

Which is the real Madonna?

Goals:

Examine how changing conceptions of Madonna and child reflect broader cultural and technological changes in society.

Discover how simple linear chronology fails to allow for different rates of change and different perspectives in Europe during the Renaissance.

Examine how art provides a mirror into understanding the aesthetic (way of seeing the world) of a society.

Explore changes from anonymous art to collective art under direction of a master to individual art; changes in sponsorship; and changes in subject.

Compare stylized medieval religious art with naturalist Renaissance religious art and symbolic contemporary art.

Compare divergent paths in the European Renaissance and Japanese aesthetic.

Activity: Place the pictures in chronological order

A- Byzantine: Enthroned Madonna and Child, 12th Century (Brooklyn Public Library collection, nd)

B- Gothic/Byzantine: Giotto's Madonna and Child, fresco, Bardi Chapel, Florence, Italy c. 1320 (National Gallery, Washington DC)

C- Fresco, wall mural (Brooklyn Public Library collection, nd)

D- Jean Fouquet, "Virgin and Child," 1443, French, etheral, gray skin tones.

E- Leonardo Da Vinci, "Madonna with a Flower," Italy, 1478. youthful, affectionate virgin, dimpled but unlikely baby.

F- Albrecht Dürer, "Virgin and Child," Germany, c. 1500

G- Raphael (Italian High Renaissance), Madonna and Child (The Small Cowper Madonna), 1503-1505 (National Gallery, Washington DC). A robust mother and child-like child

H- Hans Baldung (Grien), Germany, "Madonna and Child with Parrot," 1525 or 1527, Contemporary, wearing pearls and nursing.

I- Anthony Van Dyck (Antwerp, Belgium), "Rest on the Flight to Egypt," 1630. Realistic mother and child.

J- Bartholomé Murillo, "Madonna and Child," Seville Spain, c. 1650. Realistic, peasant girl and baby, (original at Metropolitan Museum of NY).

K- Giovanni Battista Salvi (Sassoferrato) 1609-1685, "The Madonna with the Sleeping Child," Italy, Real people.

L- Marc Chagall, "Madonna of the Village," Russia/France, 1938-1940. Surrealist, fairy-tale like.

M- Pablo Picasso (Spain), "Madonna and Child," 1963. Line drawing, Expressionist.

N- Pop Madonna: Cover photo, Nicole Claro, Madonna (NY: Chelsea, 1994).

AA- Giotto (Byzantine) 1320, Jesus as Little Man

BB- Da Vinci (Early Renaissance) Jesus as Physical Child, dimpled, but unlikely baby

CC- Van Dyck (Late Renaissance), 1621-22, Jesus as Physical and Emotional Child