

Art of the Proto-Renaissance (14th century/early 15th century)

Key Ideas

- The proto-Renaissance in Italy reveals important influences of Classical art, Byzantine art, Gothic art, and an emphasis on observation of the natural world. In Italy, the 13th to 14th centuries are a time when artists moved towards naturalistic representation, fully realized in the Renaissance.
- Monastic orders (especially mendicant orders, like the Franciscans) gained popularity during the 14th century due to a schism in the Catholic Church. St. Francis of Assisi becomes a popular subject in Italian art of this time, with his focus on developing a more personal relationship with God and helping those in need.
- The bubonic plague (Black Death) strikes Europe, resulting in a loss of 50 to 60 percent of the European population. (In some cities, it may have been 80 percent of the population.) The plague results in more commissions of devotional images.

Terms and Names:

Bonaventura Berlinghieri

Giovanni Pisano

Nicola Pisano

Duccio di Buoninsegna

Simone Martini

Cimabue

Giotto di Bondone

Diptych: Two-panel altarpiece.

Triptych: Three-panel altarpiece.

Polyptych: Multi-panel altarpiece that can be open or closed in different arrangements.

Predella: Lower zone of base of an altarpiece, usually decorated with small sculptures or paintings related to the main theme.

Tempera: Egg-based pigment.

- Segna di Buonaventura, *Madonna and Child*, Sieneese school, about 1310, tempera and gold ground on poplar panel, 87.64
- Bernardo Daddi, *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*, Florentine school, 1339, tempera and gold ground on poplar panel, 34.20
- Nardo di Cione, *Standing Madonna with Child*, Florentine school, c. 1350-1354, tempera on poplar panel, 68.41.7
- Lippo Vanni, *Crucifixion with the Virgin, Saint John the Evangelist and a Clerical Donor*, c. 1350-1360, Sieneese school, tempera and gold leaf on panel, 79.19
- Mariotto di Nardo, *The Coronation of the Virgin with Five Music-Making Angels*, 1408, Florentine school, tempera on poplar panel, 65.37
- Mariotto di Nardo, *Saint Bartholomew and Saint Anthony Abbot*, 1408, Florentine school, tempera on poplar panel, 66.7
- Benedetto di Bindo Zoppo, *St. Lucy*, c. 1410, Sieneese school, tempera on panel, 68.89

Additional Resources:

Information on the Black Death (Plague): <http://www.history.com/topics/black-death>

Learn more of Giotto's and the Arena Chapel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47QgqdeSi0U>

Differences between tempera and oil paints: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtJfQVb7QXY>

Learn more of tempera painting on wood panel (poplar panels):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqTbqKCiyJw>