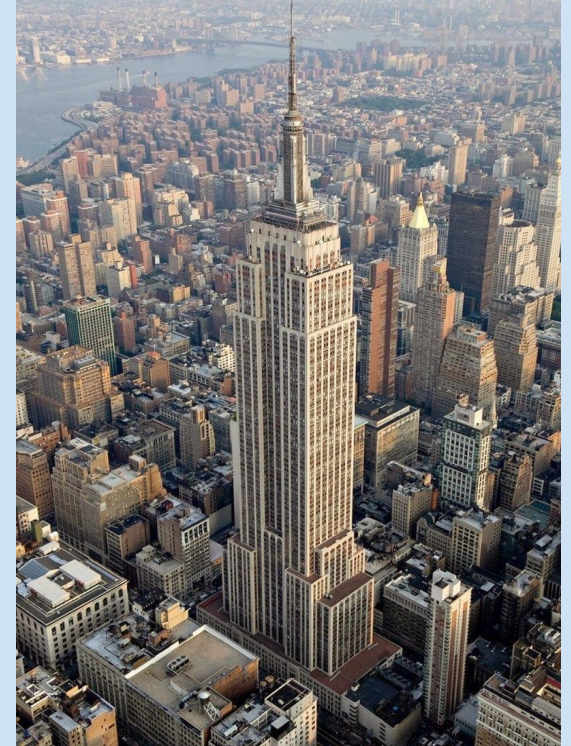
# More Examples of Rococo Art:





# Art Deco History:

- 1910s - 1950s
- First appeared in France and made its way to the United States and the rest of Europe during the 1920s.
- It represents the interior and exterior style and design from anything big or small , such as clothing, fashion, skyscrapers, buildings, etc
- Bright colors, gold, and geometric, sharp lines are important elements
- During its prime, it represented glamour, exuberance, and opulent lifestyles
- It depicted the social and technological progress
- Expensive and detailed craftsmanship
- Themes of materialism
- Chrysler Building, Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center are examples of Art Deco



# Examples of Art Deco:



# Differences:

- Emerged in different time periods (Rococo: early 18th century, Art Deco: 1920s-1930s)
- They both have different purposes:
  - Art Deco is supposed to be modern and also functional. It's used in building, fashion, and furniture design
  - Rococo was more used to decorate interiors of buildings, palaces, and be a sign of wealth to the upper class
- They both have different characteristics:
  - Art Deco has geometric shapes, sharp, and angular lines. Incorporates technology
  - Rococo has pastel colors, more curved and flowy lines. More elaborate rather than simplistic modern features like art deco

However;

They both represent the idea that art is a reflection of society and lifestyle and that art can imitate the ideals of life

# Sources:

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