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Возрождение (середина XIII – середина XVI столетия). Грани гуманизма. Часть II

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Аннотация. Работа является второй частью публикации: Demchenko A. I. The edges of humanism of the Renaissance in the mid-13th – the mid-16th century: Part 1 // Pan-Art. 2024. Vol. 4. No. 2. Эссе посвящено рассмотрению искусства и культуры периода Возрождения, открывающего Новое время, взятого в пределах от середины XIII до середины XVI столетия. В предыдущей части публикации был охвачен период перехода от Раннего Возрождения к Проторенессансу. В данной части эссе раскрываются особенности утверждения стиля ренессанс, кульминация которого пришлась на конец XV – начало XVI века. Данный этап справедливо обозначен как Высокое Возрождение – время создания шедевров Леонардо да Винчи, Рафаэля, Микеланджело, Дюрера. В ходе обзора ключевых артефактов Возрождения (от литературы и музыки до живописи и скульптуры) автор обосновывает огромное значение данной эпохи, по праву «золотого века» искусства, для последующего развития европейской художественной культуры.

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The edges of humanism of the Renaissance in the mid-13th – the mid-16th century: Part 2

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Abstract. This work is the second part of the publication: Demchenko A. I. The edges of humanism of the Renaissance in the mid-13th – the mid-16th century: Part 1 // Pan-Art. 2024. Vol. 4. No. 2. This essay is dedicated to examining the art and culture of the Renaissance period, which ushered in Modern times, spanning from the mid-13th to the mid-16th century. The previous part of the publication covered the transition period from the Early Renaissance to the Proto-Renaissance. This part of the essay explores the features of the formation of the renaissance style, culminating in the late 15th – early 16th century. This stage is rightfully called the High Renaissance – the time of the creation of masterpieces by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo and Durer. Through a review of key Renaissance artifacts (from literature and music to painting and sculpture), the author substantiates the immense significance of this era, rightfully considered the “Golden age” of art, for the subsequent development of European artistic culture.

Now, having considered the individual phenomena of the Early Renaissance, we are very close to what is meant by the concept of the *renaissance style* (using a lowercase letter, as opposed to the name of the era as a whole). It reached its culminating stage in the late 15th – early 16th centuries, when such great painters as Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Durer worked. It is no accident that this stage is especially pointed out as the *High Renaissance*.

The renaissance style developed under the sign of humanism. It meant liberation from all that bound a human in the affirmation of his earthly existence. In this process, an important support for humanists was a return to the ideals of Antiquity.

After many centuries of oblivion of the ancient heritage, its *revival* took place – hence the name of the era itself (it received the French name *Renaissance*). Much of what the Renaissance man aspired to, he found for himself in Antiquity: a bright perception of the world, the glorifying of worldly pleasures, spiritual liberation, the principle “*the man is the measure of all things*”, the ideal of a beautiful, well-developed personality.

In the struggle for a new attitude to the world and man, humanists opposed the Middle Ages and the Church as the main ideological force of the previous time. It was primarily a battle against medieval asceticism, for the rehabilitation

of the worldly, earthly and human. A remarkable phrase from the novel by **Francois Rabelais** (1494-1553) **Gargantua and Pantagruel**: “*The fragrant odour of the wine, O how much more dainty, pleasant, laughing, celestial and delicious it is, than that smell of oil!*”

In the famous book **The Decameron** by **Giovanni Boccaccio**, the right of a human to enjoy the life on earth is asserted by all means. *Decameron* in Greek means *ten-day*: ten young people, escaping from the plague, shelter in a villa, where they tell each other interesting stories for ten days. These ten people are a small republic of humanists. Its law is freedom; its goal is the happy enjoyment of life. It was a model of a Renaissance community, in which harmony, love of life and freedom of thought reigned.

Painting also revealed such lively and ardent interest in the earthly world. It became the leading art form of the Renaissance, perhaps because it expressed the reality, tangible beauty and poetry of life in the most direct way.

Loyalty to nature becomes a mandatory criterion. Artists achieve a convincing image of a person and the surrounding environment by mastering the means of perspective and light-and-dark modeling, which allowed them to convey the real volume of figures and objects in three-dimensional space.

It is reasonable to look from this point of view to two full-scale studies of **Albrecht Durer**, the most outstanding representative of the German High Renaissance. One of them (Grass, 1503) shows a secluded corner of the plant world, the other (Hare, 1502) is a part of the animal world. Both cases demonstrate palpability, visibility, absolute reliability of the pictorial embodiment, behind which there is a careful study of the real world.

Dutch artists, including **Jan van Eyck** (circa 1390 – 1441), who can be considered the first classic of Dutch painting, sought to emphasize the authenticity of the image, to its utmost scrupulousness, to carefully study the details and visible palpability of the image more than anyone else. Using a new technique of working with oil, he conveyed the illusion of a light-filled object world.

In his famous painting **The Arnolfini Portrait** (1434), depicting an Italian merchant with his wife expecting a baby, the artist captured a solemn moment of awareness of the upcoming event – hence, the corresponding signs and the united hands of the spouses. The clothing of the characters, the subject environment of their home, the dog at their feet – all this is painted with the utmost precision and care, in the smallest details.

The complete reality and authenticity of the image was fully characteristic of the main school of Renaissance painting – the Italian school. For example, two female portraits by **Leonardo da Vinci** (1452-1519): **Beatrice d'Este** and **The Lady with an Ermine**. The vitality of such images is simply stunning: the models seem to be alive, which is possible primarily due to the amazing outline of the eyes (in the second portrait, this is complemented by a special ease of the pose).

Under the brush of Renaissance artists, religious themes are filled with earthly content; art becomes obviously secular, and the divine is humanized. Let us turn to one of the works of **Lucas Cranach** (1472-1553), who, being the same age as Albrecht Durer, in his own expressive way represented the German High Renaissance.

In his altarpiece **The Virgin and Child under the Apple Tree**, the characters of the sacred history are depicted without halos; they have completely alive, very human faces and figures, set in a beautiful nature. Renaissance artists fully mastered the color richness of the world, including the depiction of light and aerial environment. The radiant glow of colors characteristic of their paintings is especially felt in their pictures.

In asserting the beauty and richness of real life, Renaissance artists were little interested in historical attributes, that is, the correspondence of the image to the supposed type of face and costume of a long time ago. The subject of the paintings was usually their contemporary. Therefore, he or she entered the picture in his or her usual clothes and with a characteristic system of feelings.

In this way **Mary Magdalene** (circa 1425) appears in the picture of the Dutch artist **Rogier van der Weyden** (circa 1400 – 1464). With a certain correlation with the Evangelical type of the penitent sinner, the first to see the resurrected Jesus Christ and beatified (a sad look and sorrowful folds of the mouth as an impression of restrained grief, suffering), we see the image of a young secular woman in an elegant fashionable costume from the time the painting was created.

The artist could also drape his characters. So does **Albrecht Durer** in the diptych **The Four Apostles**, dressing them in solemn robes of a conventionally antique cut. However, this is necessary most of all in order to give the image a positive tone, and even more – to focus the viewer's attention on the faces and through their depiction to reveal the unique features of an individual.

Through the brightness and sharpness of the physiognomic characteristics, four contrasting temperaments are transmitted here. The far left is a young man with a wise, harmonious appearance. On the far right there is a ferocious old man with the eyes of a fanatic. All four combine the burning spiritual energy. They are the thinkers and fighters of the reformation in Germany (the picture was painted at the depth of it, in 1526).

In the vast gallery of types of the Renaissance, the most significant place was occupied by the figure of the humanist, who concentrated in himself such qualities as spirituality, intensity of intellectual life, inquisitiveness and curiosity.

The abovementioned was reflected in the intensive expansion of scientific knowledge, in the great geographical discoveries (when the world was expanded to the size of the globe), in the invention of printing (which contributed to the previously unheard-of spread of education).

The typical image of the Renaissance humanist is found in **Albrecht Durer's Portrait of a Young Man** (1521), where the attention is concentrated on the face, which is very close to the viewer and in which the gaze is focused on the distance. This face is filled with calm confidence and it seems to radiate the light of reason.

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The art of the era actively asserted the idea of the value and uniqueness of the individual. It is no accident that in the Renaissance the *portrait* is formed into an independent genre and is experiencing its first flowering, including such a variety as the *self-portrait*. Artists often draw themselves, which indicated the increased self-awareness of the creator of art.

The greatest of them occupied a prominent position in society, and they represented the spirit and glory of the nation in the eyes of their contemporaries. The fact that the most significant of them were awarded the title of *divino* – *celestial*, testifies to the universal worship of the outstanding masters of art in Italy. One such *divino* is **Raphael Santi** (1483-1520).

Looking at his **Self-Portrait** (1506), we indeed find something angelic – a pure, chaste youthful face of a man of gentle soul and high thoughts. In the features of this “Mozart of the Renaissance” in its own way, the characteristic musicality of his painting lines is reflected. It is no accident that he was the author of the Sistine Madonna.

In the Renaissance, the character of the artist of a new type is formed, as an active creative person who has the fullness of artistic self-consciousness and is able to make people reckon with themselves.

Albrecht Durer painted as many as *five* self-portraits. Not out of self-love, of course. He valued himself as a model, because he found in his appearance something typical of the Renaissance man with his strong, bright, original personality.

Let us turn to the fourth of these self-portraits (1500). Strong-willed personality and integrity of nature are emphasized by the frontal, strictly symmetrical construction of the picture. Everything in the image is filled with a proud sense of self-worth and his significance. The sign on the left (made in gold) contains the author's abbreviation: *A + D* – Albrecht Durer (above the sign is the dating of the painting). In this stroke, we see additional evidence of what was said about the pathos of self-affirmation of the creator of art.

Durer's self-portraits lead us to the idea of the inner strength of the spirit inherent in the man of the Renaissance. At times, it could come out, resulting in such qualities as will, energy, perseverance, the readiness to implement their plans against all obstacles, the ability to heroic action, which required courage, valor, bravery.

The emphasizing of such motifs often required a corresponding garment in the form of legendary images and stories. The most appropriate genre for their implementation turned out to be *sculpture*. In Italy, the revival of sculpture (after more than a thousand years) was based on the ancient heritage.

One of the first to comprehend this legacy was **Donatello** (real name Donato di Niccolo di Betto Bardi, circa 1386 – 1466). He also created the first classical examples in many genres of Renaissance sculpture. In particular, he owns the palm in the revival of nude images.

It is noteworthy that in his **David** (1430s, bronze) the Renaissance is compared to *the youth* in the life of a human. In the outline of this figure, there is evident a certain challenge, heroic bravado – David tramples on the head of the defeated Goliath.

Turning to the legendary past (especially to the images of biblical history) helped metaphorically convey the grand scale of those events and the significance of what the best people of the era were capable of. On this account, F. Engels rightly argued that the Renaissance “*gave rise to titans in power of thought, passion and character*”.

In Donatello's work **St. John** (1409-1415, marble), we can see one of the embodiments of the titanism of the Renaissance nature expressed through the monumentality of the image. A mighty, majestic old man appears with a folio in his hands (according to the Christian tradition, St. John the Theologian is an apostle, the author of one of the canonical Gospels and the Apocalypse).

About a century later, **Michelangelo Buonarroti** (1475-1654) would continue and bring to the highest expression the tradition of monumentality and titanism in sculpture, including the **statue of David** (1501-1504). It was no accident that it was installed in the main square of Florence, a city that was the center of the initiatives and achievements of the Renaissance.

In this image, the proud power of a free man who is able to overcome any obstacles is perfectly revealed (it is also transferred through the grandiose dimensions – the height of the statue is 5.5 m). In addition, such David becomes after Donatello's David another embodiment of youth – the youth of man, personifying the youth of the era that opened the era of Modern times for history.

Sometimes attempts were made to capture the heroic potential of a contemporary without a mythological environment, directly, in the form of a specific person. Among the most remarkable experiences of this kind is **the monument to Condottiero Colleoni** in Venice by **Verrocchio** (his real name was di Michele Cioni, 1435 or 1436 – 1488).

As is known, condottieri in Italy of the 14th-16th centuries were the leaders of mercenary military units that were in the service of individual sovereigns and popes of Rome. For the image of the commander, the sculptor chose the genre of an equestrian statue (1479-1488). The figure is heavy and menacing, even frightening – so the image of a man of strong will and indomitable passions, bold and cruel, is presented.

Noting this hyperbolism of the image, we can agree with the opinion of *individualism* as one of the life attitudes of the Renaissance man. Of course, among the strong personalities of that era, we are more attracted to those who are endowed with the traits of civilization and nobility – they are immeasurably more consistent with our ideas of the Renaissance.

From this point of view, let us turn to one of the portraits by **Hans Holbein** (1497 or 1498-1543). His **Morette** (circa 1534-1535) is painted without any exaggeration, quite real, but nevertheless impressive.

There is a characteristic gesture – the person has his hands on the weapon; his powerful body, a sturdily built head and posture speak for his will, power and energy. But, in addition, there is a sharp look that reveals intelligence, seriousness, and says that he is a mature statesman.

The finishing of details and the chiseled accuracy of the image are subordinated here to the goals of creating a majestic image of a severe nobleman, wise and experienced. By the way, this work can serve as proof of the close international ties inherent in that time: a *German* artist paints a portrait of the *French* ambassador at the *English* court.

If we try to carry out a musical link to the foregoing, it would seem that the best example could be the choral picture **Battle** (1515). Its author, the French composer **Clement Janequin** (circa 1485 – 1558) tried to reproduce by vocal means military signals and fanfares, as well as soldiers' songs.

Nevertheless, listening to the sound of this vivid musical scene, we have to conclude that it is rather a sketch of a colorful, noisy whirlpool of life, which is served by the use of patterns and energetic imitations. Indeed, Janequin, with his characteristic lively ease of sound writing, vividly recreated genre pictures: among them – Hunting, Women's Chatter, Street Cries of Paris.

Overall, the Renaissance was not at all warlike. Most importantly, it was addressed to a human, who was seen as a defining value and often praised as the most perfect creation of nature.

It is curious that the nature itself was given a purely background role. The scenery in the pictures usually played the second part in relation to a human as the supreme creation of life. This tendency is curiously highlighted in the sonnet **"I Saw from the Sea in the Distance..."** – it belongs to **Matteo Boiardo** (1441-1494), the author of the most famous chivalric poem **Orlando in Love**. There is an almost paradoxical situation: eleven lines are an excellent description of nature, the poet enthusiastically admires the beautiful earthly world, but in the final *terzina* it recedes for him before the beauty of a human.

It should be emphasized that the core of Renaissance ideas about a human was his *lyrical essence*. The range of this lyricism is very diverse. Often it was of an exalted character.

Let us turn for example to the music of one of the Dutch composers, **Gilles Binchois** (circa 1400 – 1460), and his **Rondo**. In this case, we have a mature renaissance style. In contrast to the spontaneous polyphony of the Early Renaissance (with the characteristic misalignment of lines and the free use of dissonances), we hear an absolutely "civilized" sound, i.e., euphony and complete organization of the musical structure. The sound of the strings emphasizes the conquering softness and sincerity of tone. This is the humanism expressed in music – with tenderness and love for a human.

Immediately in contrast is a very different example of Renaissance lyrics, belonging to one of the Spanish composers, **Miguel de Fuenllana** (after 1500 – circa 1570), **Have Pity on me, Senora!**

Spain became the birthplace of the romantic culture that later spread throughout Europe. What is captured in this sample, most likely, is one of the composer's musical *arrangements*, common in a wide urban use, which corresponds to the sound of the voice accompanied by the *vihuela* (in appearance and playing techniques close to the guitar).

The fervent, immediate feeling of the yearning heart is conveyed here very sincerely, and the love complaint is expressed with an almost burning suffering – this is the outpouring of a lover suffering under the omnipotence of female charms (a motif that we will soon note in painting as well).

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Although the Renaissance human had the strength of spirit, the defining feature for the artistic culture of the Renaissance was, nevertheless, a *lyrical mood*. It was reflected in the works of art by the means of general softness of outlines, the special plasticity of forms, the tenderness of tone. The corresponding atmosphere can be easily felt in one of the most significant musical works of that time.

The Dutch composer **Heinrich Isaac** (circa 1450 – 1517) worked in a number of European countries, including Austria, and wrote the famous song **Innsbruck, I must leave you**. In addition to those features that have just been mentioned and which are well felt in this music, the spirit of the epoch, which will be discussed later and which can be considered defining for the Renaissance, is perfectly conveyed here: sublime beauty, complete balance of the state (a sense of majestic peace), enlightened harmony, all-pervading light.

These are the peculiarities that were especially characteristic of the emotional-psychological tone of the High Renaissance (the late 15th – early 16th centuries). In addition, in this kind of music, choral singing *a cappella* acted as an expression of an emphatically human and universally significant nature.

Let us go back to Renaissance lyricism. The lyrical edges of the inner world had an extremely strong force of attraction for the man of that time. The spirit of *womanhood* reigned in this sphere. Moreover, it reigned so much that the Renaissance is perceived mainly as a "feminine" era. Therefore, above all, much of painting and poetry, which were the leading art forms of the Renaissance, is addressed to a woman.

In poetry, **Francesco Petrarch** (1304-1374) crystallized this theme in complete forms. It was in his works that the final transition to the Renaissance took place. At the age of twenty-two, he had met a woman who had gone down in history as Laura, and his love for her had made up his whole life. In the prism of this love, the poet conveyed the ennobling and uplifting power of a great feeling, revealed all sorts of shades of the movements of the human soul.

The most important of these shades is love as an all-encompassing feeling that generates a joyful acceptance of being. In one of the sonnets (a poetic form that became after Petrarch the most favorite in the Renaissance), it takes on the character of a hymnal outpouring, and the title word **"Blessed"**, repeated five times, makes this outpouring an ecstatic spell.

Let us note that Petrarch, based on a tradition that has been established since the time of the poetic community **"Dolce stile Nuovo"**, connects the image of his beloved with the name of *Madonna*. It is no accident that the cult of the Virgin Mary acquired such great importance in the Renaissance.

It also affected the music, where in particular the anthem *Ave Maria* was repeatedly performed. The Dutch composer **Josquin des Prez** created one of them. His music has already been mentioned, and his work falls on a period of High Renaissance. He was an older contemporary of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael – all three passed away one after the other: Leonardo in 1519, Raphael in 1520, Josquin in 1521.

Josquin's motet *Ave Maria* is a song of purity and chastity, and such music carries the spirit of worship, the enlightenment of benevolent reverence. From this sample (as well as from the above-mentioned choral song of Isaac) we can judge that everything in art has acquired a complete alignment, balance and harmony by the turn of the 16th century.

Turning to painting, we find that among the various edges of the implementation of the idea of femininity, a separate place was taken by the motif of the power of female beauty. In many images, the attractive power of plastic soft, rounded shapes and lines of the female body, its sensual charm are fixed.

Among the characteristic works of artists of the circle of Leonardo da Vinci is the **Portrait of a Young Woman** by **Francesco Melzi**: a young woman admires a perfectly drawn patterned flower, and she herself is like a flower, in the fullness of female grace and beauty.

Something similar is found in **Titian** (Tiziano Vecellio, about 1477 or 1490 – 1576), who in his early work belonged to the High Renaissance (his later work is attributed to the Baroque era). As with Melzi, in Titian's **Flora** (about 1515) we find the same correctly presented, but almost teasing erotic stroke – half-naked breasts.

The great artist designs this angle very skillfully: a kind of modesty (the hand supporting the garment) and at the same time a calm "presentation" of her charms – a luxuriously blooming youth, which resonates with the luxury of fabrics.

According to the motif of the power of female beauty, a curious interpretation allows for the plot of the painting **Judith** (about 1502) by **Giorgione** (his real name is Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco, 1476 or 1477 – 1510). If we start directly from the famous Old Testament plot, we find a direct correspondence to it in the image: a young beautiful woman tramples on a severed head – a bloody, monstrous motif.

However, all sorts of aesthetic reservations are immediately included: first, it is depicted with grace and nobility, and secondly, the canvas has an air of an amazing harmony, calmness, a full balance and a soft radiant light.

If we turn away from the biblical plot, we see a remarkable detail: the sword in the hand of a woman is an attribute of manhood taken away from the fallen man. The victory was won by seduction of female beauty, captured in the smooth tenderness of the figure; a naked thigh is highlighted with some erotic piquancy.

There is a charming slyness in the face and gesture of her hands, and a half-smile glides over the face like a reflection of the inner triumph. This is the triumph of a beautiful woman over a man and the awareness of the power of her charms. Let us look into the face of the defeated Holofernes – he is blissful!

Renaissance painting chose *the theme of Madonna* as its main theme. Since Madonna was usually depicted with the Child, this was the theme of mother and motherhood. Thus, through the image of *the Mother of God*, the sanctity of motherhood was affirmed: worshiping the miracle of the birth of life, raising this act to the rank of a divine action.

Raphael is one of the *central* figures of the Renaissance, and Madonna is the *central* image of his work. He painted her countless times. He is often compared with Mozart, because behind the exceptional musicality and radiant harmony of Raphael's compositions lies a psychological complexity, a dramatic depth. This feature also distinguishes his most famous painting.

The name **Sistine Madonna** (1515-1519) comes from the Church of San Sisto in Piacenza (a city in Northern Italy), for which this masterpiece was created. The gestures of the saints and the upward gaze of the charming putti (little angels), as well as the general rhythmic composition of the figures, serve to draw attention to the Mother of God.

The "curtain" opens and Mary carries her Child into the world. The artist erects a kind of monument to the miracle that took place – this is emphasized by the fact that Madonna steps on the clouds.

Mary is a very young girl. Her fragile appearance, slightly raised eyebrows, wide-open eyes, the general expression of her face carry a hint of defenselessness and anxiety. Providence sealed the tragic fate of the Son, and at the same time the willingness to sacrifice Him: in the movement of her hands, carrying the Child, we guess instinctive impulse of the mother holding a child, and at the same time the understanding that the Son does not belong only to her.

We find the same thing in the Infant Christ: He is open to the world (wide-open eyes, protruding tufts of hair), but in His gaze and posture (He is slightly huddled into a ball) there is a hidden anxiety.

Thus, the *Sistine Madonna* represents the idea of happiness and the torment of motherhood. They are two edges that have become the main ones in the artistic representation of the image of the Virgin Mary.

Madonna Litta by **Leonardo da Vinci** stands out among the paintings that convey the joy of motherhood. Serenity and harmony are emphasized by a distant idyllic landscape on a clear sunny day. This landscape is viewed through symmetrically arranged windows.

The infinite tenderness of a mother's feelings is transmitted through exceptional poetic image and most scenic way in which much defines the technique developed by Leonardo – his famous *sfumato* (from Italian – *disappeared, as smoke*): the finest melting transitions from light to shadow, softening the outlines of objects through the picturesque recreation of surrounding light and air.

Another edge of the artistic interpretation of the image of Madonna is *the torment of motherhood*. This side of the story was connected with the sad thoughts of the mother of God about the ill-fated ending of the last days of Christ's earthly life. However, the true, universal essence of this side of Mary's image is much broader. It was thought that, as a rule, the serenity of childhood is inevitably followed by decades of hardships, trials, and vicissitudes. The mother would be forced to let her child into this difficult life, unable to protect it from adversity and disaster. That is what made the dramatic appearance of Madonna.



Illustration 01. 'Sistine Madonna' by Raphael (Italy)

Let us turn to Michelangelo's **Madonna of Bruges** (Bruges is a city in Flanders, where the sculpture was located). The great master sharpens the contrast between the playing Child and the saddened Mother. Her stern, even severe, beautiful face was frozen (one might say, petrified) in difficult, mournful thoughts.

A similar state is found in **Giorgione's** painting **The Madonna on the Throne** (about 1505). Taking advantage of the fact that the Child has fallen asleep, the young mother indulges in deep thought. Her beautiful face is covered with a secret sadness: lost in thought, the woman withdrew into herself. Perhaps, one can catch a hint of concern, fatigue of a young mother. That is, one can see the idea of great work and the inevitable hardships of motherhood.

Something similar we can find in music, for example, when listening to the choral miniature **Pavane** by French composer **Thoinot Arbeau**. Pavane was a common aristocratic dance at that time, but the dance beginning was softened and mediated to such an extent that it was almost imperceptible. The prayerful mood is steeped in a deep, heartfelt lyricism. The charm of the song, its saddened beauty clearly echo the image of Madonna, as it appears in the works of Raphael and Giorgione.

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It is necessary to make a reservation at once: such mood was only a striking contrast. The main line in the artistic development of the Renaissance was defined by such categories as light, reason, harmony with the invariably accompanying sense of beauty, sublimity, and poetry.

These qualities corresponded to the appropriate style:

- a noble simplicity, a combination of restraint and grace, soft outlines, smooth rhythm (not only in music, but also in other forms of art);
- the plasticity of forms, classical harmony and balance;
- the generality of artistic language, which was expressed in the attraction to collective images, in the ability to highlight the main thing, not getting carried away by the particulars, and in the ability to extract the most essential from the empirical existence.

All this was based, ultimately, on the belief in reasonableness, order, expediency of existence and on such quality as clarity and calmness of mind, which, in turn, implied restraint and moderation of manifestations, the principle of "the golden mean".

In addition, the Renaissance man was supported by a consciousness of inner significance and perfection of personality. It is known that at the time of the Renaissance, integrity and harmony were inherent to it, and this in particular meant an organic combination of the spiritual and the sensual, *ratio* and *emotio*.

The humanists opposed the ideal of a free, fully developed personality to the medieval humiliation of a human, and many of them were examples of approaching this ideal.

Leonardo da Vinci can be considered a model of Renaissance universalism. It is impossible not to be struck by the very listing of his activities:

- a painter, a sculptor, an architect and a visual art theorist, as well as a musician;
- a scientist who has carried out numerous scientific researches and made a number of discoveries in the field of mathematics, physiology, anatomy, botany, mechanics;
- as an engineer, he is the author of many technical ideas and inventions, including those implemented much later (for example, the project of a submarine).

Thus, light, reason, harmony, beauty. The concrete consideration of these defining principles of the art of the Renaissance will begin with *architecture*, where they are clearly implemented in the very design of buildings and where the *renaissance style* was formed by the middle of the 15th century.

The aesthetic foundations of this style are such concepts as harmony, clarity, the simplicity and completeness of the architectural composition, the orderliness of the plan (meaning its top view), the maintaining of proportions, a clear differentiation of volumes, the rhythm of decorative design (pilasters, columns, etc.).

The final statement of the principles of the renaissance style occurred in the works of **Donato Bramante** (1444-1514). He made the most active use of the ancient order system (in its creative reinterpretation) and completed the search for a perfect *centric* structure characteristic of Renaissance architects.

Before turning to one of his buildings, let us recall the outline of **Reims Cathedral**, which has been mentioned earlier as a sample of the most typical Gothic style in its classical, French version. It is in contrast with this sample that the features of the *renaissance style* appear quite clearly.

Let us take for comparison the famous work by Bramante – **Tempietto** (1502, means *the chapel*, a small temple in the courtyard of a monastery in Rome). The represented features of renaissance style are as follows: the perfect symmetry of the central-domed composition, its calm balance, a soft roundness of the overall configuration, a purely *secular* interpretation of Church buildings (only the cross above the dome remained from the traditional understanding of the Christian Church).



Illustration 02. *Tempietto by Bramante (Rome, Italy)*

Another example of a purely secular interpretation of the temple structure is found among the works of **Leon Alberti** (1404-1472), who was the immediate predecessor of Bramante. He built the **Basilica of Sant'Andrea** in Mantua (the middle of the 15th century), in its appearance it rather resembles a theater building. Its interior is remarkable because of solemn and stately character peculiar to the renaissance style.

The author of the project of this building was an example of Renaissance universalism: a politician, scholar and poet, an excellent connoisseur of Antiquity, an architect and architecture theorist, a sculptor, painter, archaeologist, mathematician, physicist, musician and athlete. In his personality, he embodied the formulated ideal of a harmonious, fully developed person.

Alberti is considered the creator of the Renaissance *palazzo* (luxurious mansion). The construction of this type of building acquires a large scale in Italy, which begins a decisive change in architecture: from now on, the architecture of *secular* purposes (palaces, public buildings, country villas) is widely developed, and it begins to play the leading role.

Much of the then developed principles of secular building would remain relevant until the 19th century. In short, these principles can be described as follows: clarity, rationality, a clear constructive idea, the solemnity, nobility and integrity of appearance.

Quite typical can be considered a building called **Cancelleria** (1499-1511) – one of the Roman palazzos by **Donato Bramante**. More precisely, he completed the design of the facade, but this is the main value of this building.

The turn to everything in question began in *Florence*. By the way, here for the first time in the world in the 14th century, appeared manufacturing as a germ of the capitalist way of production. Many outstanding figures of the new humanistic culture and new art (starting with Giotto and Dante) were born and worked in this city.

Florence was the secret capital of Italy during the Renaissance; it is considered "*the most Italian*" city. It was here that the renaissance style of architecture was formed. The beginning of this process is associated with the name of **Filippo Brunelleschi** (1377-1446).

The majestic dome of **Florence Cathedral** (1420-1436) erected by him is the first major monument of Renaissance architecture. In parallel, he built the **Hospital of the Innocents** in the same city (1421-1444), which became evidence of a qualitatively new approach to the design of secular buildings.

Here, the revival of the features of the ancient order system in its free interpretation is evident (in this respect, the gallery with an elegant colonnade attracts attention). The features of the renaissance style are also obvious: soft lines, the roundness of outlines giving harmony and friendliness to the appearance of the building.

In addition to the public buildings discussed above, the construction of private-owned buildings has become widespread in Italy. Here are two illustrative examples – the work by **Jacopo Sansovino** (1486-1570) and **Baldassare Peruzzi** (1481-1536).

Sansovino had been building **the Palazzo Corner** in Venice since 1532. Characteristic of the architecture of this city is a light, openwork and at the same time, impressive and solemn building characterized by an emphasized integrity and harmony, and its integrity is determined by the fact that the total volume comes from the shape of a cube.

Villa Farnesina in Rome (1509-1511) was built by Peruzzi as an example of a structurally clear building based on absolute symmetry. This type of building (a villa as a country palace) existed in the days of Ancient Rome and now revived in other historical conditions.

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In Renaissance *painting*, the assertion of beauty and harmony was realized by a whole system of expressiveness resources: a clear orderliness of composition, a noble simplicity of expression of feelings, a calm sonority of color.

That is why artists preferred restrained light, when all the outlines acquire a special softness. The same goals were met by a spiritualized landscape that corresponds to a state of balance, emphasizing the beautiful in man (peaceful nature, calm expanse of landscape distances).

The desire to emphasize the beauty of a human and the surrounding nature could draw people into the world of romance, poetic dreams. **Madonna in the Grotto** (1483 – 1490 or 1494) is one of the early paintings by **Leonardo da Vinci**, but in it the artist has developed a method of pyramidal construction of the composition (the figures form a semblance of an isosceles triangle). Such a scheme became extremely common (let us remember Raphael's Sistine Madonna), because the complex balance of the pyramidal grouping allowed artists to express the internally rich harmony of the whole.

The romance is presented here in the special charm of the characters (Mary, the Angel, the Christ Child, the little John the Baptist) and in a landscape of almost fantastic character (bizarre rocks resemble giant crystals in shape).

Sandro Botticelli (his real name was Alessandro Filipepi, 1445-1510) expressed the most vividly *romantic aspirations* of the Renaissance. He ultimately poetized life's realities. We can see it in special features of his painting manner: a refined and aristocratic grace, a free stretch of imagination, the fragile beauty of figures, covered with an inexplicable lyrical sadness or light melancholy, the musicality of flexible, singing, tremulous lines, the transparency of colors, and the whimsical play of rhythms.

Spring (1477-1478) is the first painting which fully expressed the unique originality of Botticelli's talent. The above-mentioned spring motifs and a youth nature characteristic of the vital tone of the Renaissance are vividly refracted in the painting.

The chosen motif is shown by means of Flora (a goddess of flowers and spring bloom scattering flowers) and the dance of the three graces (the goddesses of beauty, grace and joy), as well as Cupid, shooting an arrow at one of the graces, who seems to have fascinated a young man on the left. Everything takes place in the midst of a fairy-tale landscape with a natural abundance of luxurious herbs, flowers and fruits, slightly touched with gold.

Perhaps, the most famous masterpiece of Botticelli is **The Birth of Venus** (about 1485), where the goddess of love becomes the embodiment of sublime, spiritual beauty (the artist achieves the precise transformation of the female sensual principle). Everything here is inspired by poetic dreams, which are echoed by the musicality of singing lines, and the tenderness of light, transparent, cold colors and their exquisite combinations give birth to an atmosphere of chaste purity.

In the same way Botticelli could interpret Christian motifs, which corresponded to the "ascension" of the depicted characters and decorative picturesqueness of color. In his **Annunciation**, the characters of the Gospel legend appear as almost weightless figures ready to soar up and the emphasized refinement of faces and hands, the precious luxury of fabrics – everything speaks of the extraordinary, wonderful, exceptional nature.

No matter how beautiful such images are, we still have to state that the main line of artistic embodiment of beauty and harmony in the Renaissance was in connection with a more real sense of the world and man.

Therefore, for example, for **Leonardo da Vinci**, the author of the romanticized Madonna in the Grotto, the main work was the **Portrait of Mona Lisa** (about 1503), often appearing under the name **Gioconda** (based on the name of Mona Lisa del Giocondo – the wife of a rich Florentine D. Giocondo). This is one of the artistic emblems of the Renaissance. The woman Leonardo chose as a model can hardly be considered among the beauties. Nevertheless, her image, recreated by a master genius, is full of irresistible charm.

Attention is drawn to the refined features of a delicate face, elongated fingers, finely painted folds of perfect cloth. The spirit of light harmony, calm self-confidence, the fullness of life, subtlety and complexity of the inner world, including those captured in an elusive smile, are depicted in the image of the portrayed woman.

The natural environment is in tune with the mood (a slightly mysterious landscape with the smooth bends of river flows) and is clearly emphasized by the extreme softness of color: here again we should mention Leonardo's *sfumato* – a subtle haze that envelops the face and figure.

The Renaissance artist fills religious subjects as well with the beauty and harmony of life reality. In **Michelangelo's Holy Family** (1504-1505), three figures are woven into one whole, which is intended to convey a close unity, an indissoluble bond that binds close people. How much concern, how much care for the Child is written on the faces of the parents!



Illustration 03. 'Mona Lisa' by Leonardo da Vinci (Italy)

Renaissance ideas about the beautiful, harmonious individual found their complete embodiment in the images of nudes. Such images affected the worship of the beauty and perfection of the human body, representing, in the view of the artist of the Renaissance, the *outer* shell of the beauty and perfection of the *spiritual* world of the individual.

Physical strength and athleticism were often emphasized in men's figures, and through such properties, the ability to heroic deeds was revealed. In this respect, **Michelangelo's** works (both sculptural and pictorial) were particularly prominent.

Let us turn from this point of view to one of the frescoes that adorn the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican. In **The Creation of Adam** (1508-1512), a brave and handsome young man lies on the side of a hill. Sabaoth, who has just created him, is touching the hand of his creation, breathing life, energy, will into it. In both figures, power and fullness of forces, powerful athleticism are transferred.

Nevertheless, as might be expected from the artists of the Renaissance, this predominately "feminine" era, the highest culmination of their work was reached when they turned to the image of a perfectly beautiful female body.

In the **Sleeping Venus** by **Giorgione** (about 1508 – 1510), the image of the depicted, as befits the goddess of love and beauty, is distinguished by a perfect softness of lines, which serves as an expression of the highest femininity. A feeling of moral purity poeticizes the naked body full of sensual charms.

The serenely fair forehead, the calm arch of the brows, the softly drooping eyelids, the beautiful strict mouth are all full of that perfect harmony that is only attainable when a clear spirit lives in a perfect body. In linear expression, harmony is embodied as follows: the hand thrown over the head completes the closed figure "eight", covering all forms in a single smooth contour.

The artist recreated the image of a human living in harmony with the world around her, the image of her happy life in beautiful nature – the figure is perfectly inscribed in the picturesque landscape. The whole is completed by a soft radiance of color: golden light in the late afternoon and a cloudy atmosphere softens all the contours...

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Summing up the results of the Renaissance, it should be noted that it was not the only, but the "Golden age" of human history. Including the "Golden age" of art, which took a very high position in the life of society.

First, this concerns the poetry and painting. Everything most valuable and perfect for the Renaissance is concentrated in the immense artistic heritage created by the artists at that time.

Over the next three or more centuries, European artistic culture developed largely based on principles established during the Renaissance. Like the self-determination of European nations, then began the self-determination of the respective national artistic cultures.

Completing the review of the key artifacts of the Renaissance, let us once again consider musical art. To feel the spirit of this culture, it is enough to hear the choral **Galliard** by one of the Italian composers (**Baldassare Donato**, Galliard is a popular dance of those times).

Let us immediately emphasize an extremely characteristic point: a very soft breaking of the dance rhythm, which is one of the signs of civilization, reached by the time of the maturity of the Renaissance (in the phase of the Early Renaissance, it was not yet evident).

It captures the joyous leisure of free people – everything here has an air of a lively charm, and the mood is full of carelessness, elegant playfulness (based on the use of syncopated figures, but again softened).

Like much of what can be heard in Renaissance music, it is written for an unaccompanied choir. Singing *a cappella* was the main type of musical performance of the Renaissance, which in its own way reflects the humanism of the era, because it is impossible to imagine anything closer and more natural to our perception than human voices.

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