

# New Spain, Rococo and Neoclassicism

## ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

- Seventeenth century art can be characterized by a taste for the theatrical and a stress on movement and compositional variety.
- Many artists experiment with psychological and emotional portrayals.
- The Reformation and Counter-Reformation caused a rift in Christian art of Western Europe. Art is influenced by changes in society. It is affected by economic forces which cause widespread migration, war, and a concentration of population in cities. New countries emerge and social movements gain strength.
- Artists become more prominent members of society. Art movements come in rapid succession. Art is seen in a new, often provoking, way to the public.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- In colonial Latin America there is a mixing of indigenous art forms with European formulas and materials.
- There is also an influence from Asia and Africa.
- In addition to religious subjects found in Europe at the time, there are other types of paintings, including portraits, history paintings, and genre scenes.
- Latin American colonial art aligns with art production from Spain and the rest of Southern Europe.
- The late eighteenth century is known as the Enlightenment, a period of scientific advance. It is followed by the revolutionary principles of the Romantic Period.
- New philosophies, particularly those by Marx and Darwin, spread throughout the world. These views were supplanted by a new understanding of worldwide cultures.
- Modern movements include Neoclassicism and Romanticism.
- Artists belong to academies and show their work in salons.
- Architecture is characterized by a series of revivals.
- The salons of Paris grow in importance. Artists work less in the service of religion, more for corporations.

## IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

1. The shift of power from the royal court to the aristocrats is paralleled in the shift in taste from Baroque to Rococo.
2. The French Royal Academy dictated artistic taste in 18<sup>th</sup> century Paris.
3. Rococo architecture seeks to unite the arts in a coherent artistic experience.
4. A quintessential Rococo painting is the fete galante, which portrays the aristocracy in their leisurely pursuits.
5. The Rococo also developed a strong school of satirical painting.
6. The effects of the Industrial Revolution on society and art.
7. The new intellectual transformation called The Enlightenment, in which philosophers and scientists based their ideas on logic and observation, rather than tradition and folk wisdom.

## VOCABULARY

academy	savants	mori	vita activa
biombo	fete gallante	mestizo	
casta	untainebleau	pastel	
painting	galerie des	Philip IV	
enconchado	glaces	Plateresque	
engraving	grand tour	Polyptych	
escudo	kermess	Prix de Rome	
etching	Louis XIV	quadro	
exemplum	Maria De	riportato	
virtutis	Medici	rococo	
femmes	memento	salon	

## RESOURCES

Elizabeth Vigee Lebrun  
<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2016/vigee-le-brun>  
 What'd I Miss?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwSSCpyCdns>  
 Do you Hear the People Sing?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMYNfQlf1H8>

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## JOURNAL

*Brooklyn Biombo* (3.1, 2.2, 3.2)  
*The Swing* (3.1, 1.2, 1.4)  
*The Oath of the Horatii* (3.1, 3.2, 3.3)

## CONTEXT

Following the news that Columbus landed in what is now the Bahamas in 1492, European powers immediately set upon a mission of conquest and colonization. Spanish and Portuguese adventurers occupied vast expanses of territory in an area we today call Latin America. The great Native American Civilizations of the Aztecs and Incas rapidly fell before the more technologically advanced and disease bearing Europeans.

Within a short time, local populations were made to work for their European overlords, artist included. Some Native Americans married into the established Spanish hierarchy and produced children called Mestizos. The Spanish extracted much the New World had to offer: silver, gold, and new crops, like potatoes and corn. They also established a world-wide trading empire in which ships slowly trekked across the Pacific connecting Mexico with Asia. These voyages, called the Manila Galleon, enabled trade vessels to make the four month journey unimpeded. The Mexican market could boast Asian spices, ceramics, silks, ivory and other precious items long before they became available in the colonial United States. Artistic life became enriched by the contact of East and West layered onto a Native American population.

Instability in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars, however, inspired Spain's colonies to seek independence. As quickly as Spain gained her territories, she lost them to very capable generals like Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin. In 1822 most of Latin America was a patchwork of independent states; colonial rule was over.

Center stage in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century politics was the European conquest of the rest of the world. The great struggles of the time took place among the colonial powers, who at first merely established trading stations in the lands they encountered, but later occupied distant places by layering new settlers, new languages, new religions, and new governments onto an indigenous population. At first, Europeans hoped to become wealthy by exploiting these new territories, but the cost of maintaining foreign armies soon began to outweigh the commercial benefits. As European settlers grew wistful for home, they built Baroque and Rococo inspired buildings, imported Rococo fashions and made the New World seem as much like the Old World as they could.

In France, the court of Versailles began to diminish after the death of Louis XIV, leaving less power in the hands of the king and more in the nobility. Therefore, the Rococo departs from the Baroque interest in royalty, and takes on a more aristocratic flavor, particularly in the decoration of lavish townhouses that the upper class kept in Paris—not in Versailles. The late eighteenth century was the age of the Industrial Revolution. Populations boomed as mass production, technological innovation, and medical science marched relentlessly forward. The improvements in the quality of life that the industrial revolution yielded were often offset by a new slavery to mechanized work and inhumane working conditions.



## WORKS OF ART

- *Viceroyalty of New Spain*, Frontispiece of the Codex Mendoza 1541-1542
- *Master of Calamarca*, Angel with Arquebus 17th cent.
- *Circle of the Gonzalez Family*, Screen with the Siege of Belgrade and Hunting Scene 1697-1701
- *Miguel Gonzalez*, The Virgin of Guadalupe 17th cent.
- *Juan Rodriguez Juarez*, Spaniard and Indian Produce a Mestizo 1715
- *Miguel Cabrera*, Portrait of Cor Juana Ines de La Cruz 1750
- *Fragonard*, The Swing 1767
- *William Hogarth*, The Tete a Tete 1743
- *Thomas Jefferson*, The Monticello 1768-1809
- *Elizabeth Vigee Lebrun*, Self Portrait 1790
- *Jean Antoine Houdon*, George Washington 1788-1792

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Read Gardner's pages 763-791
- Complete homework packet
- Write journal
- Fill in flashcards
- Write Museum/Gallery review #1
- E.C. -Watch Les Miserable and write a review

**HOMEWORK DUE:** \_\_\_\_\_