

---

---

## Unit 4 Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassical Art

---

---

### Unit Overview:

The opulence of the Royal and Papal courts in the seventeenth century gives Baroque art its defining image. Yet, the style also flourished in Calvinist Holland. These diverse aspects of Baroque and Rococo art are examined in this Unit. At the end, the Neoclassical period is explored as a reaction against the Baroque and Rococo.

### Lesson 4-1: Day 1

**Objective:** To introduce Baroque art with the paintings of Caravaggio and Gentileschi.

**Skills attained:** Students will recognize how Baroque artists redefined themselves in comparison to the Mannerists before them.

### Topics:

- ① How artist's reputation change through time
- ② Caravaggio's reputation then and now
- ③ Caravaggio's influence on other artists
- ④ Gentileschi as a disciple and as an innovator

### Vocabulary:

**Tenebroso:** a sharp dark light contrast in painting.

**Procedure:** A discussion of the changes in artist's reputation leads to presentation of Caravaggio, one of the bad boys of art. Discuss how his artwork is both a stimulant to the Baroque, and something that caused a backlash as well.

**Materials list:** Slides of the following images are necessary for this lesson:

- Caravaggio, *Conversion of Saint Paul*, c.1601, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome
- Caravaggio, *Calling of Saint Matthew*, c.1597-1601, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome
- Gentileschi, *Judith Slaying Holofernes*, c.1614-1620, Uffizi, Florence

**Motivation:** The artistic tastes of today reflect our prejudices when choosing paintings to be included in textbooks. A worthwhile discussion could center on how today's textbook in its current edition would look compared to the same textbook from the early twentieth century. It would be difficult to achieve this in a classroom, but the teacher could point out that early editions of the same general survey texts that are used today, had no or few women artists, no minorities, and concentrated more than ever on the Western canon. Certain artists quickly go in and out of fashion in art history. Discuss how this can happen.

## Unit 4 Daily Lesson Plans

**Description:** This sets the stage for a discussion of Caravaggio. Perhaps more than any other painter, his reputation has been on a roller coaster ride since his appearance in Rome around 1600. Put up a slide of the *Conversion of Saint Paul*. What is so revolutionary here? What is so new? Using Activity Sheet 4:1 for guidance, have students comment on the veracity of the various critics' claims of Caravaggio's work. Why would artists be so completely divided about Caravaggio's work in his own lifetime as well as after? How could so many people find inspiration and yet reject what they see? You may want to point out that Caravaggio is the first artist who has come down to us known through his police records.

Examine the *Calling of Saint Matthew* in the same light. Do a formal analysis here, and point out the innovations in the handling of light, color and composition.

After, discuss the influence of Caravaggio on artists of his time, including Gentileschi. Have students point out how her approach to art is similar and different from Caravaggio's.

**Homework:** There is a third Caravaggio painting in your textbook, *The Entombment*. Discuss this work in light of Caravaggio's other works.

### Lesson 4-2: Day 2

**Objective:** To study Baroque ceiling paintings as an extension of similar Renaissance concepts.

**Skills attained:** Students will see ceiling paintings as a continuum in art history.

#### Topics:

- ① Di sotto in sù and quadro riportato painting
- ② Renaissance ceiling paintings and their effect
- ③ The Baroque's contribution to ceiling art
- ④ The Flight into Egypt as a Baroque landscape

#### Vocabulary:

**Di sotto in sù:** illusionistic architectural painting aimed at extending real architecture into imaginary space, literally, "from the bottom up."

**Herm:** a statue of a bust sitting on a rectangular base.

**Quadro riportato:** a ceiling painting in which painted scenes resemble framed figures transferred to a curved ceiling.

## Unit 4 Daily Lesson Plans

**Procedure:** Students will compare famous ceiling paintings from the Renaissance to the Baroque. Class will end with a consideration of an important landscape painting.

**Materials list:** Slides of the following images are necessary for this lesson:

- Carracci, *Loves of the Gods*, 1597-1601, Palazzo Farnese, Rome
- Reni, *Aurora*, 1613-1614, Casino Rospigliosi, Rome
- Pozzo, *Glorification of Saint Ignatius*, 1691-1694, Sant'Ignazio, Rome
- Carracci, *Flight into Egypt*, 1603-1604, Galleria Doria Pamphili, Rome

Comparison slides: Mantegna, *Room of the Newlyweds*, Michelangelo, *Sistine Chapel Ceiling*, Veronese, *Triumph of Venice*

**Motivation:** This might be a good lesson to have students use Activity Sheet 4:2 as a note taking device. Today's focus is on ceiling painting in the Baroque. Begin by having students think about the previous ceiling works we have learned in class. Show the Mantegna, Michelangelo and Veronese works, and fill in the grids together as a class. The questions presented here ask students to think of the placement of these works in the context of the buildings they are housed in.

**Description:** Begin by making the difference between *quadro riportato* and *di sotto in sù* known. Go through the various images and discuss which uses which technique and recall what the difference in the perception of these works is.

Examine each Baroque ceiling painting, both in a formal way and as a contextual work. Discuss the intended overall impact of each. Emphasize some elemental Baroque characteristics seen here: the dynamic movement, the explosion of forms around the work, and the theatrical use of light.

Lastly, consider Carracci's *Flight into Egypt*, a landmark of landscape painting. Although not a ceiling work, it does lay the groundwork for future discussions of its own genre. Using your Class Notes for guidance, discuss how Carracci achieves maximum impact in this work.

### Homework:

There are two other Italian Baroque ceiling paintings in the textbook: Cortona's *The Triumph of the Barberini*, and Gaulli's *Triumph of the Name of Jesus*. Study each work and comment on the technique, placement, meaning and composition.