Part II
The Renaissance
Prelude
Giotto’s Lamentation (1306)

- Why is this fresco a big deal?

- How is it different from earlier art?

- What do the aesthetics of the time tell us about the spirit of the times?
Late Medieval Art
How do they differ from Giotto?

Prayer book decoration ca. 1250

Manuscript decoration ca. 1150
Cimabue (chee-muh-BOO-ay)
*Madonna Enthroned* ca. 1280

Giotto
*Madonna Enthroned* ca. 1310
Renaissance
“rebirth”

• Rebirth of what?
• City of Florence (in what is now Italy)
• Humanism
• changes in art and aesthetics
• Protestant Reformation and Counter-Reformation
• music in Renaissance society
The city of Florence

- Early Renaissance centered in Florence
  - banking center (gold florin a standard coin)
  - Bank from Italian word (banco)
  - important to trade
  - Florentine banking offices found throughout Europe; this helped spread ideas of the Renaissance
  - important patrons of the arts found in Florence
Humanism

- belief in human perfectibility
- renewed study of literature and philosophy of ancient Rome and Greece
- Pico della Mirandola’s “On the Dignity of Man” begins:
  - “I once read that Abdala the Muslim, when asked what was most worthy of awe and wonder in this theater of the world, answered ‘There is nothing to see more wonderful than man!’”
- Machiavelli *The Prince*
  (He asks: whether it is better to be loved than feared?)
Humanism

- Europeans arrive in New World 1492
- new ways to think about the world
- new ways to think about our place in the world
- abundance of pre-Christian sources in Italy
- Fall of Constantinople in 1453
Humanism

• ancient Greeks “... measured the universe in terms of human values and reason...” (Bonds p. 96)
• Humanist did not reject religion
• move away from medieval Scholasticism toward a more skeptical approach
• writers began to use their vernacular
  - Dante *Divine Comedy*
  - Chaucer *The Canterbury Tales*
  - Boccaccio *Decameron*
New “realism” in art

• paintings used a “renaissance space”
  - 3 dimensions on a 2d plane

• Renaissance art tends toward:
  - perspective
  - based on how we see things
  - representation of psychological states
  - uncluttered
  - Roman and Greek motifs

[source: Culture and Values p. 270]
Giotto’s Lamentation (1306)

- Why is this fresco a big deal?

- It is showing some sense of perspective or depth.
International Gothic Style vs. Early Renaissance Style

GENTILE DA FABRIANO, Adoration of the Magi, altar piece from Santa Trinità, Florence, Italy, 1423. Tempera on wood approx. 9’ 11” X 9’ 3”. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence

MASACCIO, Holy Trinity, Santa Maria Novella, Florence Italy, ca. 1428. Fresco, 21’ X 10’ 5”
Renaissance art traits
attention to perspective

FRA ANGELICO *Annunciation* ca. 1445
Renaissance art traits

Blend of traits:

• Roman gods theme
• Images of the Virgin
• A classical notion of the beautiful female figure

SANDRO BOTTICELLI, Birth of Venus ca. 1482
Reformation
Northern Humanism (1500-1560)

• literary/art movement inspired by:
  - Italian Renaissance (Classical studies)
  - Late Medieval lay piety (simple Christianity)
  - Those with pure humble hearts could pray directly to God (Adams, p. 354)
  - interest in vernacular translations of the Bible

• shared aesthetic values with Renaissance (idealism, rationalism, Classical literature)

[source: Adams Exploring the Humanities ch 15]
Reformation
Northern Humanism (1500-1560)

- Germany was the center
- called Protestants (protesting what?)
- Catholic Church seen as corrupt (selling indulgences)
- looked to the early church (before hierarchy and bureaucracy)

[source: Adams Exploring the Humanities ch 15]
Reformation
Northern Humanism (1500-1560)

- Martin Luther (1483-1546)
  - salvation comes from grace not good works
  - Lutheranism
  - Bible sole source of religious authority (not the Pope)
  - lead simple pious lives
  - 95 Theses
  - excommunicated in 1520 by Pope Leo X

[source: Adams *Exploring the Humanities* ch 15]
Reformation
Northern Humanism (1500-1560)

- John Calvin (1509-1564)
  - predestination of some souls to heaven
    others to hell

- Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547)
  - Church of England (Anglican)

[source: Adams Exploring the Humanities ch 15]
Counter-Reformation

- second half of 16th century
- attempt by Catholic Church to purify itself
- Council of Trent (1545-1563)
  - tried to clean up abuses of the Church
  - Vulgate the only official Bible
  - faith and good works get you into heaven
  - music and art should be easily accessible to uneducated

[source: Adams Exploring the Humanities ch 15]
Music in Renaissance Society

- Secular courts measure greatness by “cultural capital” (Bonds p. 102)
- courts maintained musicians (performances at chapels, banquets, etc.)
- well-funded *cappella*, 12-20 musicians (Bonds p. 103)
- upper classes viewed musical literacy and ability as “an essential grace” (Bonds p. 104)
  - Henry VIII composed and sang
  - Elizabeth I was known as a keyboard and lute player
Music in Renaissance Society
northern composers go south

• Dunstable (born in England) worked in France

• Du Fay, Josquin and Lassus, all born in the Low Countries, work at courts in Italy
Music in Renaissance Society

• The church remains a patron for musicians
• they employed resident composers and performers
• provided them with housing, food, and income for “music on demand”
• Bonds p. 103
Music in Renaissance Society

- Printing Press affects music
  - new source of income
  - new music styles and innovations spread more quickly
  - Bonds p. 103
manuscript notation hand copied in 14th-15th century (see Bonds p. 49)
Liber usualis Chant Notation
(see Bonds p. 35)
Baude Cordier
rondeau
“Belle Bonne”
love song ca. 1400

(see Bonds p. 84
also p. 137)
moveable type printed music from Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo (1607)