

The ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

A revived interest *and identification with* Classical Antiquity.

Civic leaders and wealthy families strive to acquire documents, statues, remnants from Classical Antiquity (most especially Roman) and to display them as signs of cultivation, status and prestige

By seeking to *revive* Roman traditions and fashions, they change these traditions and change their own time =
“the past as an innovative model”

The “Renaissance” begins as an elite movement of the Italian **wealthy urban classes**.

FLORENCE / Firenze

Threat from the Duke of Milan (the VISCONTI family): “the new Caesar”

Cosimo de’MEDICI (c.1389 – 1464)
-neutralizes the threat to Florence by helping the SFORZA family to overthrow the VISCONTI family in Milan

-Florence sees itself as “David”

Coluccio SALUTATI (c.1331 – 1406)

Manuel CHRYSOLORAS (c.1350 – 1415)

Leonardo BRUNI (c.1370 – 1444) *Praise of the City of Florence* (1423)

-“Humanism” -derived from Cicero (L: *humanitas*): the literary culture needed by anyone who would be considered educated and civilized ; that is, learning and the arts make us truly human

Lorenzo GHIBERTI (c.1378 – 1455)
-wins the commission for the new doors to the Baptisterium
-Michelangelo’s praise : “worthy of the Gates of Paradise”

Leon Battista ALBERTI (c.1404 – 1472)

- essay on painting (1436)
- essay on architecture
 - (drawing upon **Vitruvius** and inspired by Brunelleschi's dome / c. 1450)
 - rational architecture reflects rational laws
 - rational architecture helps create rational individuals
 - = **Art is moral education;**
 - it creates values and ways of thinking and sensibilities
 - all architecture should be based on the square and circle
 - (the 2 most perfect geometric shapes)
 - the new façade for Santa Maria Novella
- Alberti's essay: *On the Family*
 - stresses the importance of a classical education and hard work
 - as prerequisites for worldly success
 - virtu* = excellence
 - the self-confident vitality of the Renaissance self-made man:
 - "Men can do all things if they will."

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact me at nhohmann@sfc.edu