

**Guy Palmer**

**A history of Modern Art**

**An 9-week course  
in 90 minutes!**

[illegible]

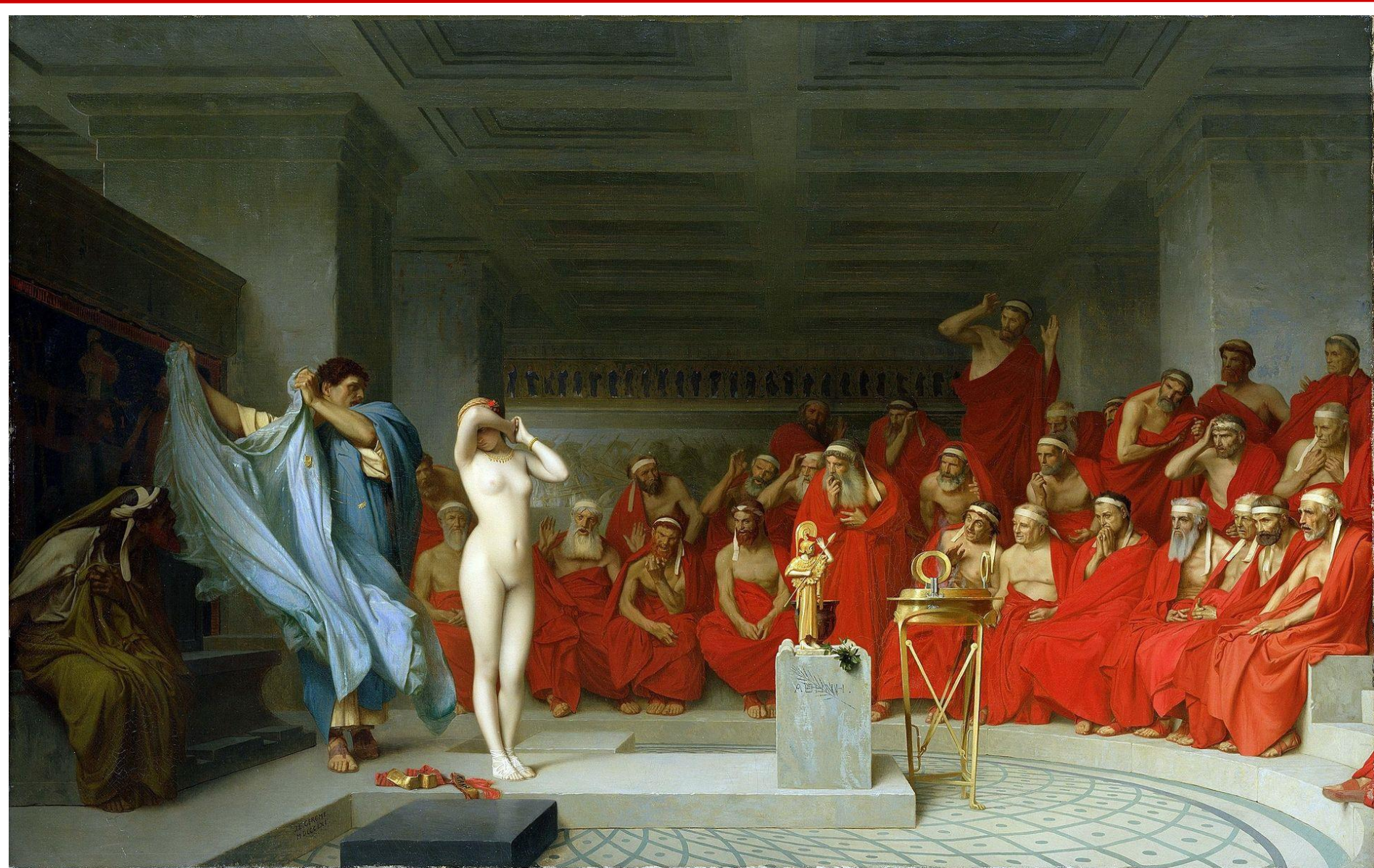
# manet - le déjeuner sur l'herbe (1863)

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# gerome - Phryne revealed before the Areopagus (1861)





# Phryne

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- **A real person**
- **A hetaira/courtesan in Greek times**
- **At one time, she was charged with impiety (a capital offence)**
- **With things going badly in the trial, Phryne's lawyer took Phryne's clothes off(!). Her beauty instilled the judges with a superstitious fear, who could not bring themselves to condemn "a prophetess and priestess of Aphrodite" to death.**

**Ps. 'Phryne' is Greek for 'toad'**

# manet - le déjeuner sur l'herbe (1863)

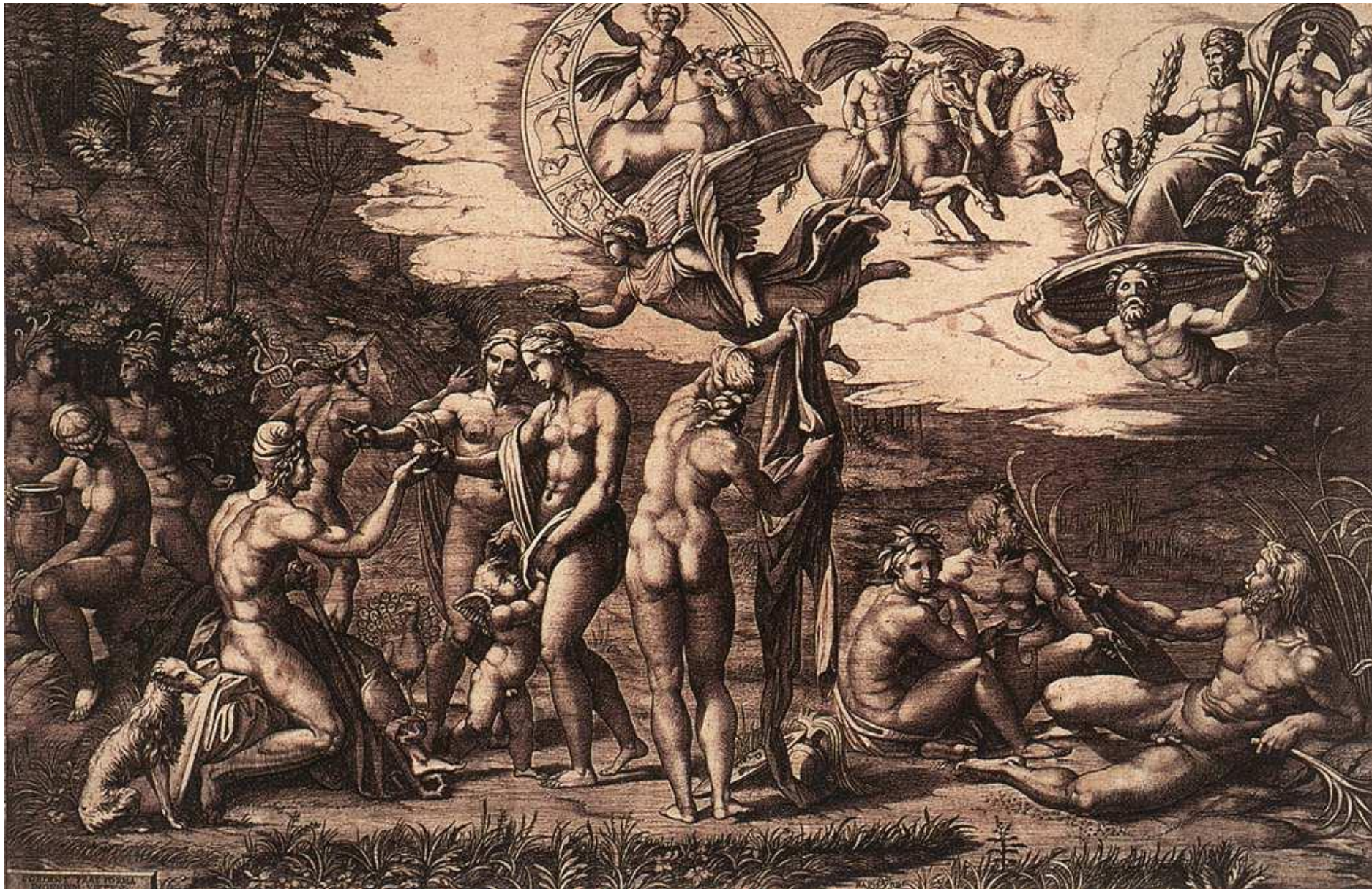
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# raimondi - the judgement of Paris (1520)

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# giorgione - pastoral concert (1510)

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# manet - le déjeuner sur l'herbe (1863)

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# **Le déjeuner sur l'herbe**

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## **Rejected by the Salon**

**Certainly not because of the nudity (au contraire)**

**But because:**

- 1. The nude woman is an ordinary person (actually Manet's wife) in a contemporary setting rather than a nymph/god**
- 2. The painting looks overly 2D (rather than 3D) and closed in**
- 3. The technique is 'sketchy' (re visible brush strokes, lack of lines, simplified colours/forms)**



# Le déjeuner sur l'herbe (cont)

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**Rejected by the public:** boos and hisses when exhibited.

**Praised by Emile Zola** (and, later, by the future impressionists): “*the greatest work of Édouard Manet ... this vast ensemble, full of atmosphere, this corner of nature rendered with a simplicity so just*”.

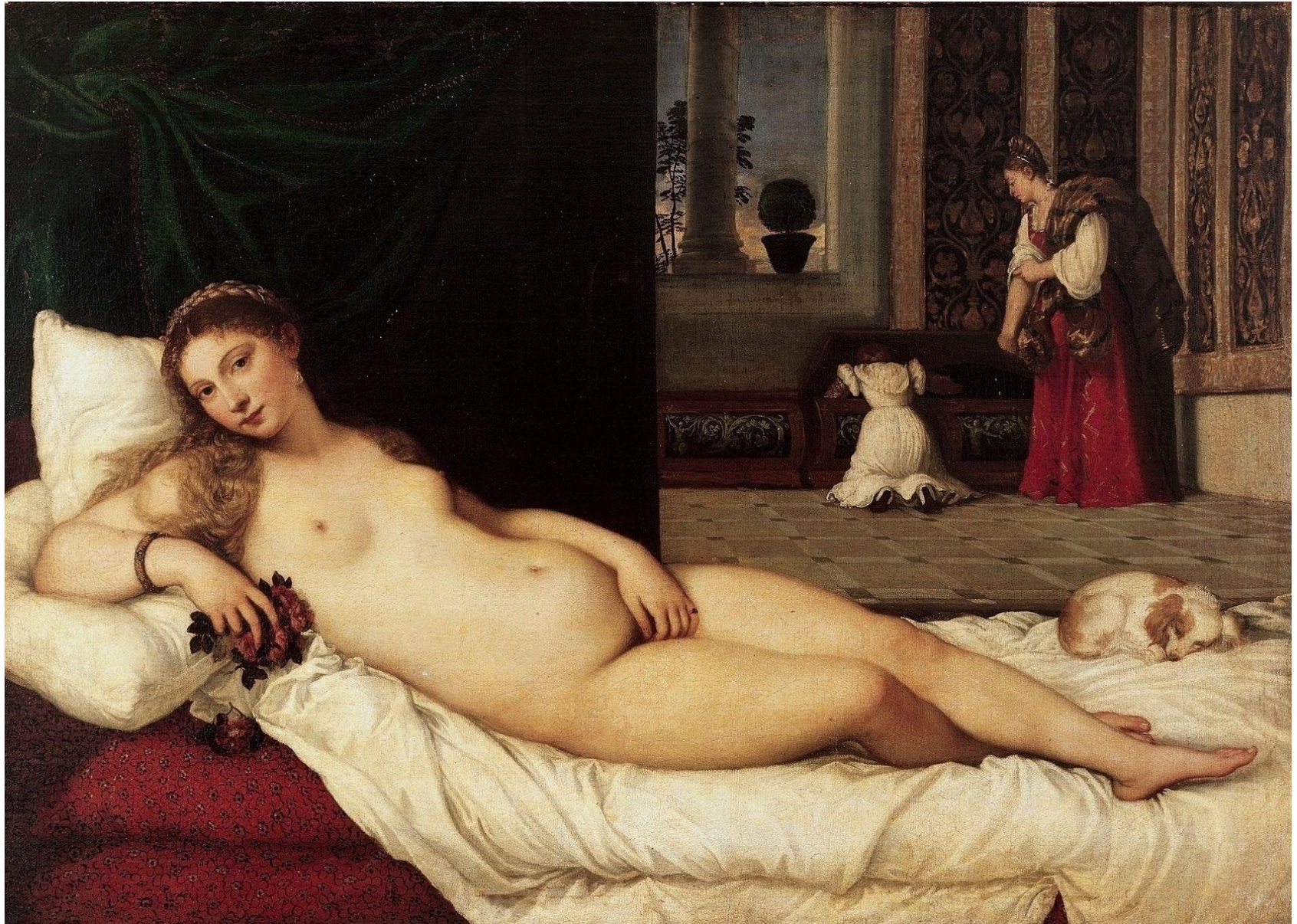
# manet - olympia (1863)

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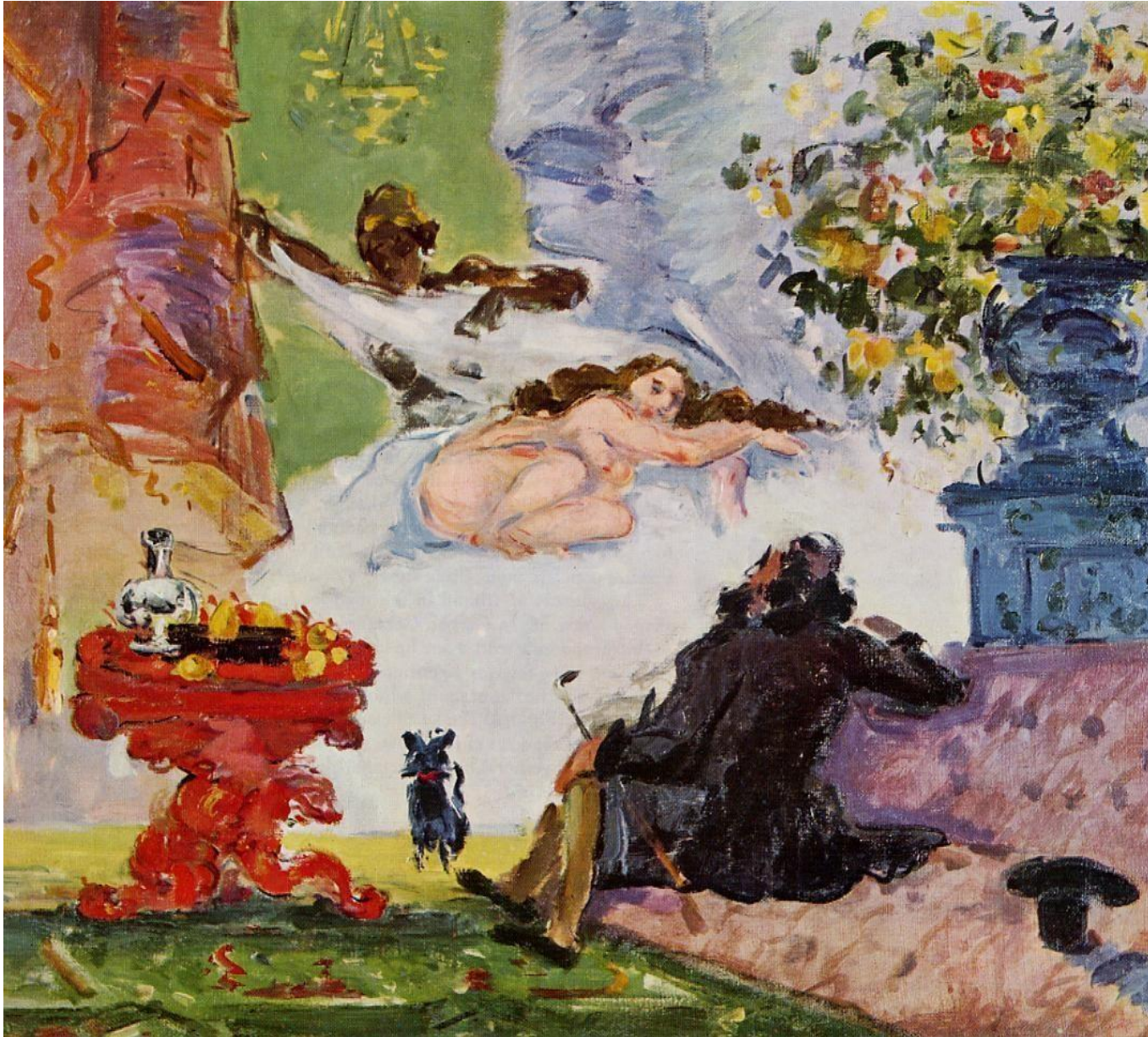
# titian - venus of Urbino (1538)





# cezanne - a modern olympia (1874)

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# **A few caveats**

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- **The history of art is almost totally non-factual**
- **Everything is a matter of personal taste (but taste depends on what you know)**
- **You can't trust the Internet**
- **Many art books are difficult to understand**
- **'Modern' certainly does not equate to 'good'**
- **My memory is not as good it was!**

# What makes art modern?

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- 1. Painted after a certain date!**  
(I've used 1863, but it could have been as early as 1800 or late as 1900)
- 2. Experimental**
- 3. You know it when you see it**
- 4. Movements / groups of artists, often somewhat rebellious**



# giotto - franciscan rule approved (1299)



# rothko - no 5 (1950)

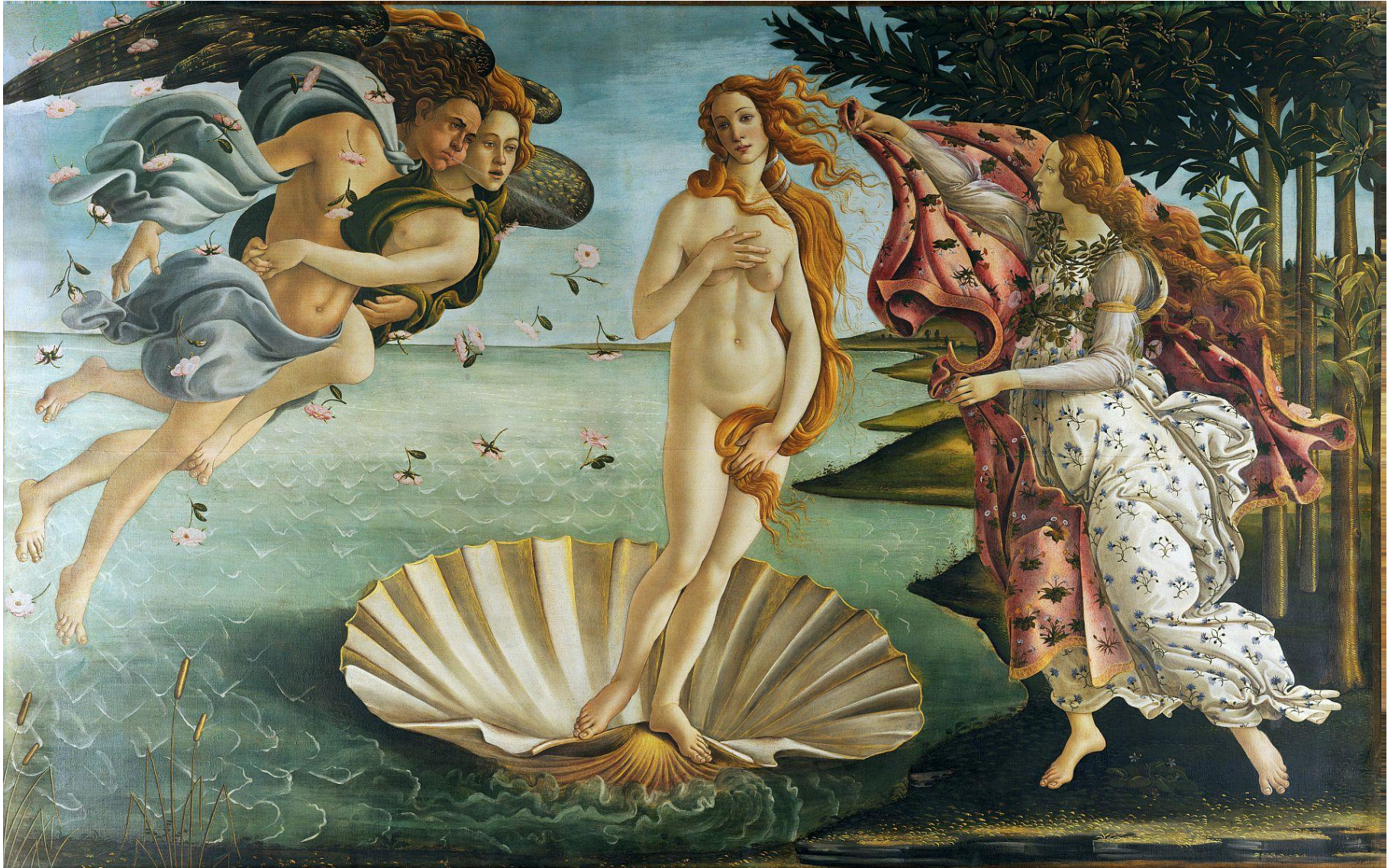
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# **botticelli - the birth of venus (1485)**

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# picasso - the girls of Avignon (1907)





# raphael - the school of Athens (1510)



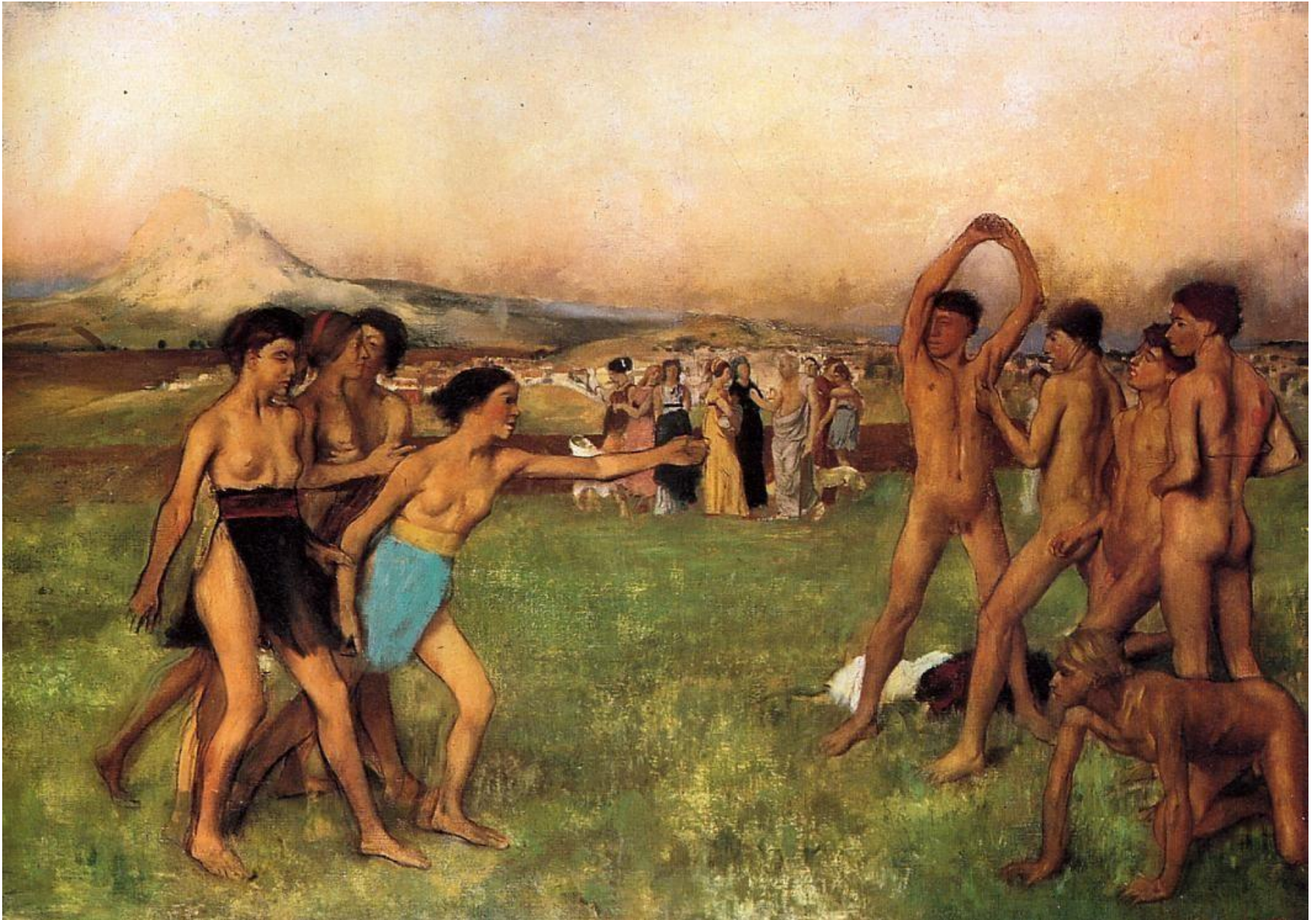


# David - the oath of the Horatii (1784)





# degas - spartan girls challenging boys (1860)





# picasso - massacre in Korea (1951)





# **lorrain - landscape with dancing figures (the mill) (1648)**

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# cezanne - l'Estaque, the bay (1886)

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# rembrandt - self-portrait (1669)

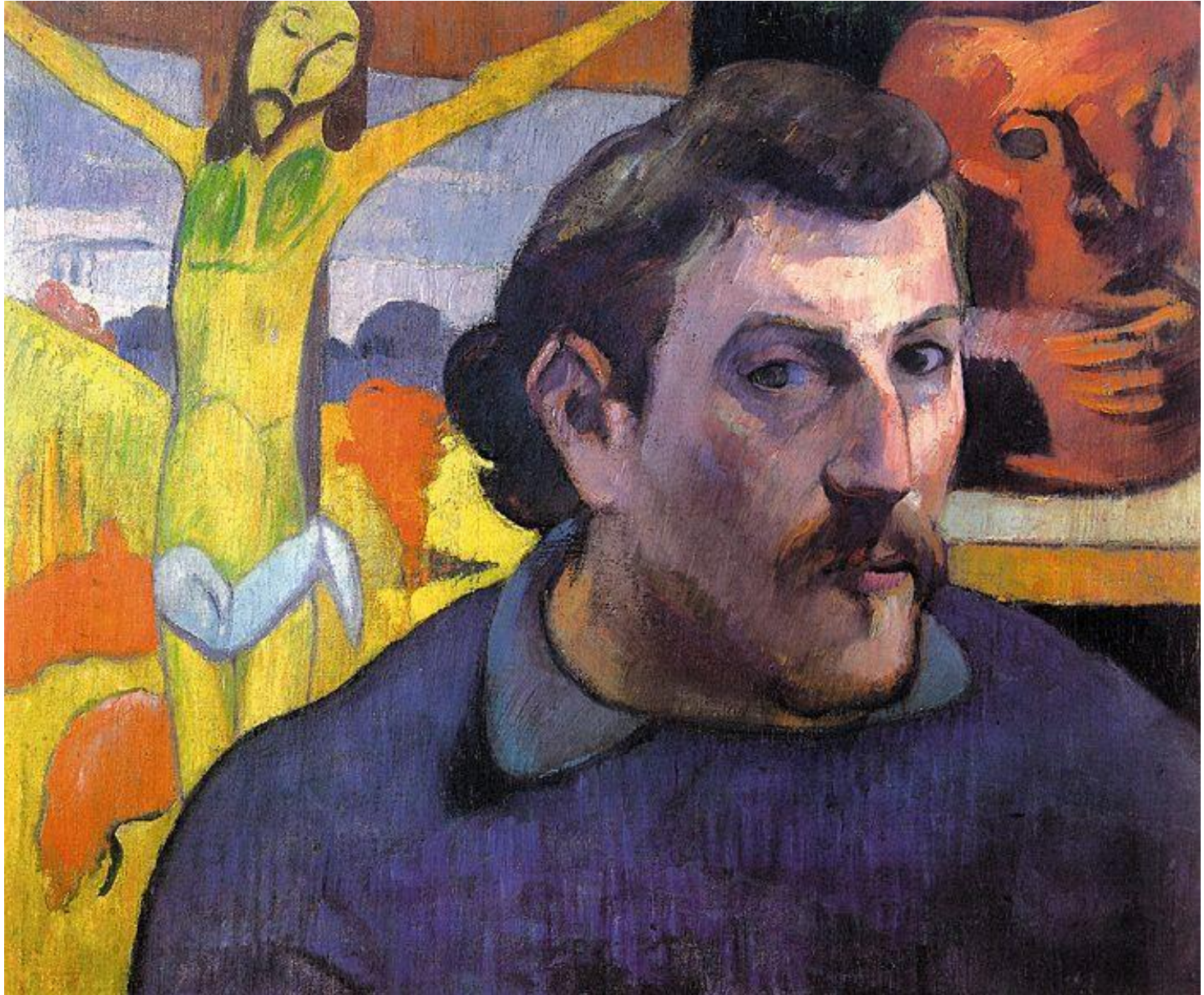
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# gauguin - self-portrait with yellow Christ (1891)

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# renoir - Gabrielle and Jean 1 (1895)





# gentileschi - self-portrait (1630)

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# Artemisia Gentileschi

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- **17<sup>th</sup> Century Baroque painter**
- **Raped by her art tutor (Tassi) at age 18**
- **She didn't press charges after being promised he would marry her and thus restore her dignity**
- **Then, he reneged on the promise so she pressed charges**
- **Legally, she was only allowed to because she had been a virgin**
- **During the trial, she was tortured with thumbscrews "to verify her testimony"**
- **Tassi was found guilty and sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment (annulled a year later)**



# monet - on the beach of Trouville (1870)





# **bouguereau - the little beggar girls (1890)**





# piccinini - the young family (2002)



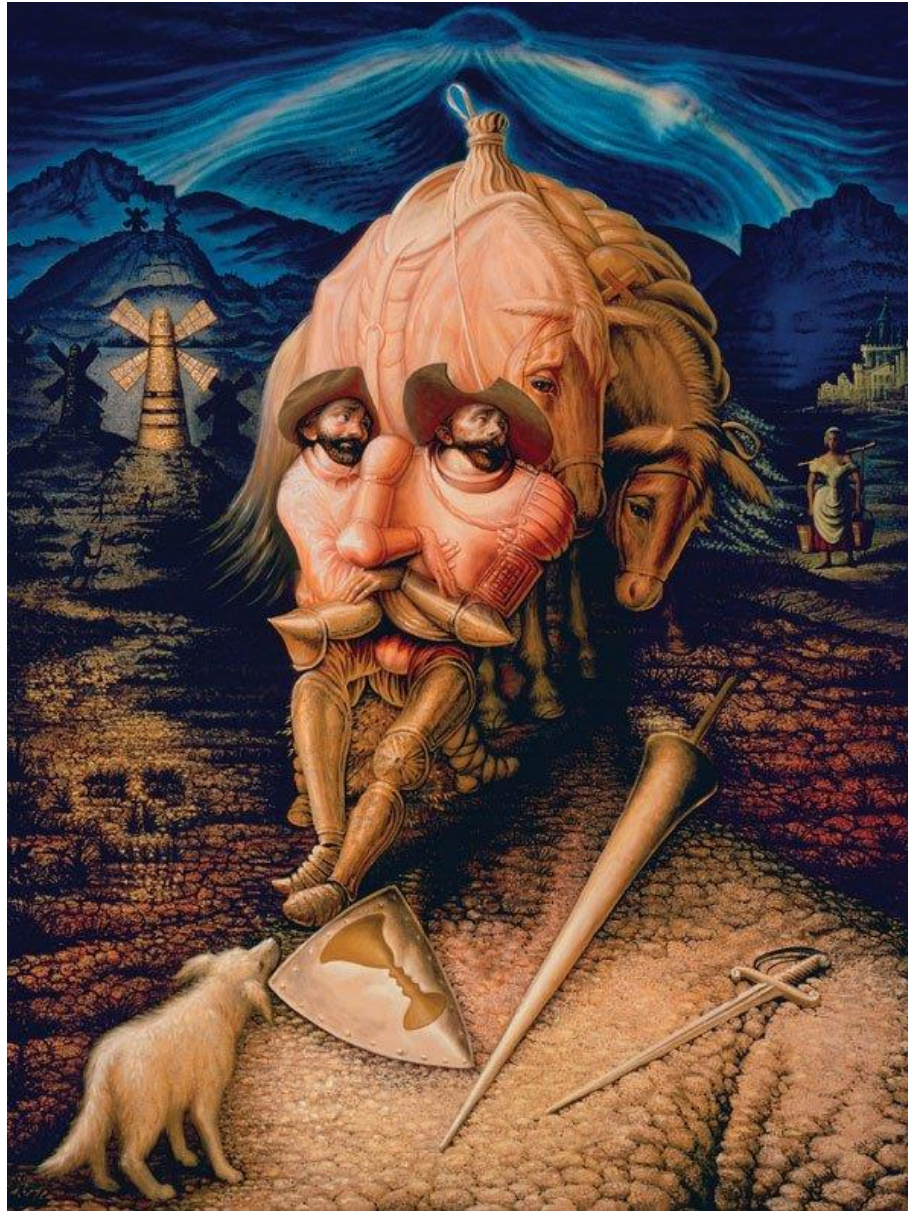


# matsys - the ugly duchess (1513)



# ocampo - friendship of Don Quixote (1999)

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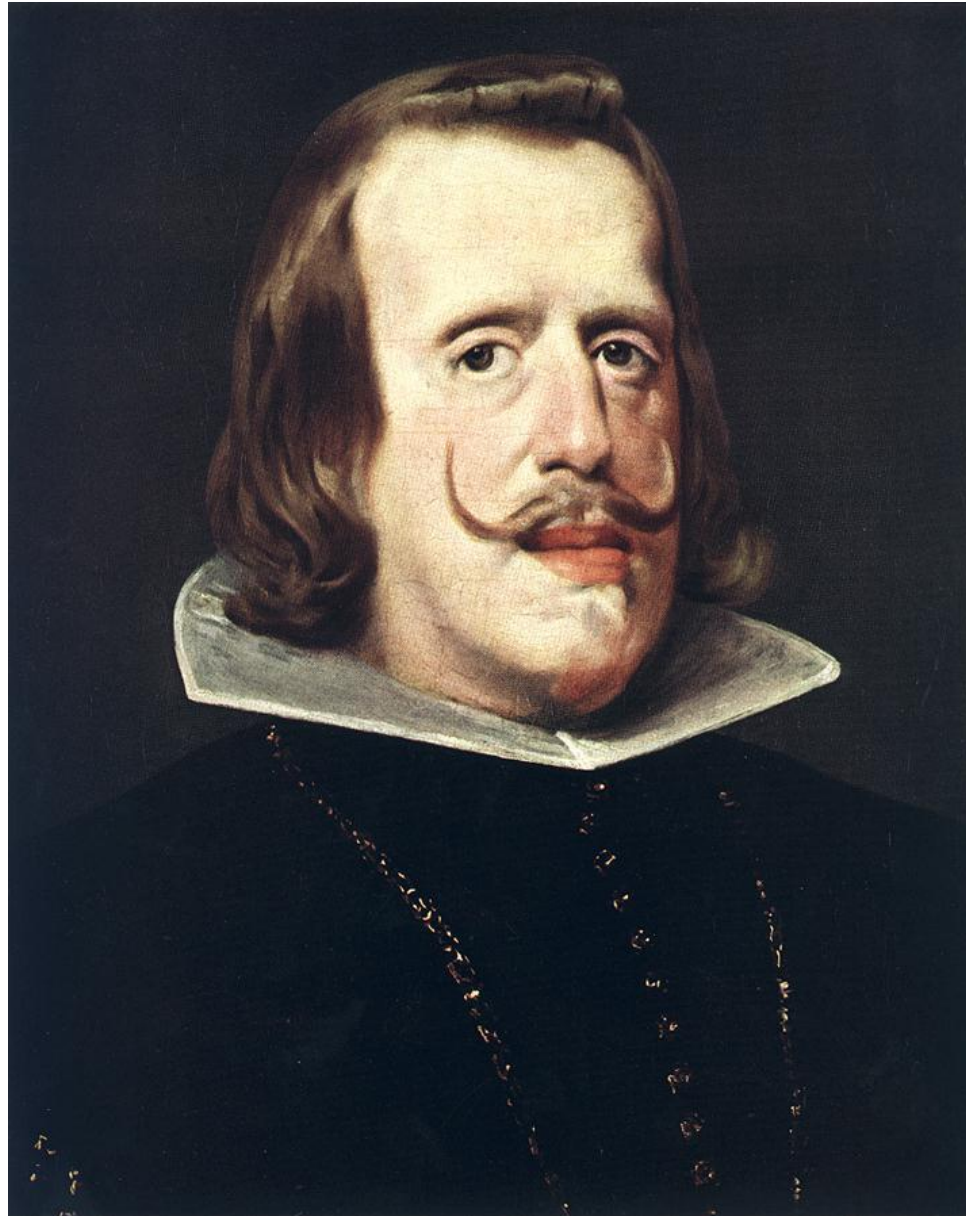


# arcimboldo - the librarian (1566)

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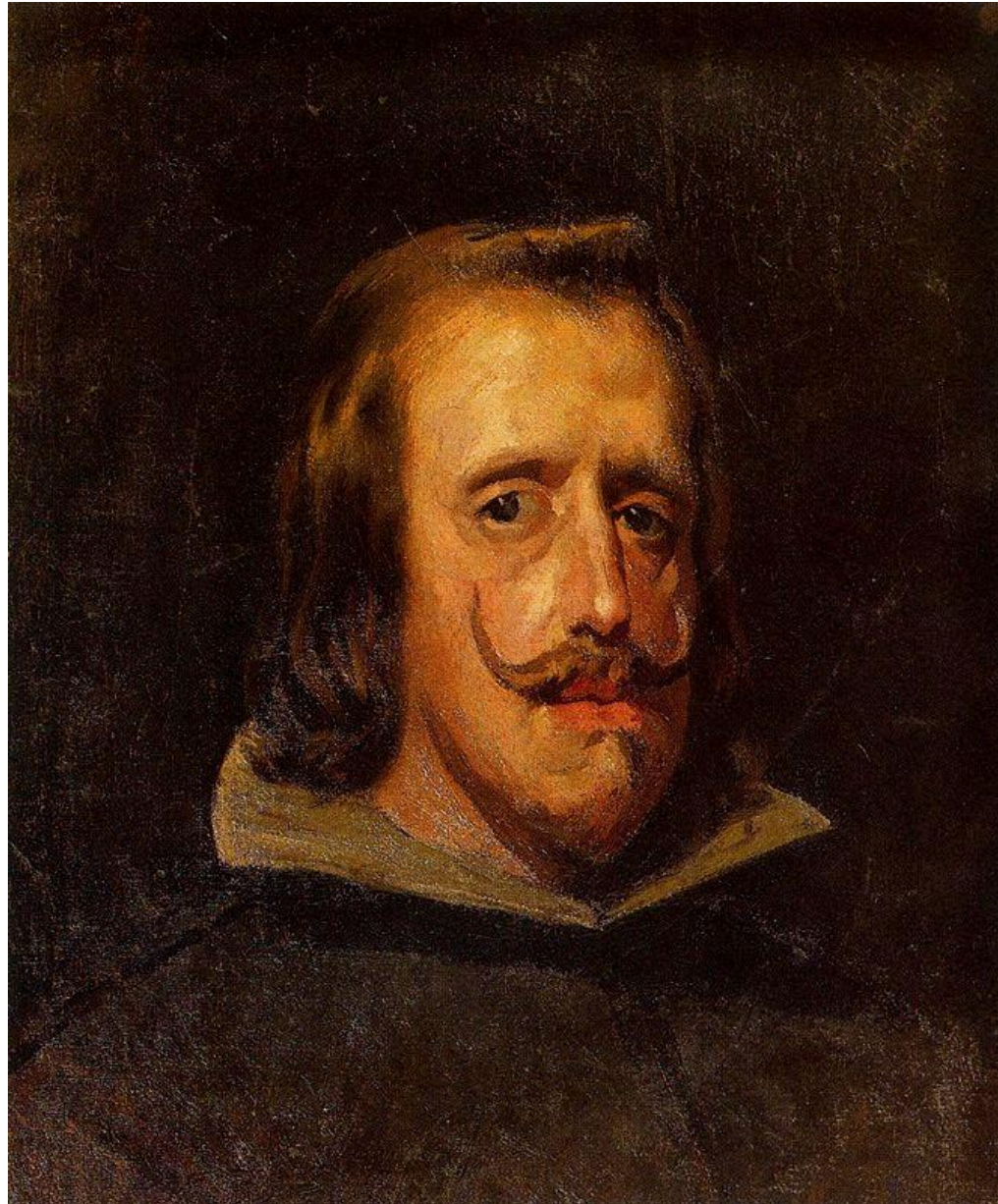


# velazquez - portrait of Philip IV (1653)



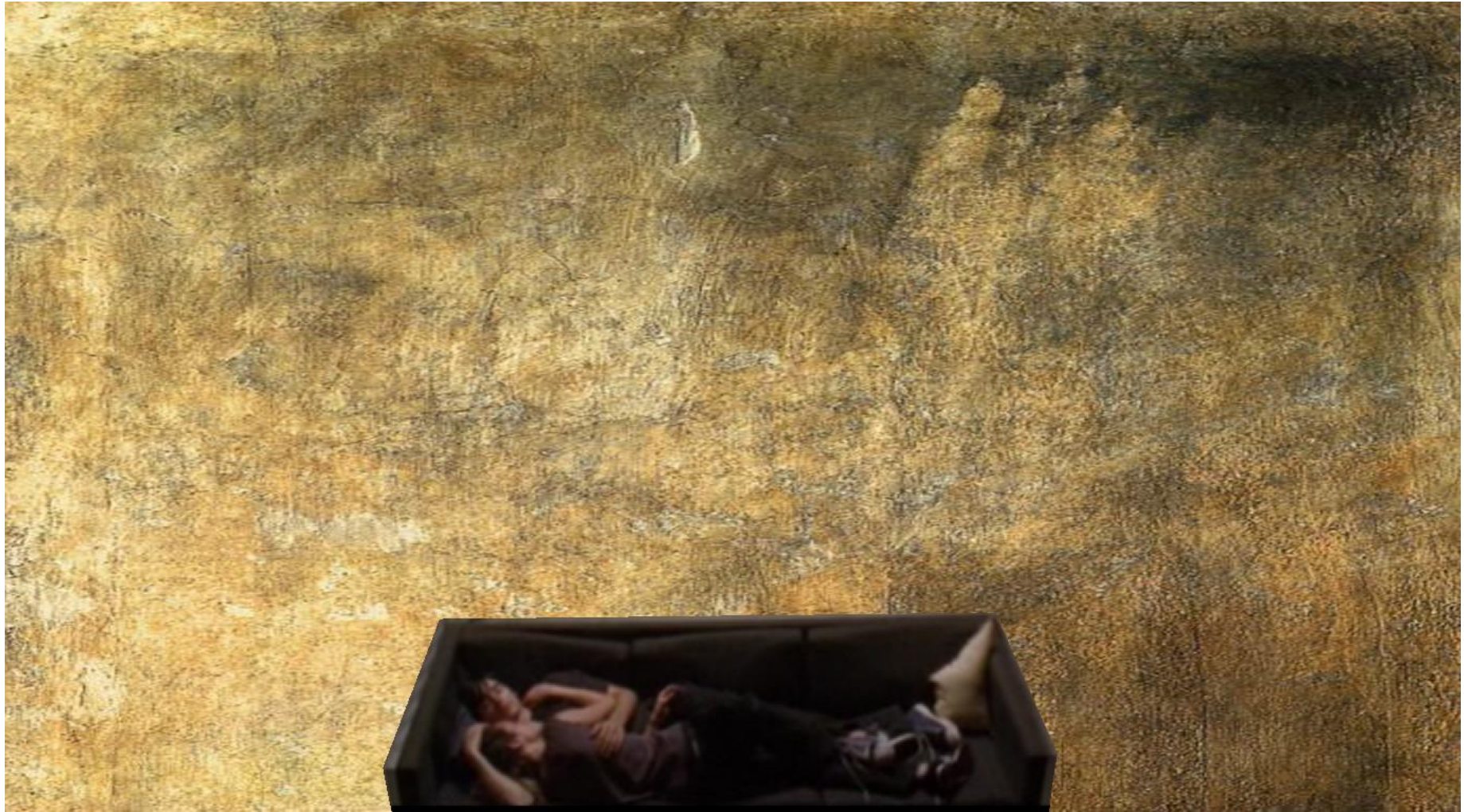


# picasso - portrait of Philip IV (1897)





# magnuson - the young lovers (2010)





# goya - the dog (1820)

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# A brief history of art

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Date	Description
30,000BC	First cave paintings
300BC	Euclid et al discover perspective
1400	Brunelleschi re-discovers perspective
1470-1580	Renaissance
1580-1870	Some individual good painters
1870s	Impressionism
1870s-now	Modern art

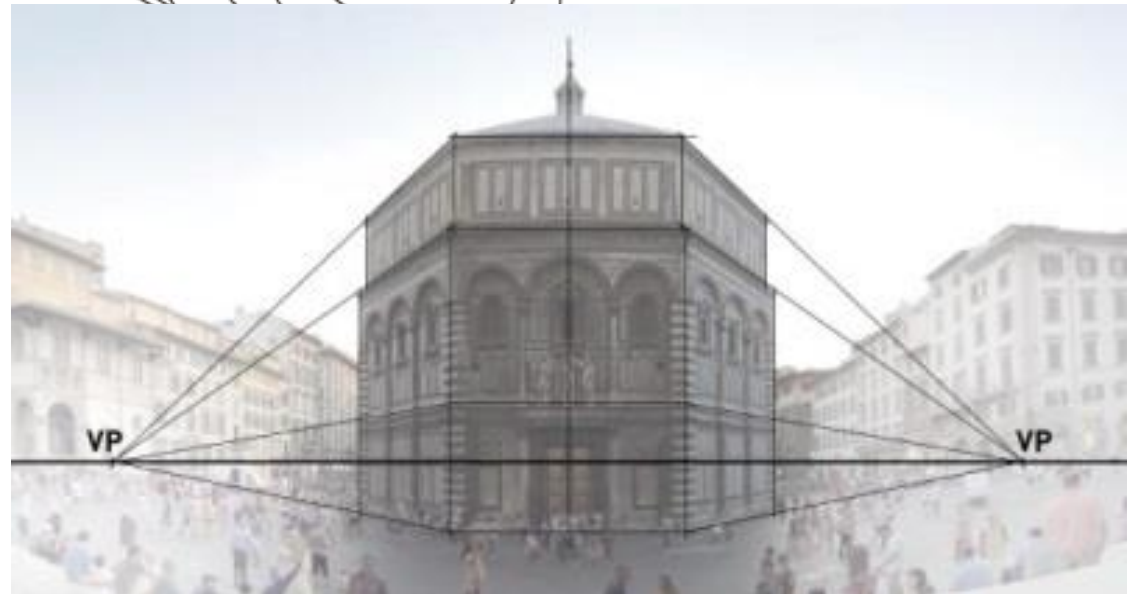
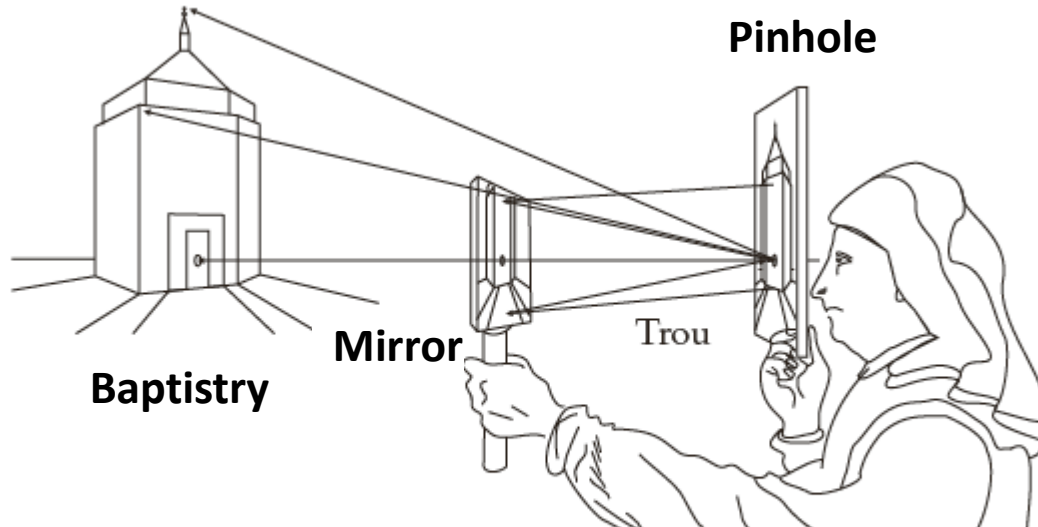


# Brunelleschi and perspective

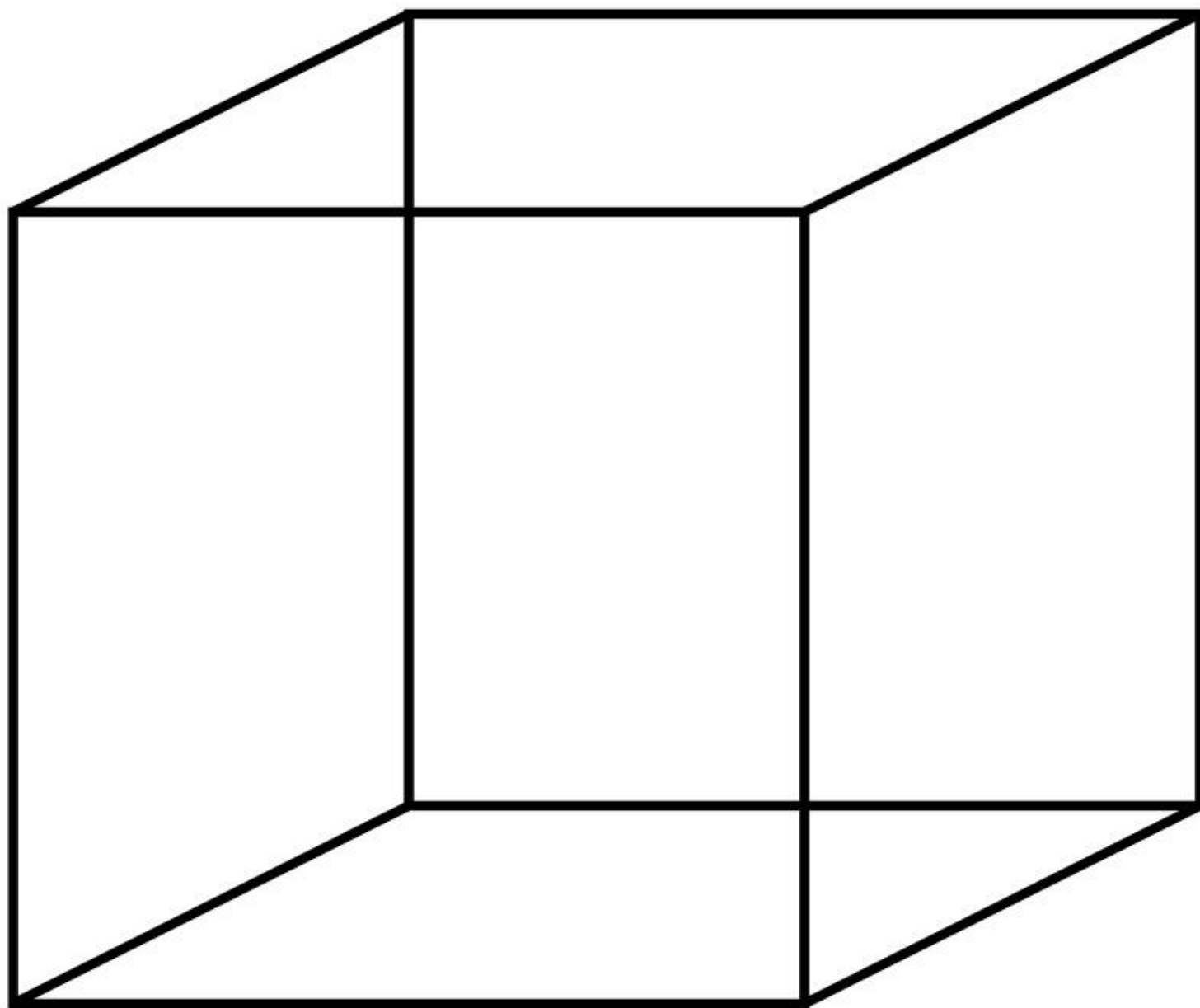
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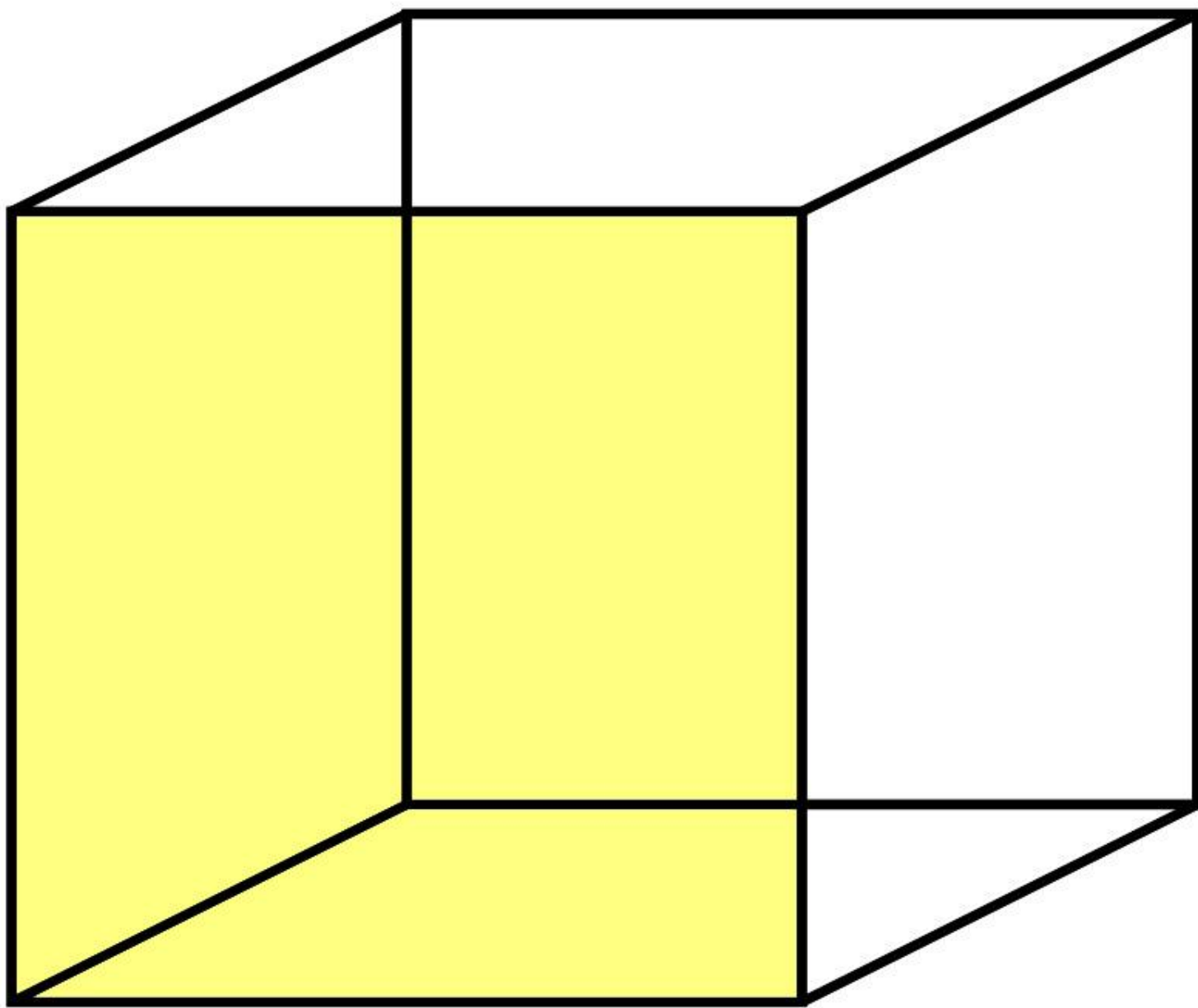


# Brunelleschi and perspective (cont)

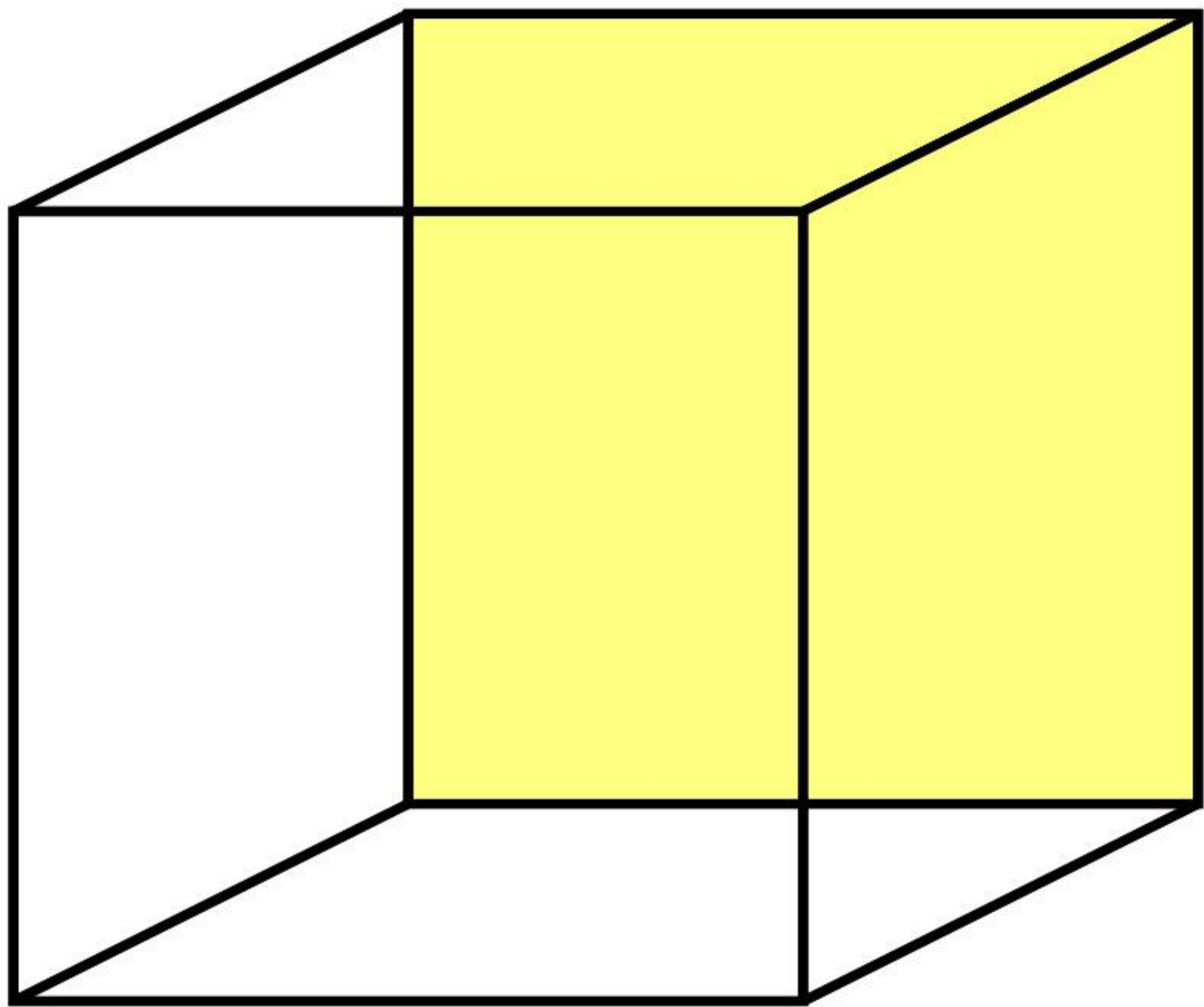


















# A brief history of art

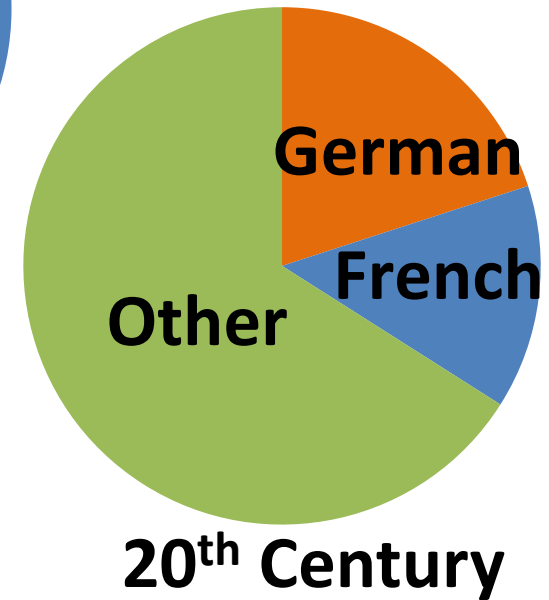
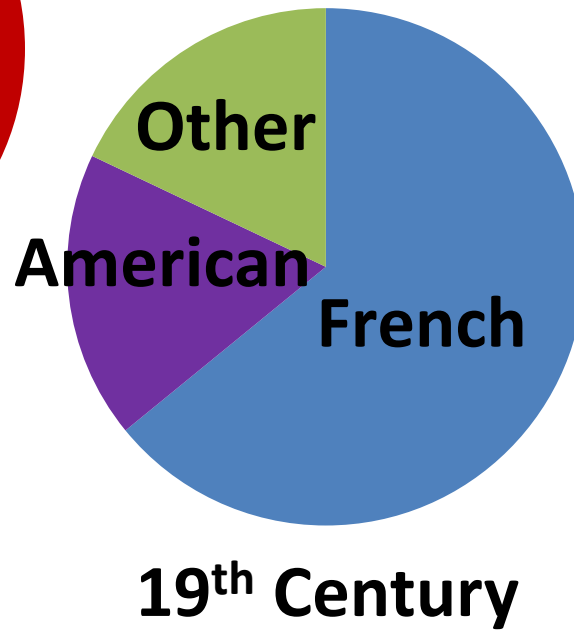
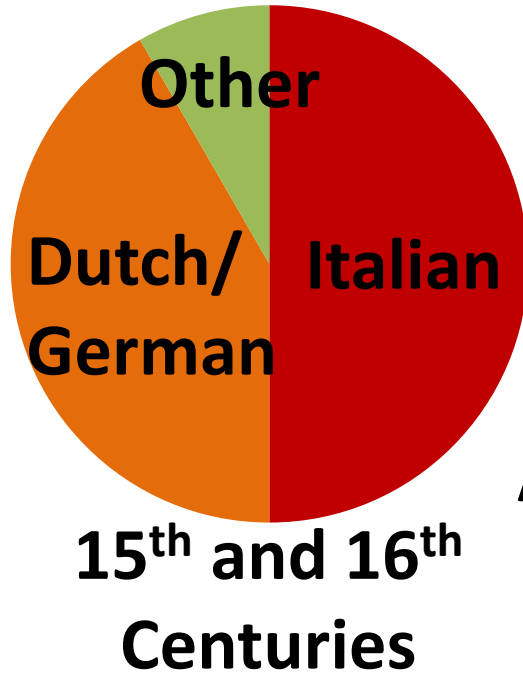
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# Another brief history of art

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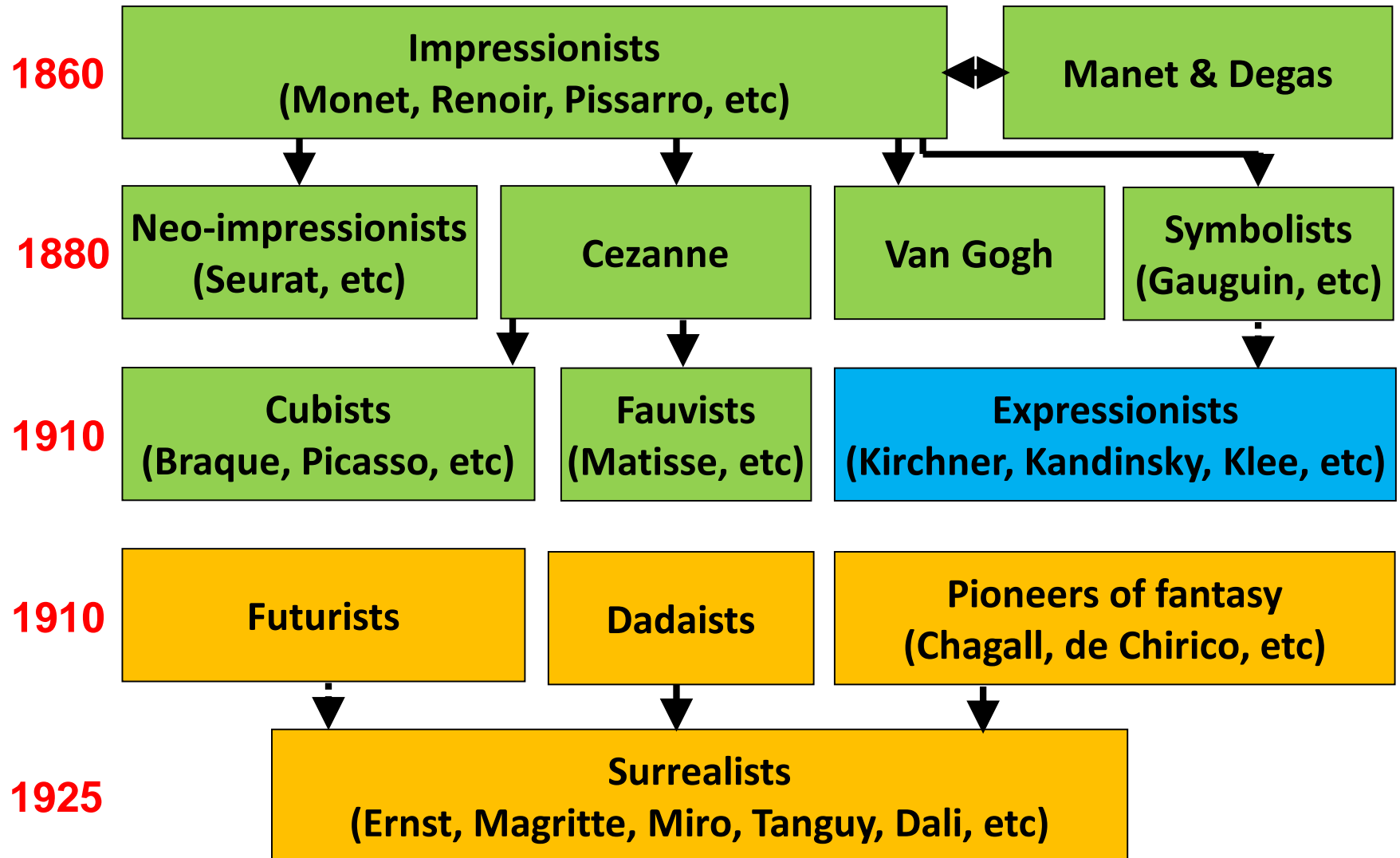
# The major modern art movements

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Movement	Artists
Impressionism	Bazille, Caillebotte, Degas, Manet, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley
Post-impressionism	Cezanne, Gauguin, Seurat, Van Gogh
Fauvism	Derain, Matisse, Vlaminck
Expressionism	Beckmann, Heckel, Kandinsky, Kirchner, Klee, Macke, Marc, Munch, Nolde
Cubism	Braque, Gris, Leger, Picasso
Surrealism	Arp, Chagall, Dali, De Chirico, Ernst, Magritte, Miro, Tanguy
Abstract Expressionism	De Koonig, Pollock
Pop Art	Hockney, Johns, Lichtenstein, Warhol

# How the art movements relate to each other

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# Paris and modern art

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- All the impressionist, post-impressionist, cubist and fauvist artists:
  - Lived in, or moved to, Paris
  - Knew each other
  - Were inspired by their predecessor's paintings
- In later life, Cezanne sometimes signed himself in as "*Paul Cezanne, pupil of Pissarro*"
- Picasso: "*Cezanne is the father of us all*"
- Matisse: "*Cezanne is the father of us all*"

# Impressionism



## **So, what is impressionism? (shortened)**

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- 1. Perceptions. Light/colour rather than form.**
- 2. No greys/browns. Unmixed colours.**
- 3. Painted quickly and en plein air. Visible brush strokes.**
- 4. Everyday life. Repetition. Even weight.**

# monet - la Grenouilliere, bathing (1869)





# monet - Capucines boulevard (1873)



## **Re Monet's *Capucines boulevard***

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**Are the things on the street:**

- **Human beings, or**
- **“Black tongue lickings”?**

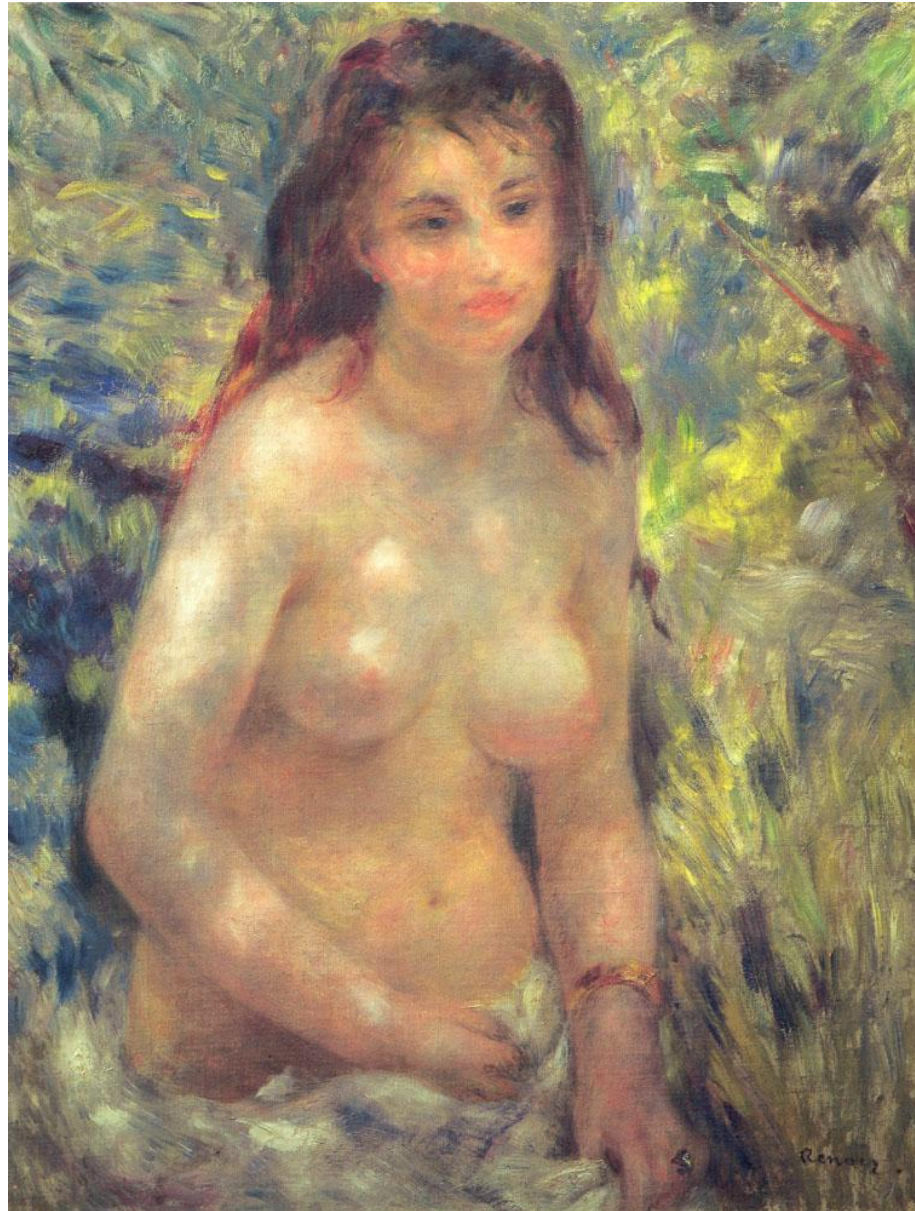
**Putting this another way:**

- **The people get no more or less attention from Monet than do the trees and sky**
- **There is no central focus to the picture – it is just what he saw outside the window**



# renoir - nude, study torso sunlight effect (1875)

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## **Re Renoir's *nude, study torso sunlight effect***

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- **“Try to explain to Monsieur Renoir that the torso of a woman is not a mass of decomposing flesh, with green and purple patches like a corpse in a state of utter putrefaction”**  
(Wolff – a contemporary art critic)



## Some key quotes (cont)

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- **“Colour is my day-long obsession, joy and torment. To such an extent indeed that one day, finding myself at the death-bed of a woman who had been and still was very dear to me, I caught myself focusing on her temples and automatically analysing the succession of appropriately graded colours which death was imposing on her motionless face. There were blue, yellow grey tones – tones I cannot describe. That was the point I had reached.”**  
**(Claude Monet)**

# **pissarro - entrance to the village of Voisins (1872)**

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# manet - the bar at Folies-Bergere (1882)

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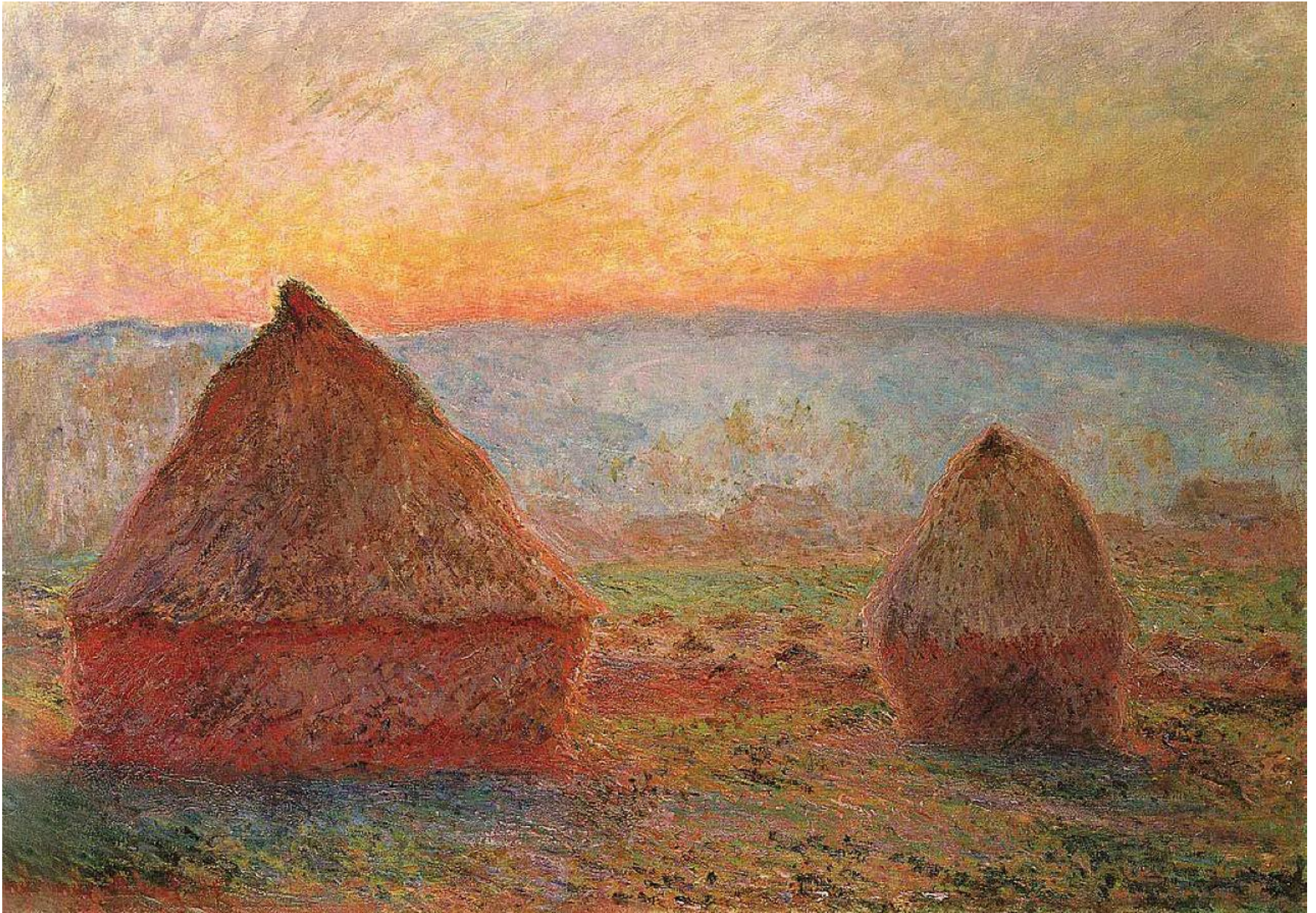


# bazille - the artist's studio (1870)





# monet - haystacks, Giverny sunset (1891)





## Re Monet's haystacks

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- **“Painting took on a fabulous strength and splendour and at the same time, unconsciously, the object was discredited as an indispensable element of the picture.”**  
(Wassily Kandinsky, on seeing one of Monet's haystacks)



## **So, what is impressionism? (shortened)**

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- 1. Perceptions. Light/colour rather than form.**
- 2. No greys/browns. Unmixed colours.**
- 3. Painted quickly and en plein air. Visible brush strokes.**
- 4. Everyday life. Repetition. Even weight.**

# So, what is impressionism?

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All the points below are generalisations/trends (and there are many exceptions). Also, they weren't the first to do any of them but they brought them all together.

- 1.** They were interested in momentary perceptions rather than permanent representations (cf. photography). They focussed on light/colour, rather than on form (and they avoided lines/contours).
- 2.** The colour that something appears to be depends on the colour of the light that falls onto it and not just the colour that it actually is. Shadows have colour. Very little actually looks grey or brown. They used unmixed colours.
- 3.** They painted en plein air (out of doors). They painted quickly, without prior sketches. Their brush strokes were visible and they did not use glazes. No meticulous finish.
- 4.** They painted everyday life, be it landscapes or urban scenes. The subject matter was unimportant to them, and they painted the same things many times. They gave even weight to all of the painting. Objects were often off-centre.



## Some key quotes

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- “[Impressionism may be regarded] as the end of the Renaissance tradition of illusionistic realism and the beginning of exploration of expressive colour and abstraction.  
(H. H. Arnason)

## Some key quotes (cont)

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- **“Impression I was certain of it. I was just telling myself that, since I was impressed, there had to be some impression in it — and what freedom, what ease of workmanship! A preliminary drawing for a wallpaper pattern is more finished than this seascape.”**  
(Leroy, a contemporary art critic, on seeing Monet’s *Sunset: Impression*)
- **“Nature, my friend, is all very well as an element of study, but it offers no interest. Style, you see, is everything.”**  
(Glyre, who was Monet’s art teacher in the early years)



# Post- Impressionism

[illegible]



# Post-impressionism and Impressionism

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- To each of the big 4 post-impressionists, impressionism was a revelation to them (and Cezanne and Gauguin started off painting in the impressionist style). But, after reflection, they each decided that they wanted to do something 'better'.
- In the 1880s, Renoir made two criticisms of (his own) impressionism:
  1. Deficiencies in technique re forms/shapes/contours
  2. The absence of a controlling mind
- Cezanne and Seurat believed in both of these points and wanted to create paintings which were more harmonious and had more structure
- Gauguin believed in the latter point and wanted to create paintings that had ideas (or mystery) behind them
- Van Gogh just painted

# renoir - the dance at Le Moulin de la Galette (1876)

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# renoir - umbrellas (1884)

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# gauguin - the vision after the sermon (1888)

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# van gogh - Auvers, the church (1890)





# seurat - a sunday afternoon on the island of La Grande Jatte (1886)

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# **cezanne - Mont Sainte-Victoire 14 (1904)**



# **What Cezanne was trying to achieve?**

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- **Paintings in the impressionistic style but organised in a more structured way (structured by shape rather than by light)**
- **Paintings in which the various components were objects and had permanence, rather than being momentary perceptions of a scene**
- **Talked a lot about cylinders, spheres and cones (he didn't think much of rectangles or straight lines!)**
- **Chose his motifs more selectively than the impressionists did and then organised his colours as mosaics**



# Fauvism

[illegible]



# **The Situation by 1900**

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**The impressionists and post-impressionists were now famous worldwide (although the public was still far from fully accepting). Paris had become the centre of artistic development. Over the next five years, all sorts of young artists came to Paris, including:**

- **Fauvists: Derain, Matisse, Vlaminck**
- **Cubists: Braque, Gris, Leger, Picasso**
- **Expressionists: Kandinsky, Klee, Marc, Nolde**
- **Dadaists: Duchamp**
- **Futurists: Boccioni, Carra**
- **Surrealists: Arp, Chagall, Picabia**
- **Modigliani**

# Fauvism

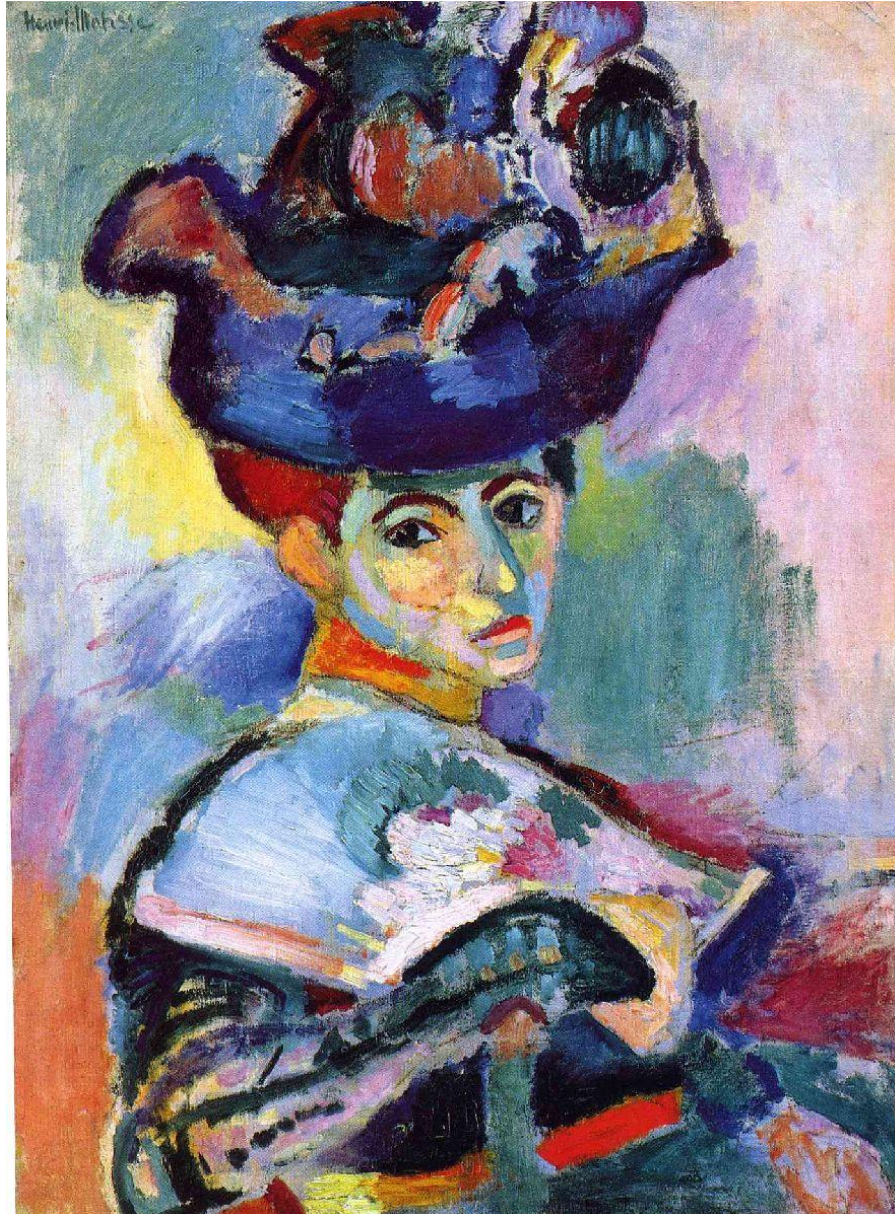
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- **The main end result was to paint in non-natural colours (the idea being that the colours should reflect the painter's feelings at the time rather than the actual colours of the things being painted)**
- **For some, this often meant pink or orange!**



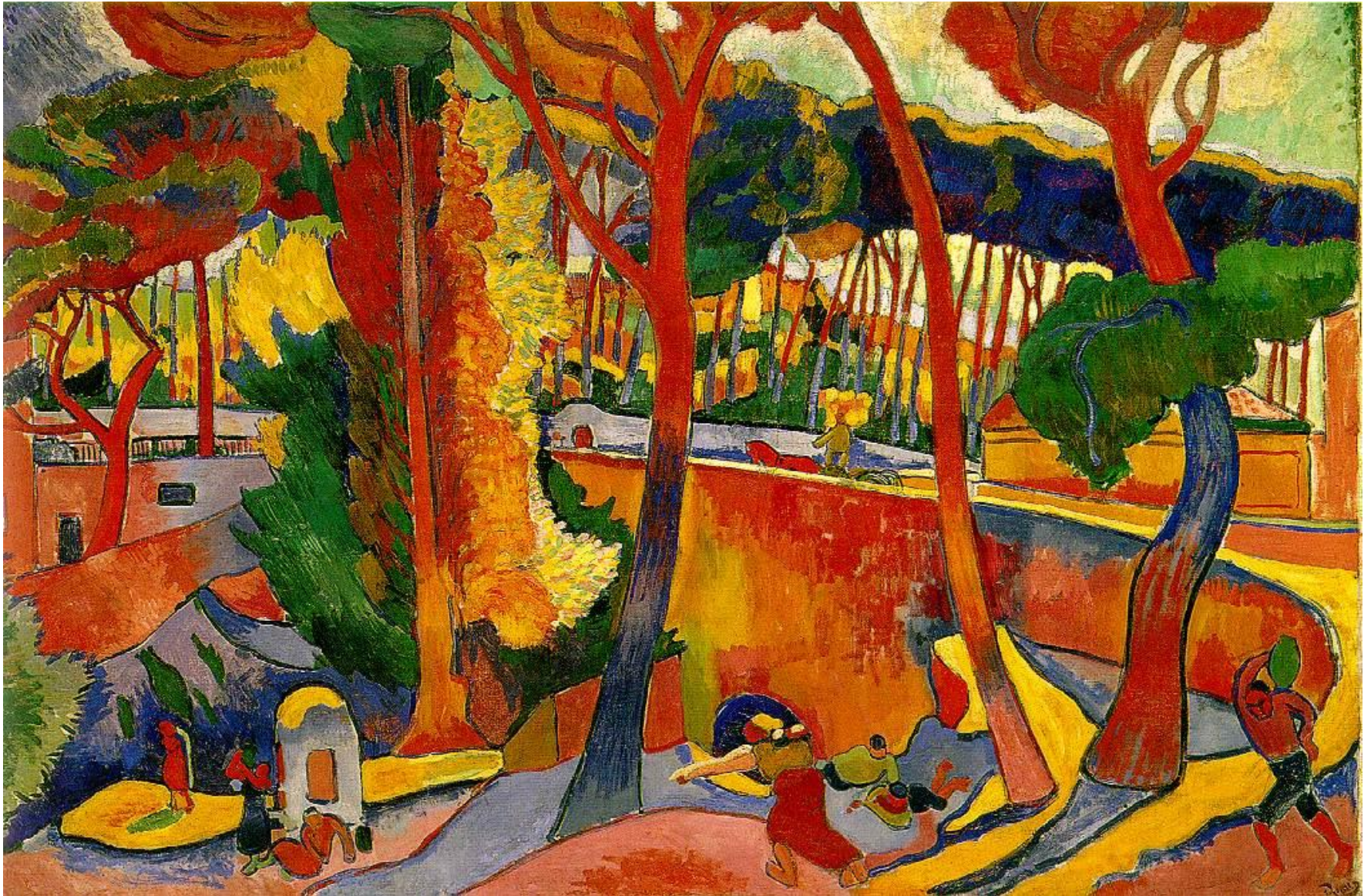
# matisse - woman with hat (1905)

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# derain - the turning road (1905)





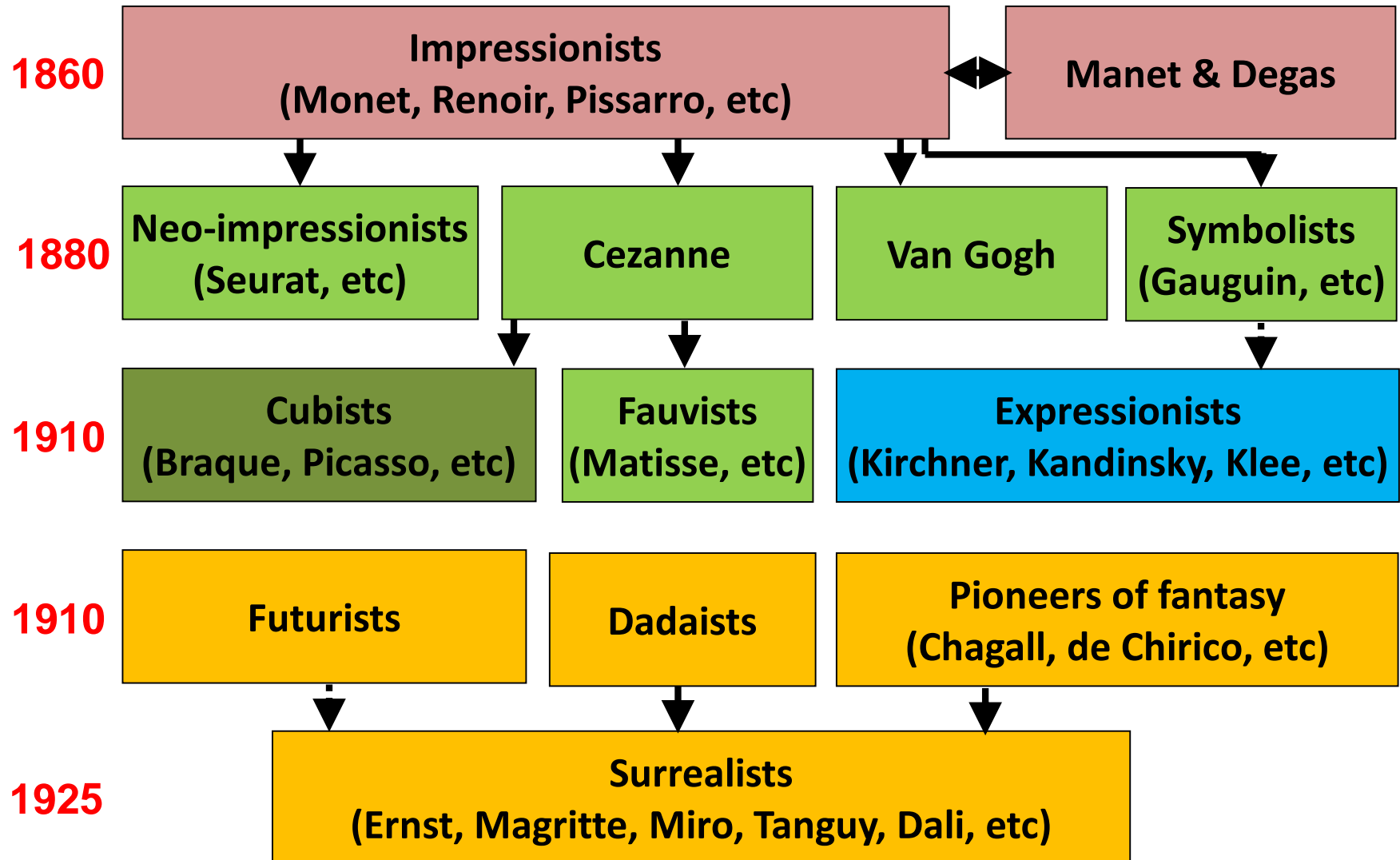
# Cubism

[illegible]



# How the art movements relate to each other

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# The Cubist style

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- Braque and Picasso did not talk about why they painted as they did. So, any interpretation is basically guesswork.
- Two completely styles of painting:
  1. **Analytic cubism**: the breaking up of a normal picture into a number of plane/facets ('cubes') representing views from different perspectives
  2. **Synthetic cubism**: effectively, collages
- I don't really see any connection between the two – they just happen to be done by the same people. Some books say that both styles are exploring the question: what is illusion and what reality? Others say that they first broke things up and later built them up again.

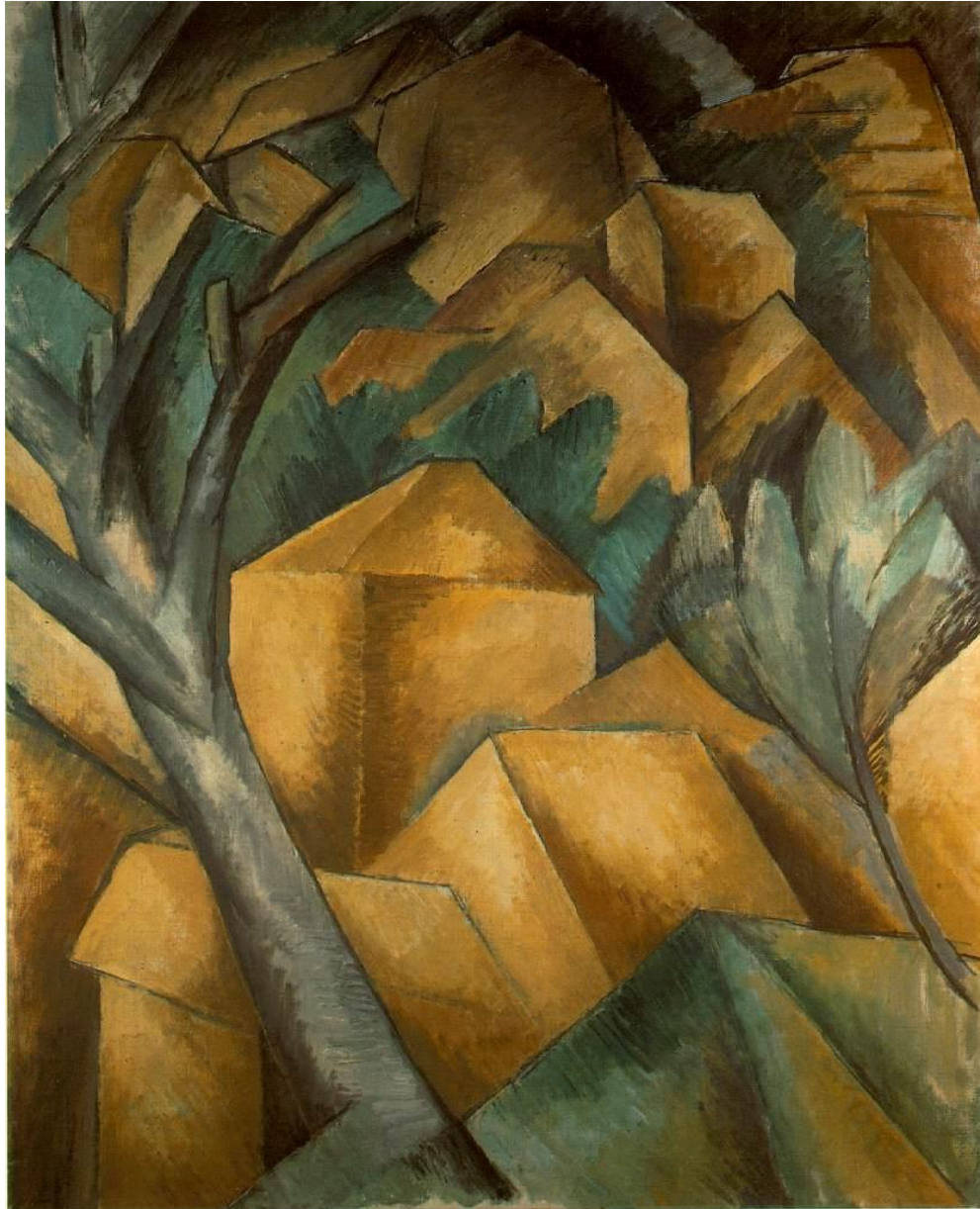


# **picasso - portrait of Ambroise Vollard (1910)**

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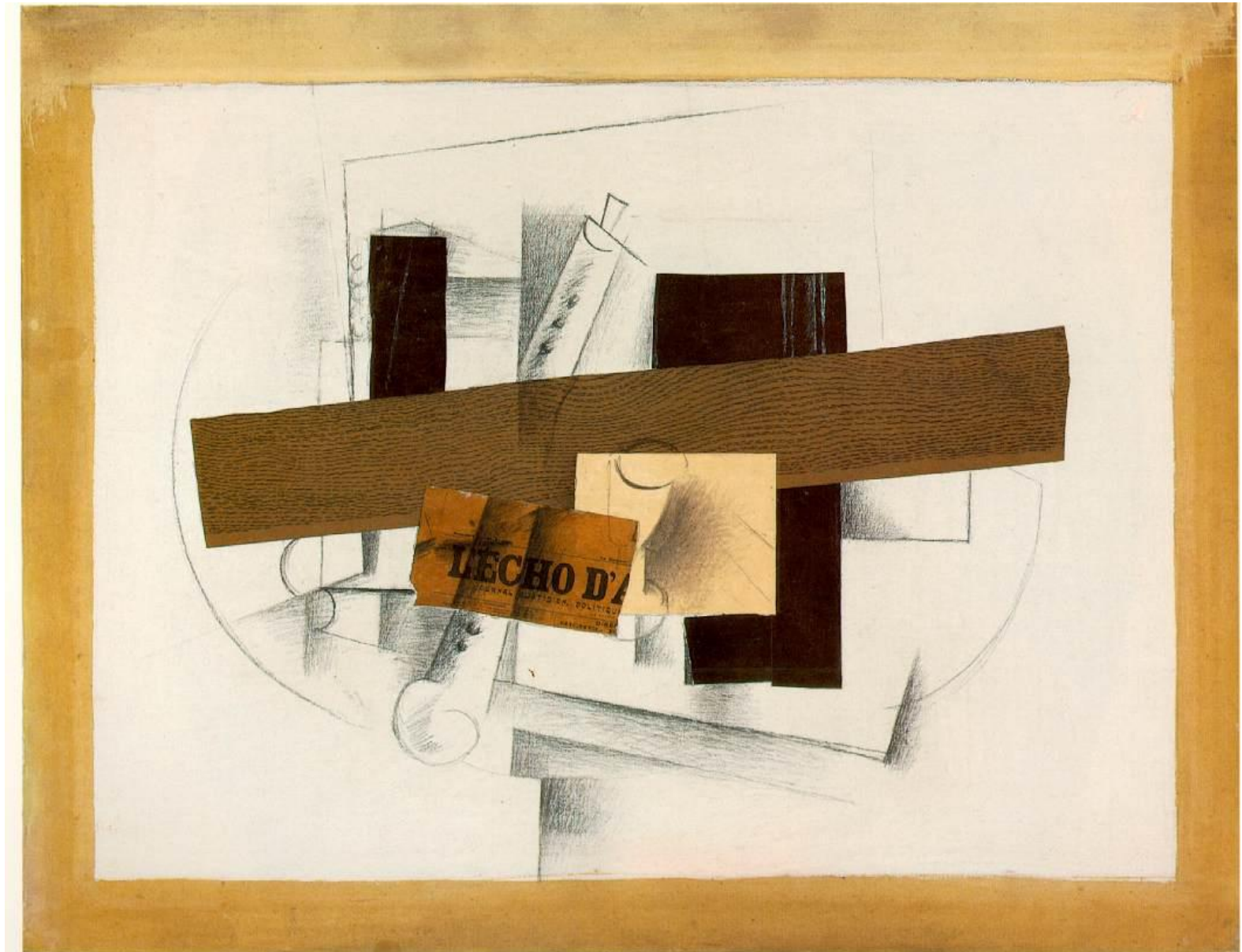
# braque - houses at L'Estaque (1908)





# braque - the clarinet (1913)

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# picasso - weeping woman (1937)





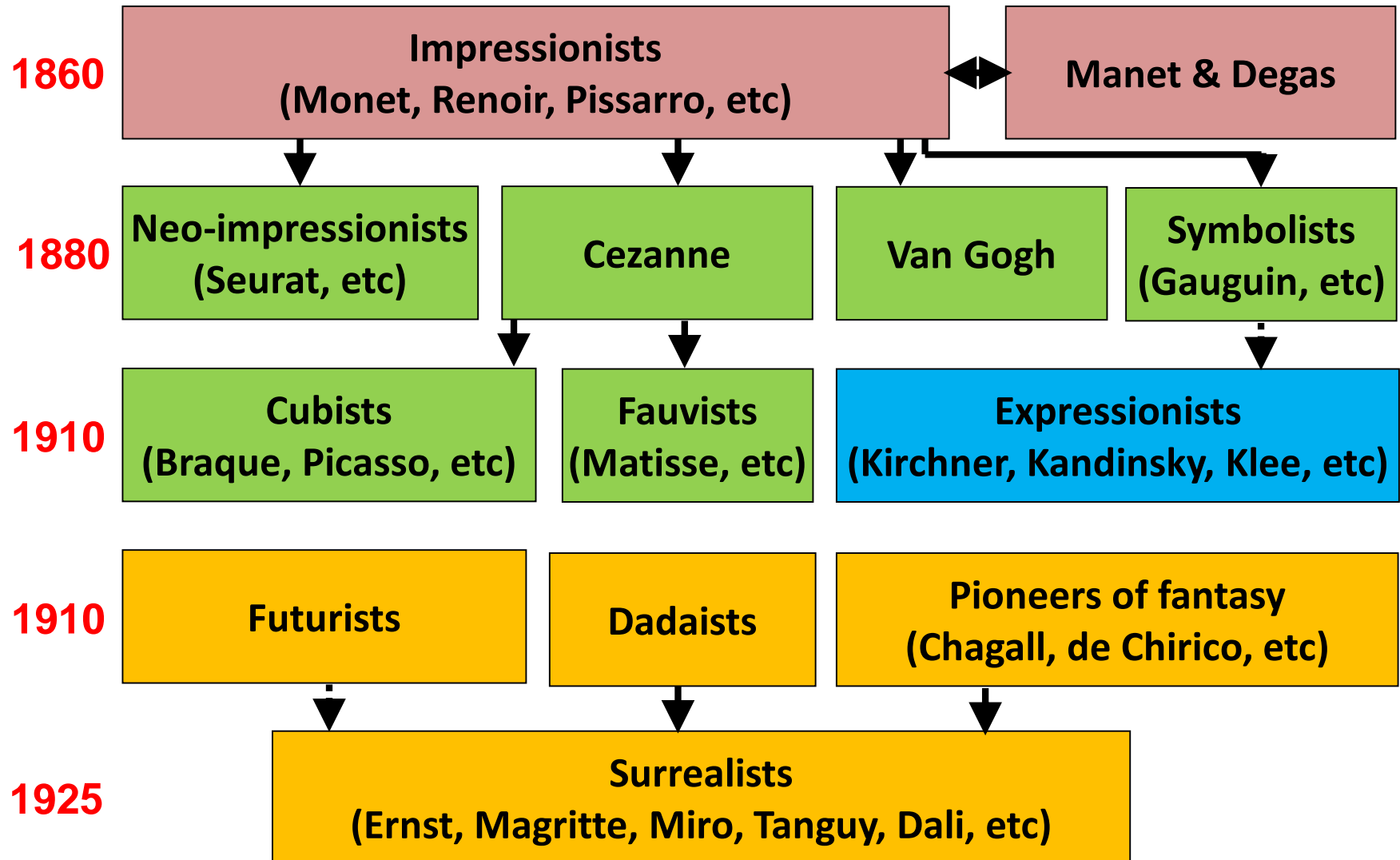
# Expressionism

[illegible]



# How the art movements relate to each other

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# **What creates an art movement?**

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**Cubism was united by:**

- 1. They were friends +**
- 2. They painted in similar styles**

**The main Cubists never really discussed their ideas, if any, in public.**

**By contrast, Expressionism was united by:**

- 1. They were friends +**
- 2. They had an idea in common (paintings should evoke ideas or emotions)**

**But there was no unity, or even commonality, of style.**

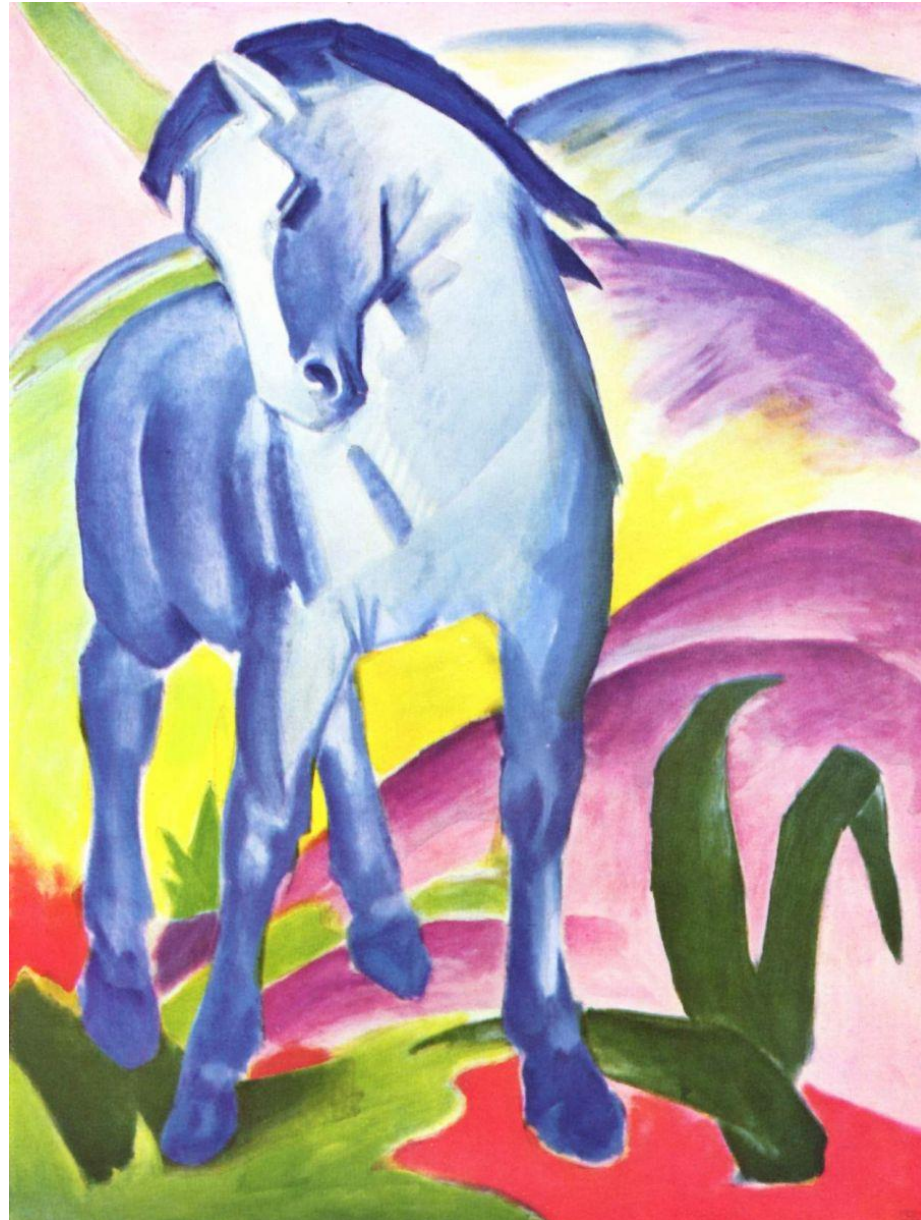


# **kirchner - two women in the street (1914)**



# marc - blue horse (1911)

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# kandinsky - with a black arch (1912)



# Kandinsky in his own words

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- ***“I had the dull sensation that the picture’s subject was missing. And was amazed and confused to realise that the picture did not merely fascinate me but impressed itself indelibly on my memory and constantly floated before my eyes, quite unexpectedly, complete in every detail. I did not understand any of this. ... What was quite plain to me, however, was that the palette had a strength that I had never before suspected, far beyond anything I had dreamt. Although I did not realise it [at the time], the subject, as an essential element of the picture, was discredited.”***  
**(on seeing one of Monet’s haystacks)**



# Kandinsky in his own words (cont)

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- ***Wrote to the effect that “colours on the painter's palette evoke a double effect: a purely physical effect on the eye which is charmed by the beauty of colours, similar to the joyful impression when we eat a delicacy. This effect can be much deeper, however, causing a vibration of the soul or an ‘inner resonance’ - a spiritual effect in which the colour touches the soul itself.”***
- ***“Emotion (in the artist) to the art work to emotion (in the observer)”.***

# Kandinsky's development over time

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**Step 1 – Impression:** a direct impression of outward nature

[how Kandinsky started out, i.e. normal painting]

**Step 2 – Improvisation:** a largely unconscious, spontaneous expression of inner character, of non-material nature

[what Kandinsky was doing in his expressionist abstracts]

**Step 3: Composition:** an expression of a slowly formed inner feeling, worked over consciously, repeatedly and almost pedantically

[what Kandinsky was trying to do in his later abstracts, with their greater emphasis on forms and construction]



# Kandinsky's development over time (cont)

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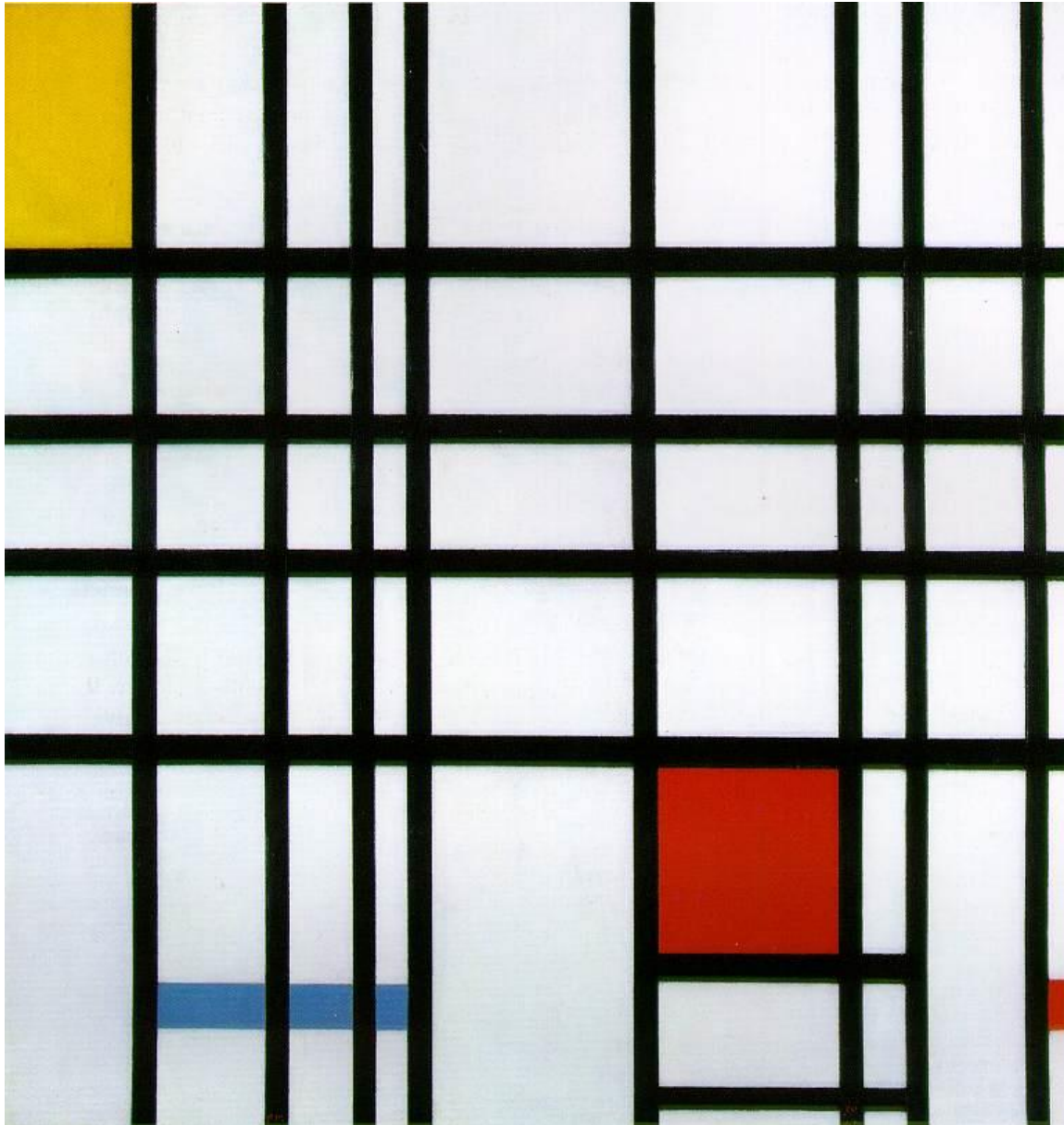
**Step 3: Composition:** an expression of a slowly formed inner feeling, worked over consciously, repeatedly and almost pedantically

[what Kandinsky was trying to do in his later abstracts, with their greater emphasis on forms and construction]

Step 3 came to be known as 'Geometric Abstraction', and Mondrian's paintings perhaps represent the ultimate end of such an approach. (Note that the later Abstract Expressionism of Pollock etc is viewed as a reaction against Geometric Abstraction, not a development of it).

# mondrian - composition with yellow, blue and red (1942)

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# Surrealism

[illegible]



# Surrealism

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- **Started as a literary movement in Paris after the first World War**
- **A formal movement, with membership (and expulsions), led by Andre Breton**
- **Stimulated by Sigmund's Freud's theories about the subconscious mind**
- **“Noun. Pure psychic automatism, by which an attempt is made to express, either verbally, in writing or in any other manner, the true functioning of thought. The dictation of thought, in the absence of all control by the reason, excluding any aesthetic or moral preoccupation. Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipotence of dream, in the disinterested play of thought.” (Andre Breton, The Surrealist Manifesto, 1924)**

# Surrealism in art

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- The dominant art movement between the two World Wars
- Many of the artists went to the USA during the second World War
- No unity of style and no working together; rather, a bunch of individuals who all thought that the subconscious and dreams were important
- **‘Organic’/‘Biomorphic’ surrealism:**
  - Automatism; dictation of thought without control of the mind
  - Resulting in pictures of largely abstract imagery
- **‘Naturalistic’ surrealism:**
  - Recognisable scenes and objects taken out of their natural context and distorted/combined as they might be in dreams
  - Attempts to use images of the subconscious mind



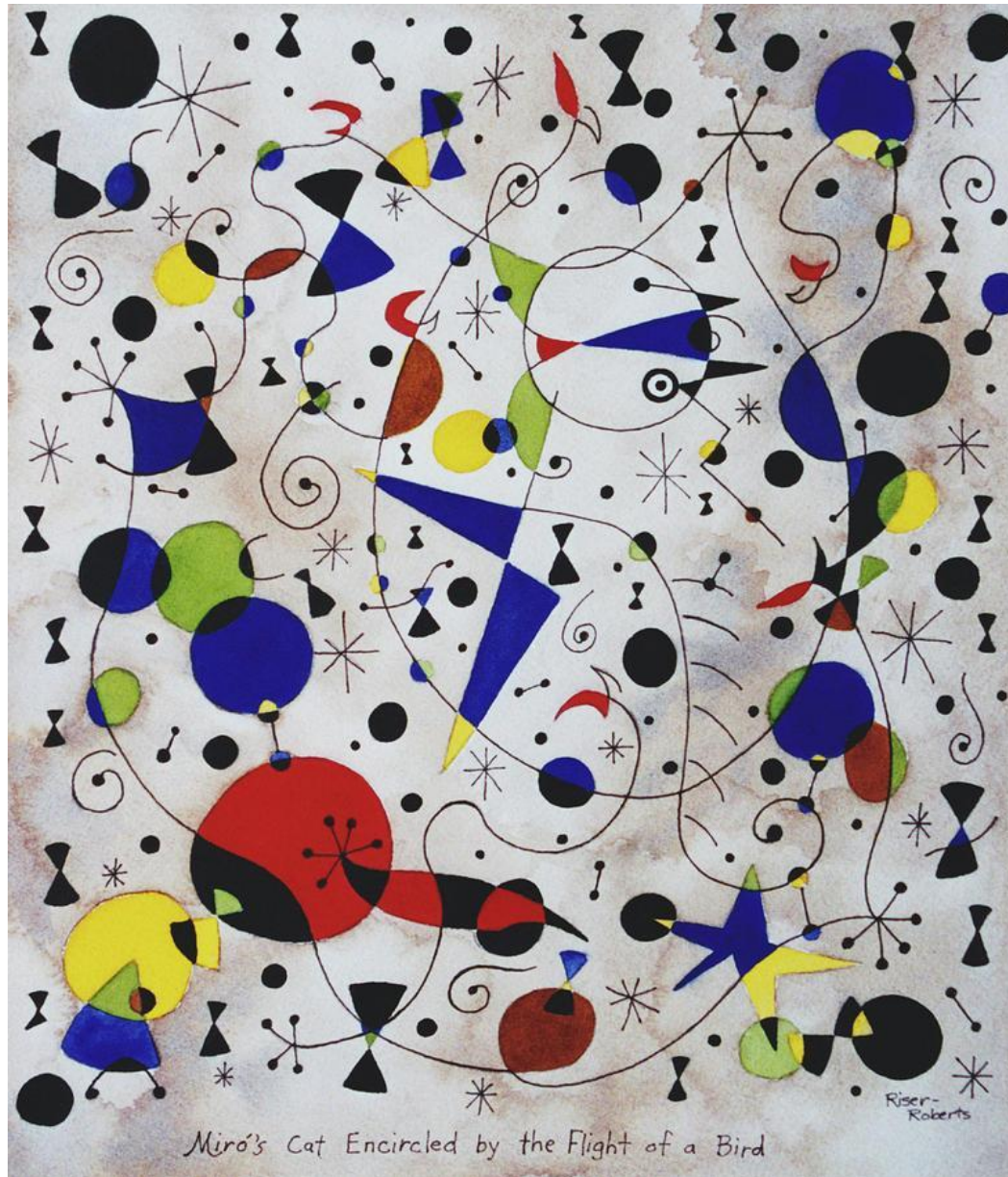
# What makes a modern art movement?

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Movement	Friends?	Idea(s)?	Unity of style?
Impressionism	✓	✓	✓
Pointillism	✓	✓	✓
Symbolism	x	✓	x
Fauvism	✓	✓	✓
Expressionism	✓	✓	x
Cubism	✓	✓	✓
Surrealism	✓	✓	x

# miro - cat encircled by the flight of a bird (1941)

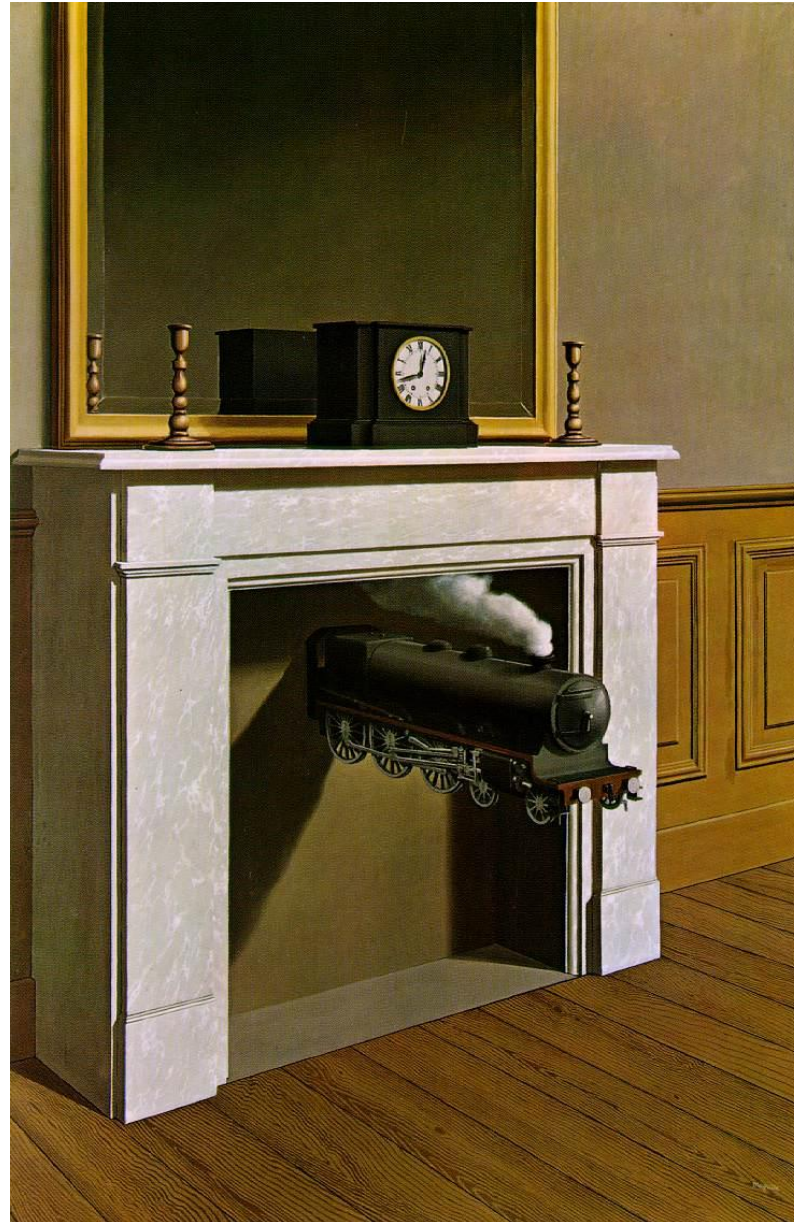
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# magritte - time transfixed (1938)

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# dali - soft construction with boiled beans (1936)

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# **Abstract Expressionism**



[illegible]

# Abstract Expressionism

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- The dominant art movement from the second World War to around 1960
- A mainly American movement, centred in New York
- Influenced more by the 'organic surrealism' of Miro et al than by the 'geometric abstraction' of Kandinsky and Mondrian
- Two broad tendencies:
  - 'Brush painting': concerned with the action of the paint brush and the textures of paint
  - 'Colour-field painting': large, unified colour shapes or areas

# pollock - no 8 (1947)

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# rothko - no 5 (1950)

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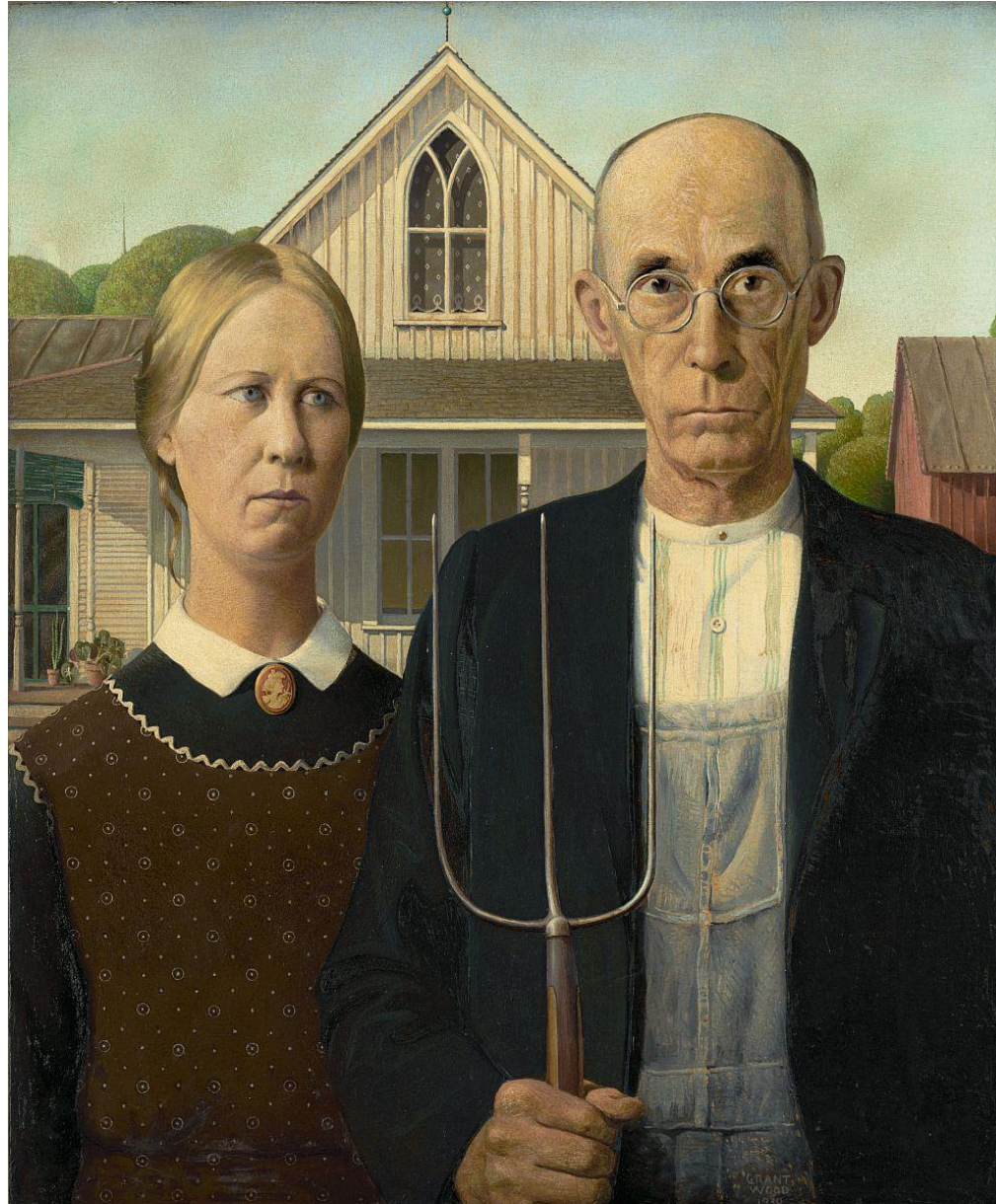
## Why did Abstract Expressionism gain acceptance?

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**Prior to the second world war, the mainstream American art was 'social realism.'**

# wood - american gothic (1930)

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**But two people (inadvertently) changed the situation:**

- **Franklin D. Roosevelt**
- **Joseph McCarthy**

# Why did Abstract Expressionism gain acceptance?

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- 1.** The New Deal's Federal Art Project (1935-1943), employed out-of-work artists to provide art for public buildings (200,000 works in total). The program made no distinction between representational and non-representational art. Abstraction had not yet gained favour and was virtually unsaleable so the program supported abstract expressionist artists before their work could earn them income.
- 2.** The second world war a) devastated the art culture in Paris and b) resulted in many artists emigrating to the States.
- 3.** (According to Wikipedia) The McCarthy era after World War II was a time of artistic censorship in the United States, but if the subject matter were totally abstract then it would be seen as apolitical, and therefore safe.
- 4.** Some art critics (e.g. Greenberg and Rosenberg) vigorously promoted it.

# Pop Art



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# Pop Art

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- **The last of the distinctive art movements (1955 to 1965), before the ‘pluralism’ of the last 50 years**
- **Created partly in the UK (London) and partly in the USA (New York) but, in both cases, centred on an imagery of American popular culture**
- **Developed in reaction to the abstraction of Abstract Expressionism**
- **Both figurative and realist. Mostly contemporary and urban.**
- **Influenced by Dadaism (and Duchamp’s presence in America); sometimes with irony, parody or humour**

# hamilton - just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing (1956)

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# hockney - Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy (1971)

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# warhol - marilyn shot blue (1964)



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