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ARTH 100: Introductory Survey of Art: Discussion Board Prompts

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ARTH 100: Introductory Survey of Art

Discussion Board Prompts

Paleolithic and Near Eastern Art

- Briefly describe the subjects frequently found in Paleolithic art and the manner in which they are represented. Why do you think that images of men were less prevalent in Paleolithic art than those of women? Do you think men or women made the female figurines? Would the gender of the artist affect your interpretation of the work?
- What accounts for the lifestyle changes between Paleolithic and Neolithic humans? How did lifestyle changes affect art and architecture?
- Identify the pictorial conventions of Mesopotamian art. Please be sure to consider the composition as well as figure style. How does the art of the Sumerians and Akkadians reflect social and economic changes?
- What do scholars believe was the purpose of Stonehenge and what does it reveal about the state of civilization at the point? How does Stonehenge compare with the Ziggurat at Ur?

Ancient Egyptian Art

- How were depictions of pharaohs idealized in Ancient Egyptian art? How does this compare with other instances of idealization in different cultures, such as Sumer, Assyria, and Paleolithic humans? Reference specific works of art in your discussion.
- What stylistic elements are embodied in Egyptian relief sculpture? Why did the Egyptians develop a canon of proportions and depict their figures in composite view? How do high-relief, low-relief, and sunken-relief sculptures compare?
- Who was Akhenaton and what was significant about his reign? How is this reflected in the art of the Amarna period? How does it compare with other periods in Egyptian history?
- Discuss the development of Egyptian architecture. What technical achievements were developed? Why is the Egyptian invention of a clerestory significant?
- How does the Palette of King Narmer describe the unification of ancient Egypt? What stylistic elements does the artist employ to convey this narrative? What features does Narmer share with the other images of Pharaohs discussed in the lecture?
- Describe the relationship between Egyptian conceptions of the afterlife and Egyptian art and architecture. Reference specific examples. Discuss the role of statuary, tombs, and mummification in Egyptian funerary practices.

Buddhist Art

- Why did images of the Buddha develop? How do artists of different cultures depict the Buddha? Do you believe images of the Buddha are important? Or is aniconism a better approach in Buddhist art?
- How do attributes such as pose, expression, gestures, adornments, and symbols suggest enlightenment in Buddhist imagery? How do they compare with the attributes of leadership seen in other cultures, such as the ancient Egyptian pharaohs? Please reference specific examples and vocabulary terms.

- What role does architecture have in the dissemination of Buddhist beliefs? How is sacred space expressed in Buddhist architecture across cultures? How do places of Buddhist worship compare with the other religious structures we've seen so far in this course, such as Stone Henge or the Pyramids?

Prehistoric Aegean, Ancient Greek Art & Roman Sculpture

- How does Greek art and architecture express the ideals of its culture? What changes do we see in different periods, and how do these changes reflect cultural and political events? Please reference specific works of art and terminology.
- How is Greek art and architecture different from Egyptian and Mesopotamian art and architecture? How is it similar? Discuss specific examples.
- How does Roman art develop from and expand on Greek ideals? What is the difference between Roman Republican and Roman Empire sculpture? Please use appropriate terminology.

Roman Architecture, Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and Islamic Art

- What are some of the unique elements of Roman architecture that distinguish it from the architecture of earlier civilizations? What are some similarities? Reference specific structures and employ appropriate terminology.
- Why were Constantine and Justinian so Great? What changes occurred under their reigns and how is this reflected in art? Reference specific works of art.
- How were the first Christian churches modeled? How and why do they differ from Roman, Greek, and Egyptian temples? Reference specific buildings and employ appropriate terminology.
- What is the function of the Dome of the Rock, and how does it compare with other religious structures we have seen so far in this semester? For example, how does it compare to a Buddhist Stupa, the Egyptian pyramids, the church of San Vitale, etc.? What type of imagery do we see in Islamic art and why?

Romanesque and Gothic Art

- What are the architectural elements used in the Romanesque period that resemble Roman architecture? Do you think the term "Romanesque" is appropriate? If not, how would you classify this style of art and architecture?
- Why do you think there was such a strong positive reception of the concept of relics in medieval society? How have relics impacted the development of art and architecture? You may wish to consider other examples of relics and reliquaries we have looked at in this course, such as those from Buddhism and Islam.
- What are the key architectural and decorative elements of Gothic cathedrals that distinguish them from Romanesque cathedrals? Do you believe terms like "Gothic" and "Dark Ages" are appropriate descriptions for the art and architecture of this period? If not, what label would you give this period?
- What were the Crusades and what impact did they have on the art and architecture of Western Europe? Reference specific examples in your discussion.

- Throughout this course, we have seen how various cultures employ art in the service of religion. With this in mind, how do the portal sculptures of Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals compare with the decorations of other religious structures? You can consider the Toranas of Buddhist Stupas, Byzantine church mosaics, Islamic calligraphy and aniconic décor, Egyptian temple reliefs, etc.

Italian Renaissance Painting and Sculpture

- What sociopolitical factors fueled the Renaissance, and how are these developments reflected in art? Reference specific works of art and vocabulary in your discussion.
- What distinguishes Renaissance art from Byzantine and Medieval European art? Please reference specific artworks and vocabulary in your discussion.
- How does Renaissance art exhibit the rebirth of classicism? Reference specific artworks and vocabulary in your discussion.
- Choose a work by a Renaissance artist from this lecture that embodies a stylistic or technical innovation exemplary of the time period. Describe its significance with appropriate terminology and upload an image with your post. Do not repeat artworks and sentiments previously mentioned by your classmates.

Italian Renaissance Architecture & Northern European Art

- How do Renaissance Flemish paintings compare with Renaissance Italian paintings? Reference specific examples by artists' names and titles of works, and please use relevant vocabulary.
- Why is the invention of the printing press important? What are some of the techniques used for printmaking, and how do they differ from each other?
- How did court and wealthy merchant patronage shape the content and appearance of religious and secular art? Reference specific examples by artists' names and the titles of works.
- Which classical elements are revived in Italian Renaissance architecture, and which are not? Reference specific buildings by name, and please use relevant vocabulary.

Baroque Art

- Choose one work of art from the lecture and describe how it embodies the Baroque style. Do not repeat artworks and sentiments previously mentioned by your classmates. Please upload an image with your post.
- Choose one work of art from this lecture and compare it to a Renaissance work of art. What's similar? What's different? Remember to use important vocabulary, and do not repeat comparisons made by your peers.
- How did the Protestant Reformation impact art? What changes do we see in painting, sculpture, and architecture? Reference specific examples and use relevant vocabulary in your discussion.
- How do Italian, Spanish, and Dutch Baroque art compare? Reference specific works of art and use appropriate terminology to illustrate your points.

18th Century Art

- Several socio-political changes occurred in the 18th Century. Select one work of art from this lecture and discuss how it reflects those changes. Please do not repeat selections made by your peers, and please upload an image with your post.
- Choose a work of Neoclassical art and compare it with a work from one of the following styles: Dutch/Italian Baroque, Rococo, Natural Art. Please identify each work by artist and title, and upload images, if possible. Please also use appropriate vocabulary. Consider both formal and contextual elements in your comparison.

19th Century Art

- Select a work of art from one of the following movements: Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism. Do not choose a work of art previously discussed by a classmate (you will not get full credit if you do so). Identify the work and explain why it belongs to that movement. Please attach an image of the work to your post.
- Select a work of Modern art either made by an artist mentioned in this lecture or affiliated with one of the Modern movements of the late 19th Century. Do not choose a work of art previously discussed by a classmate. Identify the work and explain why it is a work of Modern art. What formal elements does it have that make it Modern? Please attach an image of the work to your post.

Modern and Contemporary Art

- Select a work of modern and contemporary art from the 20th and 21st centuries either made by an artist or affiliated with one of the movements discussed in this lecture. DO NOT choose a work of art previously discussed by a classmate. You will not get credit if you do so. Identify the work by its artist, title, date, and movement/style. Explain why the work is associated with that movement/style. How do its formal properties exemplify the style, if at all? What historical event most impacted the work's creation? Please attach an image of the work to your post.