

Principles of Design

Composition:

The organization of lines, shapes, colors, and other art elements in a work of art. More often applied to two-dimensional art.

The term “design” is applicable to both two-dimensional and three-dimensional works.

Principles of Design

- Unity and Variety
- Balance (Symmetrical, Asymmetrical)
- Emphasis and Subordination
- Scale and Proportion
- Rhythm

Unity:

The sense of oneness, of things belonging together and making up a coherent whole.

Variety:

Differences that provide interest and contrast.

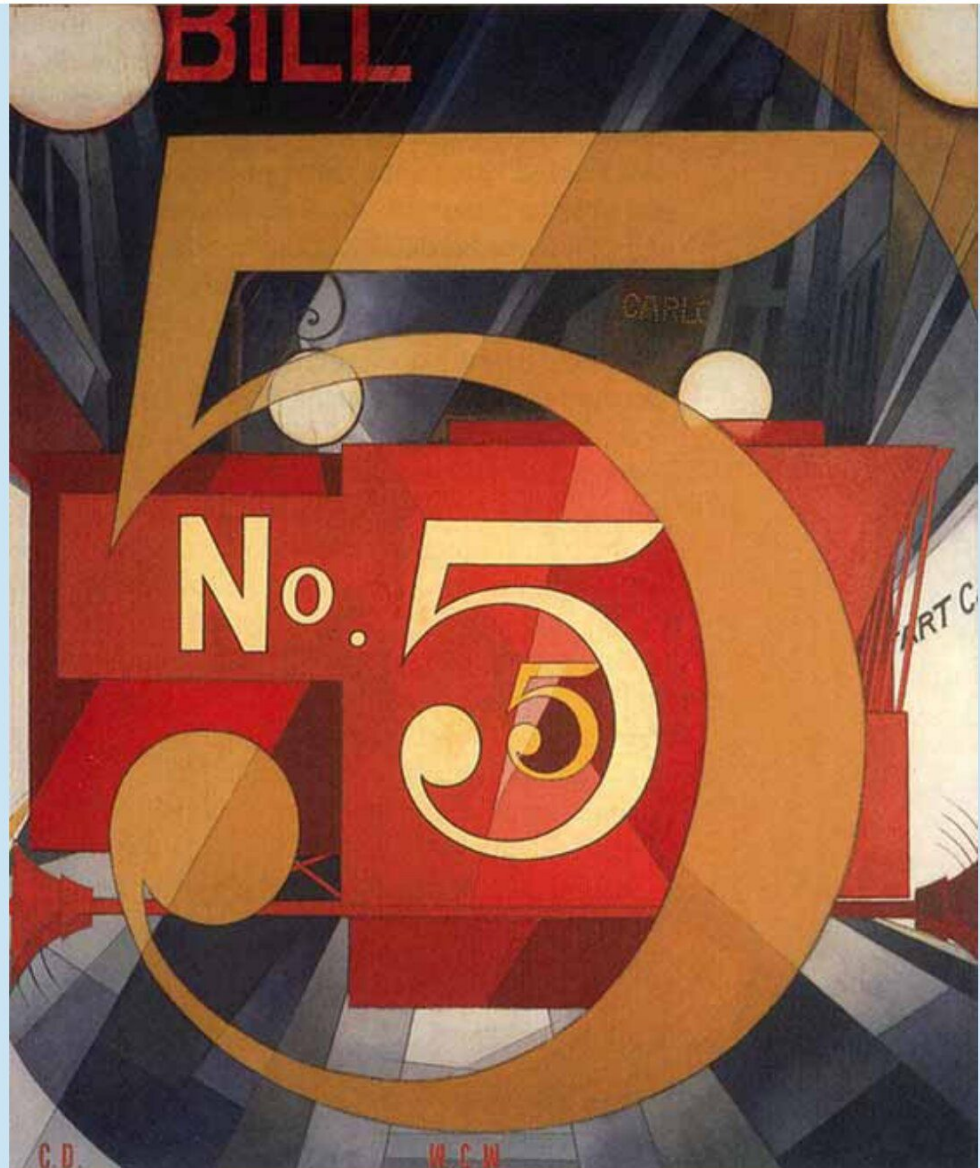
Unity and Variety



**Ben Jones, *Black Face and Arm Unit*,
1971. Painted plaster, twelve life-size plaster casts.**

The Great Figure
Among the rain
and light
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving
tense
unheeded
to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the dark city.

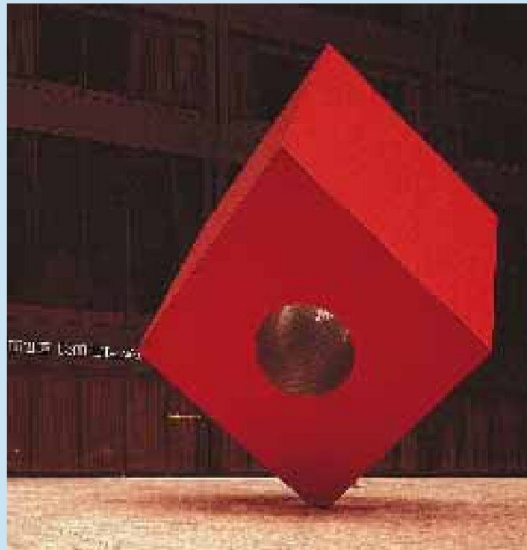
Poem by William Carlos
Williams



Charles Demuth, *I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold*.
1928. Oil on cardboard. 35X30". Metropolitan Mus. NY

Balance

Visual Weight: The apparent “heaviness” or “lightness” of the forms arranged in a composition, as gauged by how insistently they draw the viewer's eye. When visual weight is equally distributed to either side of a felt or implied center of gravity, we feel that the composition is balanced.

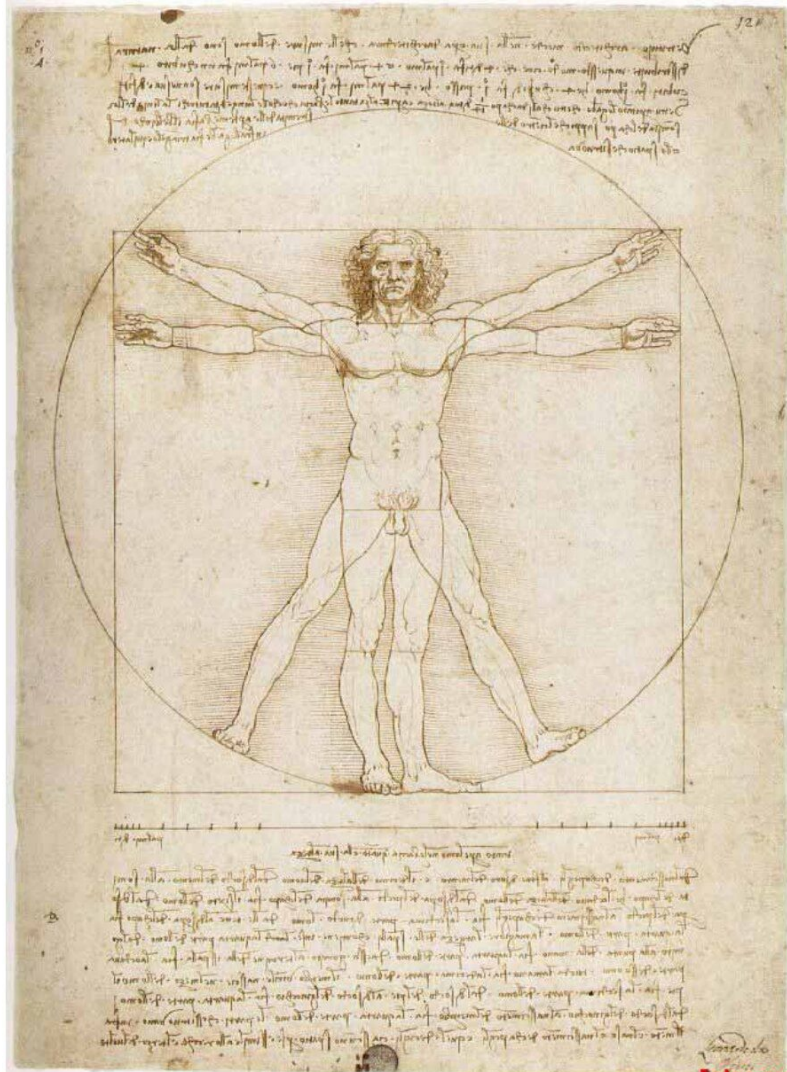


Isamu Noguchi. *Red Cube*. 1968. Steel painted red.

Balance

Symmetrical Balance: A design in which the two halves of a composition on either side of an imaginary central vertical axis correspond to one another in size, shape and placement.

Balance: Symmetrical Balance



Leonardo da Vinci. *Virtuvian Man*. 1485-90. Pen and ink. 13X9"





Latona Fountain with the Grand Canal in the background



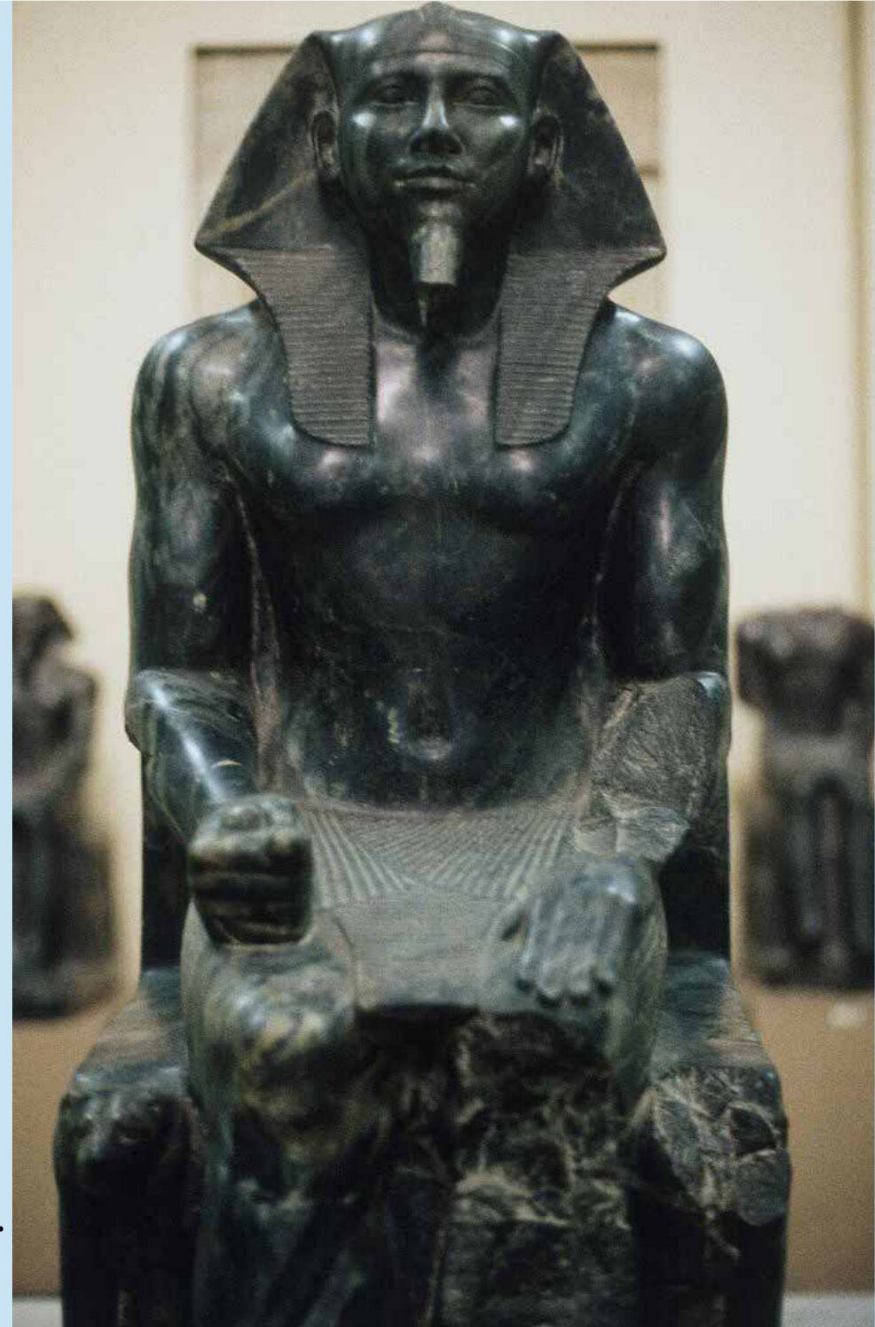
Jean-Baptiste Tuby
Fountain of Apollo at the head of the Grand Canal
1668-1671, originally gilded



Reflecting Pool and the Washington Monument. Washington D.C.



Khafre, Builder of 2nd pyramid,
from Gizeh, Egypt, ca. 2520–2494 BCE.
Diorite, approx. 5' 6" high.





China's national flag



*The red flag of the
former Soviet Union*

**The Luo Brothers,
Welcome the World's
Famous Brands**
Beijing, China



Balance

Relieved Symmetry or Approximate Symmetry:

Slight differences between axial areas of a work.

Frida Kahlo,
The Two Fridas.

1939. Oil on Canvas. 5'8" square.

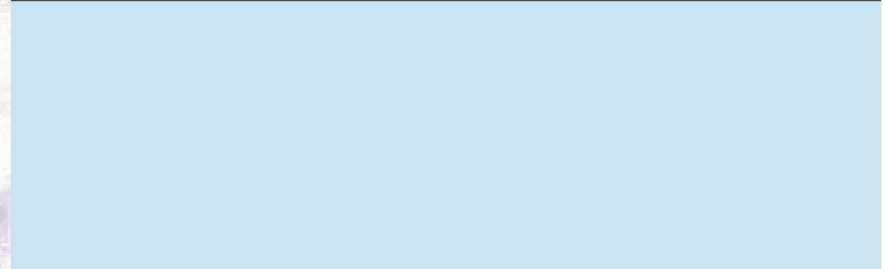
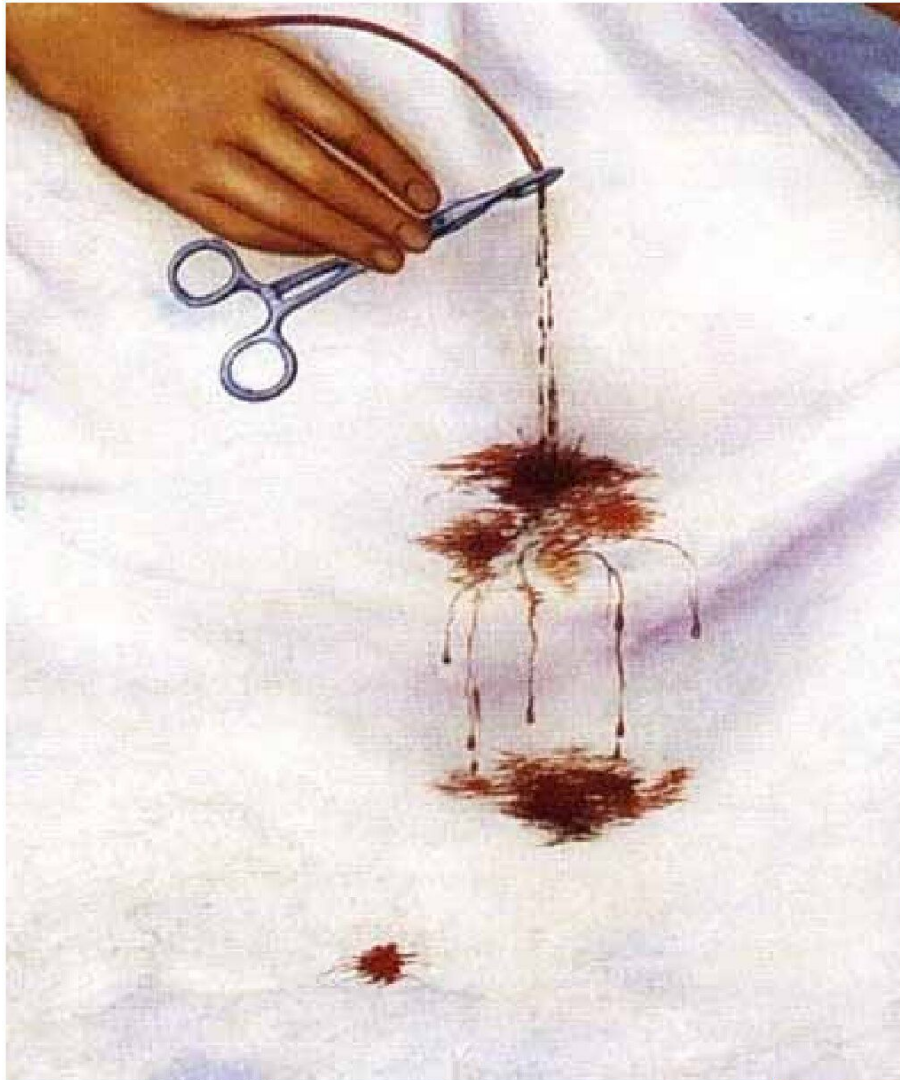


Frida Kahlo,
The Two Fridas.
1939. Oil on
Canvas. 5'8"
square.





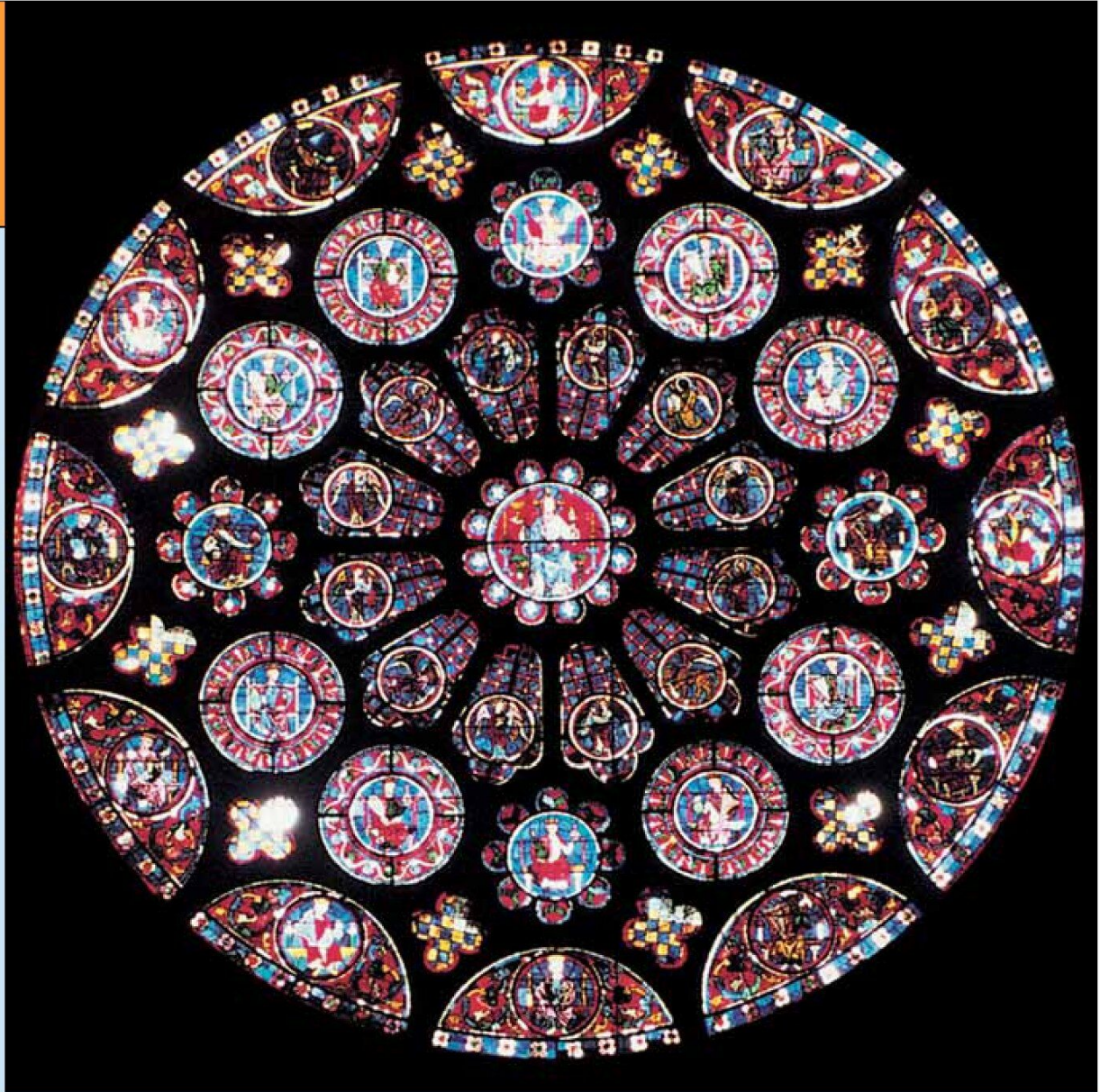
Kahlo was influenced by Mexican folk art; this is apparent in her use of fantastical elements and bold use of colour, and in her depictions of herself wearing traditional Mexican, rather than European-style, dress.



Balance

Radial Balance:

A circular composition in which the elements radiates outward from a central core.



Rose window. Chartres Cathedral. c. 1215.

**John Feodorov (the artist is part Navajo and part Euro American).
Animal Spirit Channeling Device for the Contemporary Shaman. 1997.
15 x 12 x 3 in.**

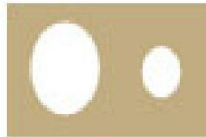


Balance: Asymmetrical Balance

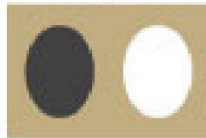
Asymmetrical Balance: Two sides that do not correspond to one another in size, shape, and placement.

- Although asymmetrical balance may appear more casual and less planned, it is usually harder to use because the artist must plan the layout very carefully to ensure that it is still balanced. An unbalanced page or screen creates a feeling of tension, as if the page or screen might tip, or things might slide off the side.

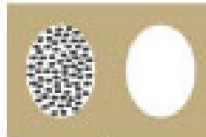
Balance through Shape



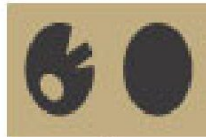
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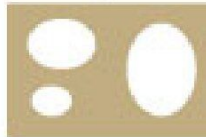
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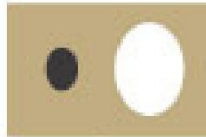
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4



5



6

1. A large form is visually heavier than a smaller form.

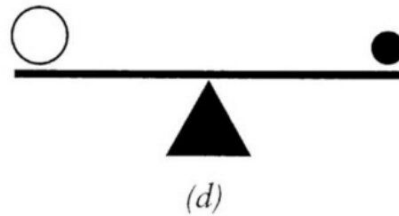
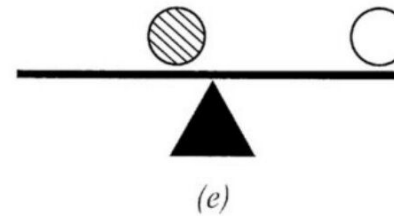
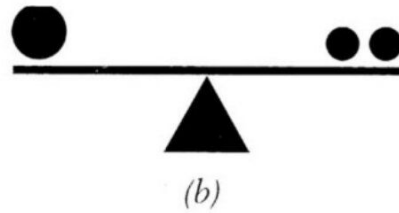
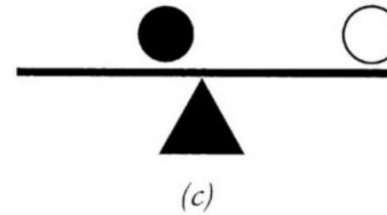
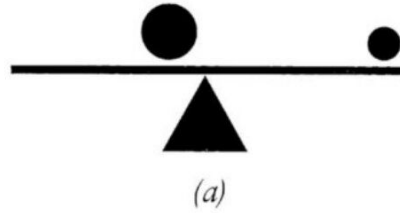
2. A dark form is visually heavier than a light form of the same size.

3. A textured form is visually heavier than a smooth form of the same size.

4. A complex form is visually heavier than a simple form of the same size.

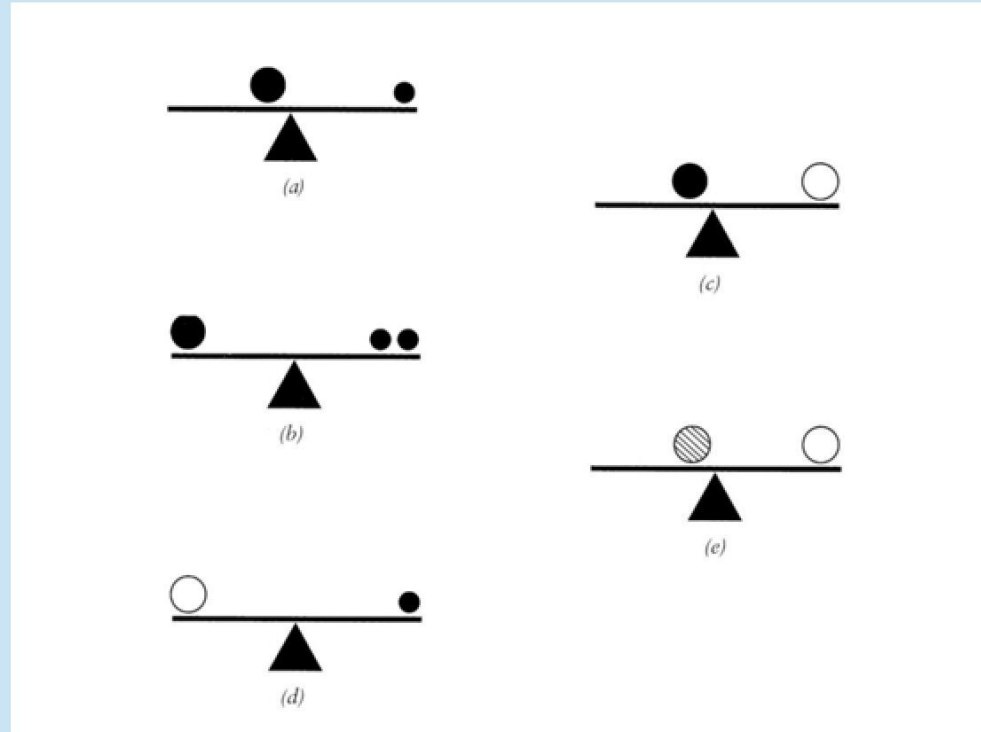
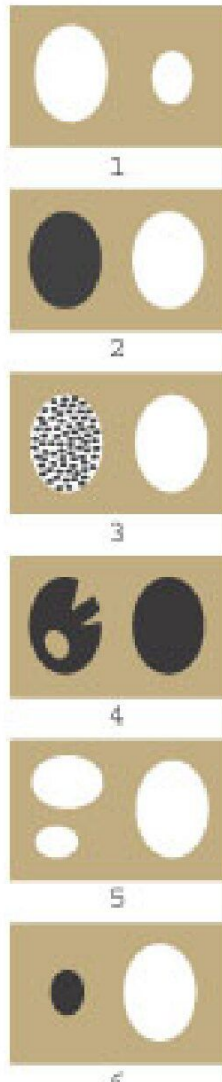
5. Two or more of small forms can balance a larger one.

6. A smaller dark form can balance a larger light one.



Balance through Position

Visually heavier shapes near the center of the artwork can be balanced by lighter shapes farther away



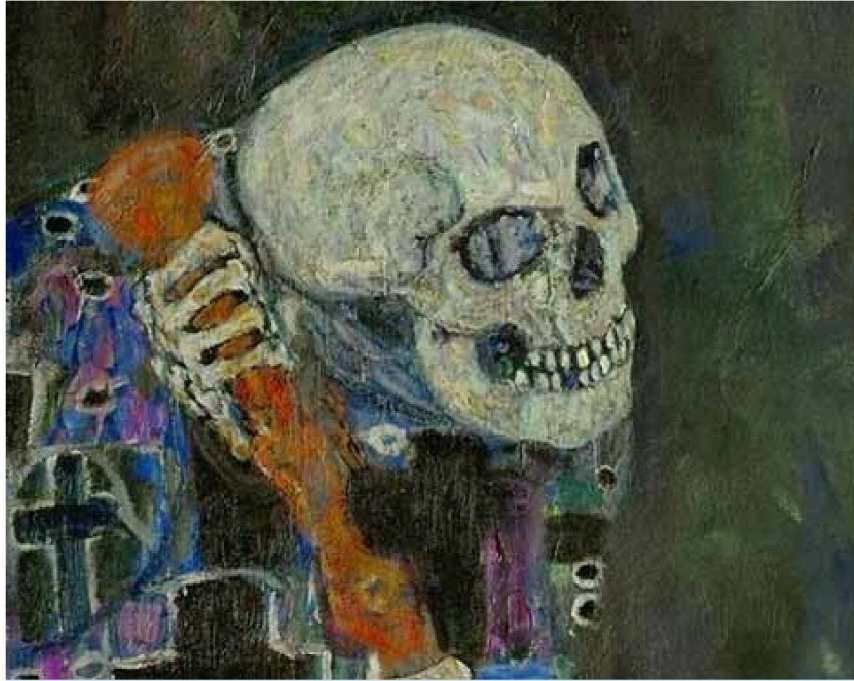
Using only abstract shapes, draw one example of each:

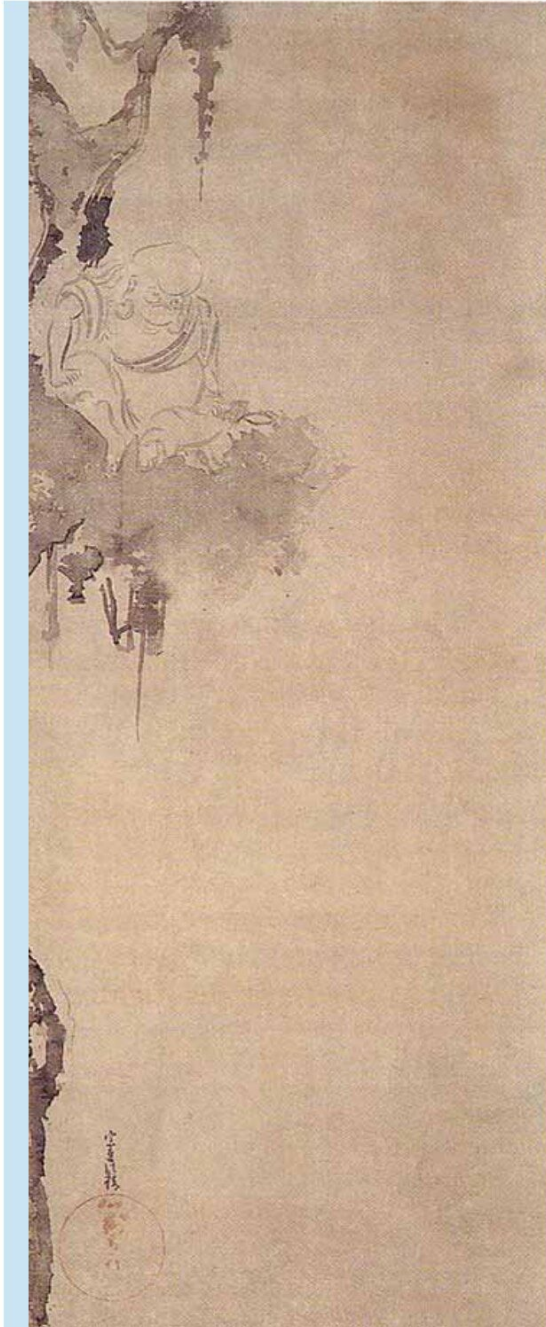
1. Symmetrical balance
2. Relieved symmetry
3. Radial balance
4. Asymmetrical balance

- Did you achieve a balance in the composition?

Gustav Klimt
Death and Life Finished
1915.
5'10"X6'6"







Nonomura Sotatsu. *The Zen Priest Choka*.

Edo Period, late 16th-early 17th c. Hanging scroll, ink on paper; 37X14”.

The Cleveland Museum of Art.

- Unlike physical balance, visual balance can be created through absence as well as presence.

Balance through Color and Value:

Warm colors (red, magenta, yellow) tend to advance and/or have more visual weight than cool colors (blue, green, cyan).

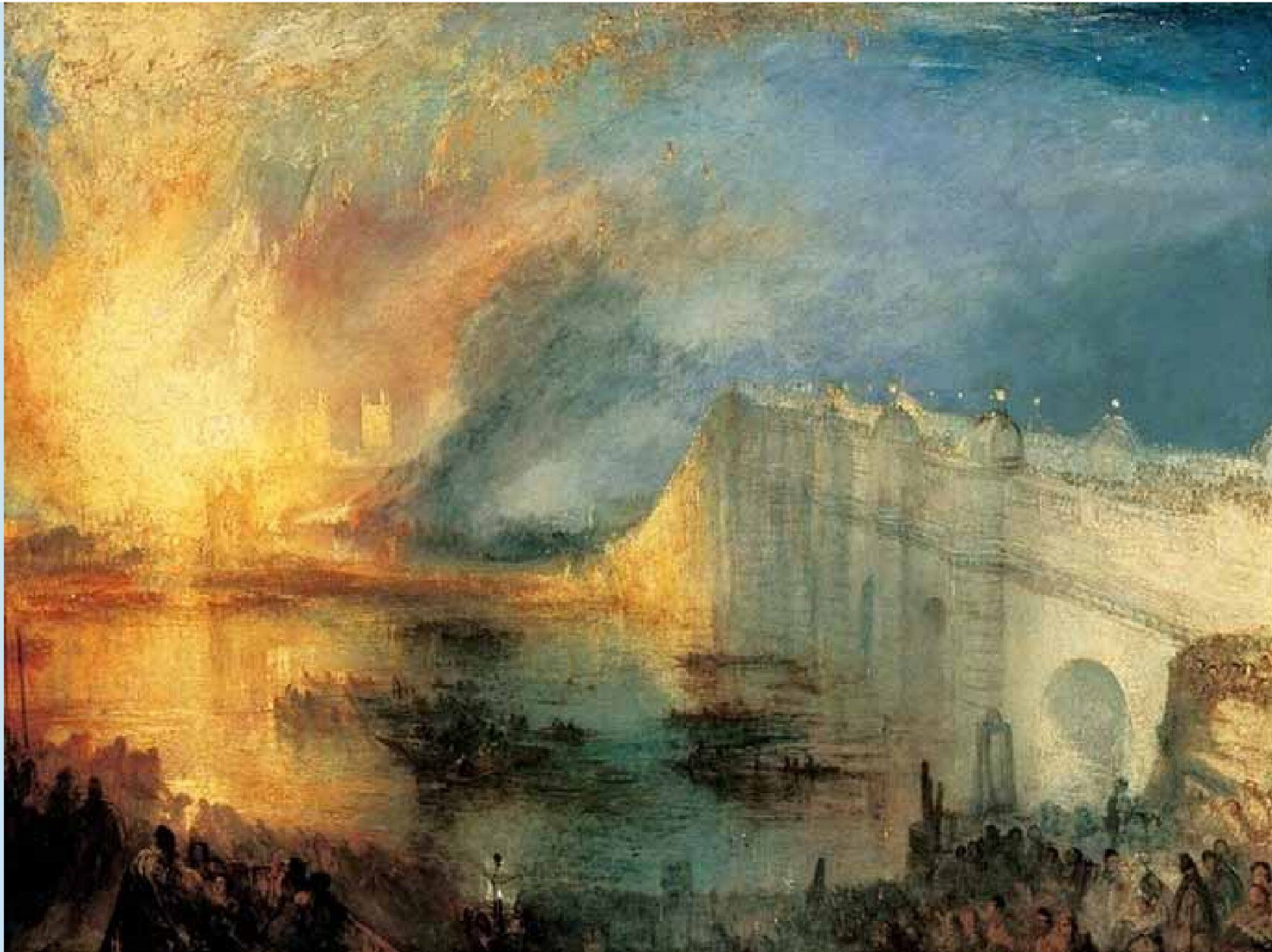
Our eyes are drawn by color. Small areas of vibrant color can be used to balance larger areas of more neutral colors.



Paul Gauguin
*Femmes de
Tahiti OR Sur
la plage
(Tahitian
Women OR On
the Beach) 1891*

Balance through Eye Direction

Your eye can be led to a certain point in a picture depending on how the elements are arranged. If the people in a picture are looking in a certain direction, your eye will be led there as well. Elements in a picture, such as triangles or arrows, will also lead your eye to look to a certain point and maintain the balance of a picture.



Joseph Mallord Turner. *The Burning of the House of Parliament*

C. 1835. Oil on Canvas. 36X48". Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Sakai Hoitsu. *Summer Rain*, one of a pair of folding screens.
Edo Period, late 18th- early 19th c. Color on silver paper. Tokyo National
Museum.

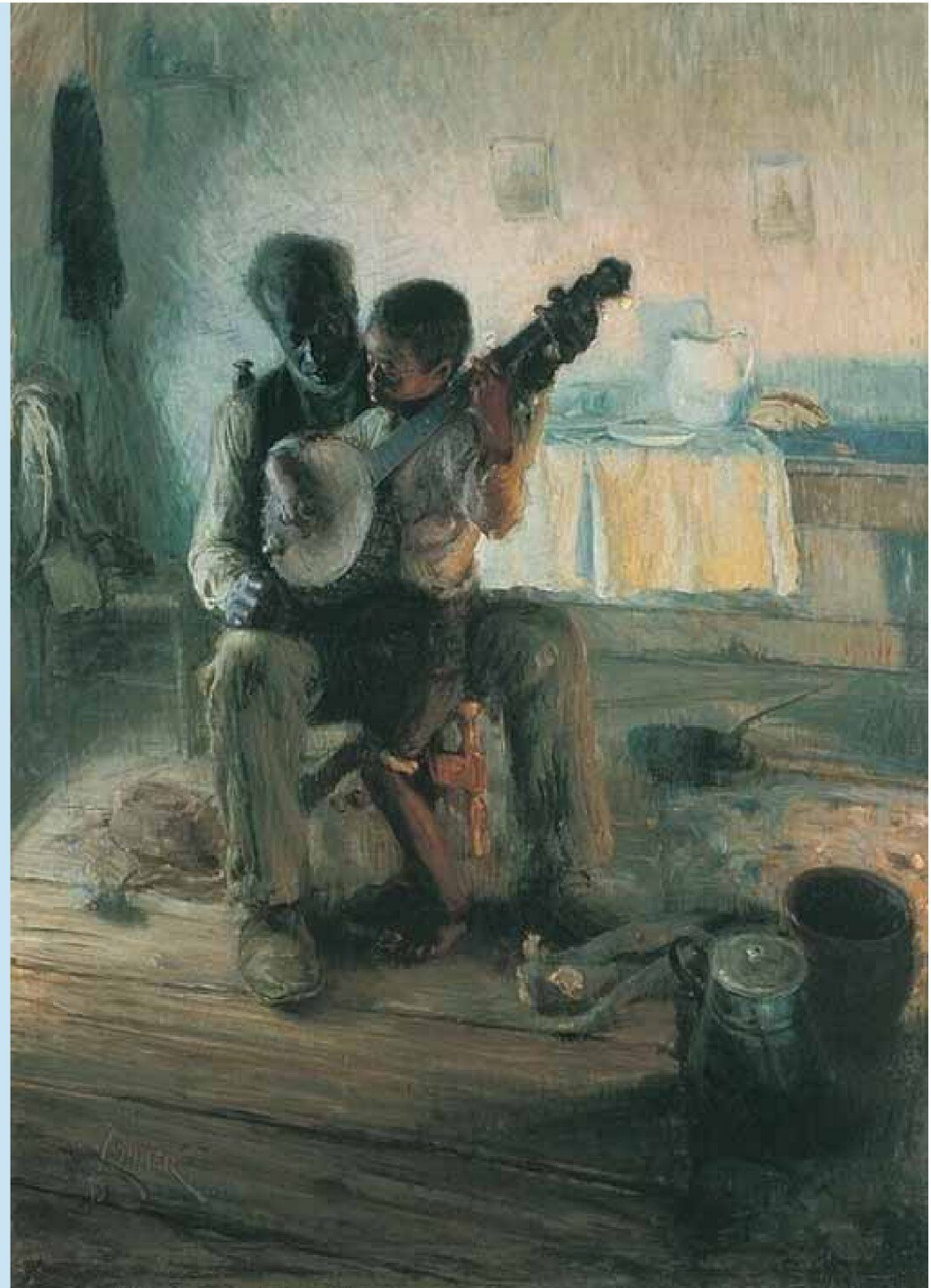
Emphasis and Subordination

Emphasis: The viewer's attention will be centered more on certain parts of the composition than on others.

Focal Point: A specific spot to which one's attention is directed.

Subordination: A less visually interesting area.

Henry Ossawa Tanner.
The Banjo Lesson. 1893. Oil on
Canvas, 49X35". Hampton
University Museum.





Francisco de Goya. *Executions of the Third of May, 1808.* 1814-15. Oil on Canvas
8'9"X13'4". Museo del Prado, Madrid.



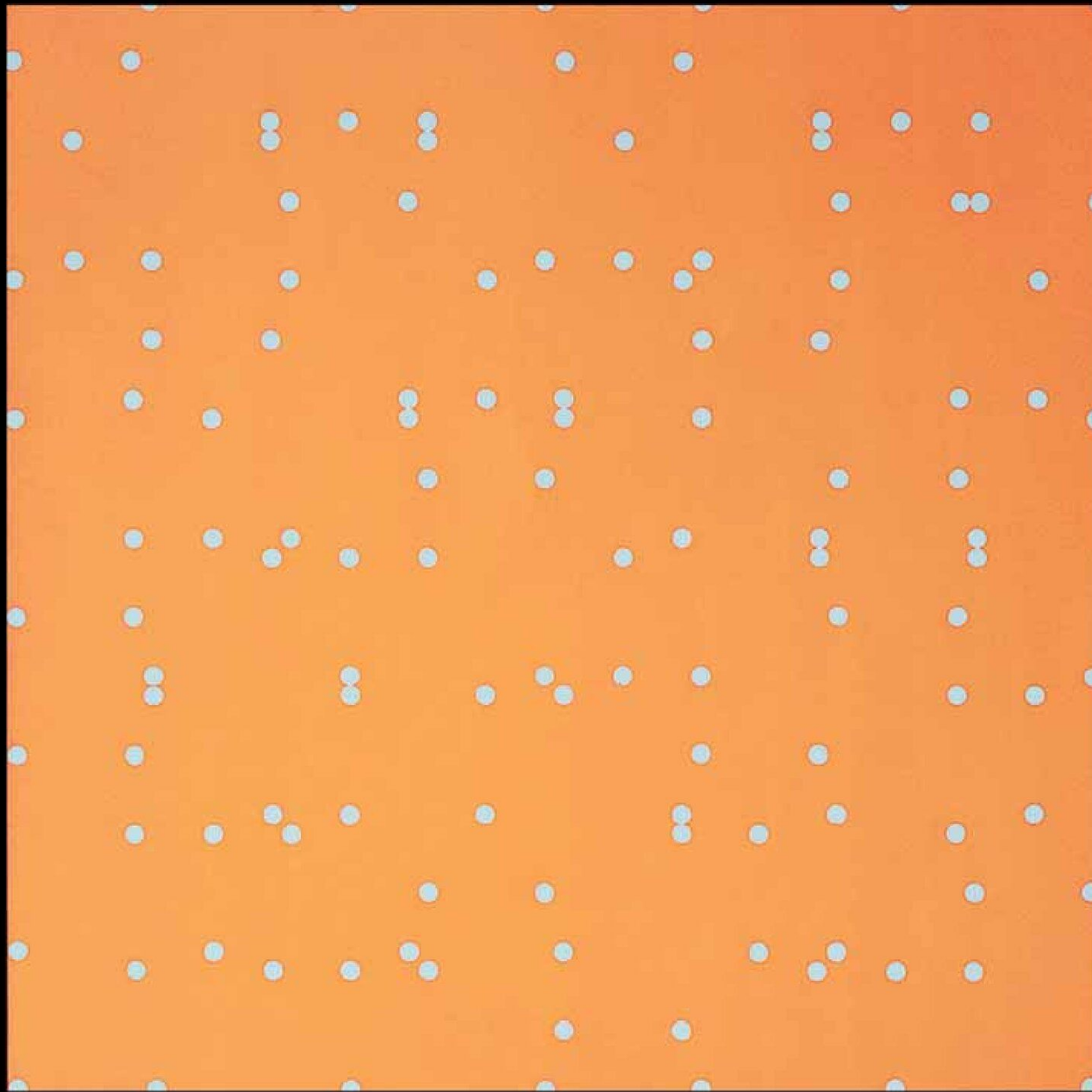
Francisco de Goya. *Executions of the Third of May, 1808. Detail.* 1814-15. Oil on Canvas 8'9"X13'4". Museo del Prado, Madrid.



**Francisco de Goya. *Executions
of the Third of May, 1808.***

Detail. 1814-15. Oil on Canvas
8'9"X13'4". Museo del Prado,
Madrid.

A work
of art
can be
afocal



Larry Poons. *Orange Crush*. 1963. 80 x 80 in.

Proportion and Scale

Scale

Size in relation to “normal” or constant size.

Proportion

Size relationships between parts of a whole or between two or more items perceived as a unit; also, the size relationship between an object and its surroundings.

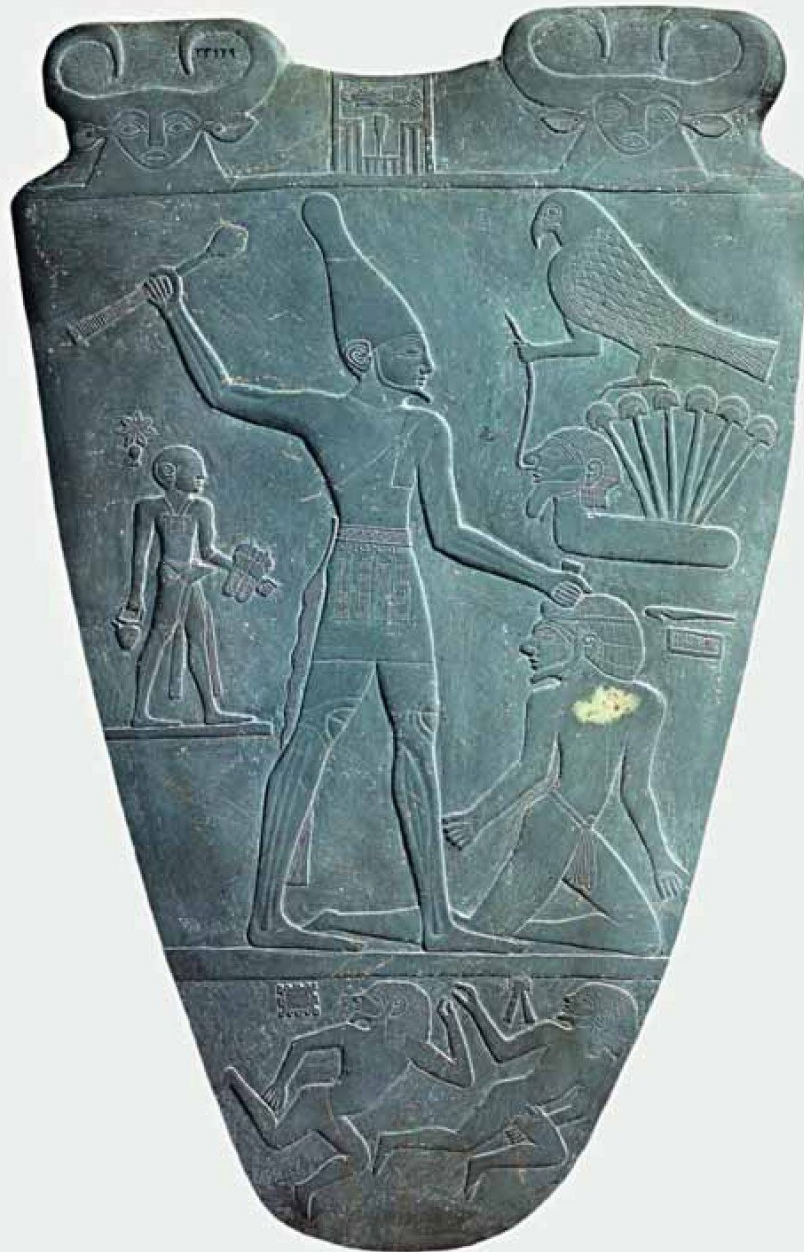


A royal altar to the hand (ikegobo). Benin, 18th c.
Brass, height 18".
The British Museum

Hierarchical Scale:

The representation of more important figures as larger than less important figures.





Palette of King Narmer (back)

From Hierakonpolis, Egypt,
 Predynastic, ca. 3000–2920 BCE.
 Slate, approx. 2' 1" high.
 Egyptian Museum, Cairo.



Palette of King Narmer (front)
 from Hierakonpolis, Egypt,
 Predynastic, ca. 3000–2920 BCE.
 Slate, approx. 2' 1" high.
 Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

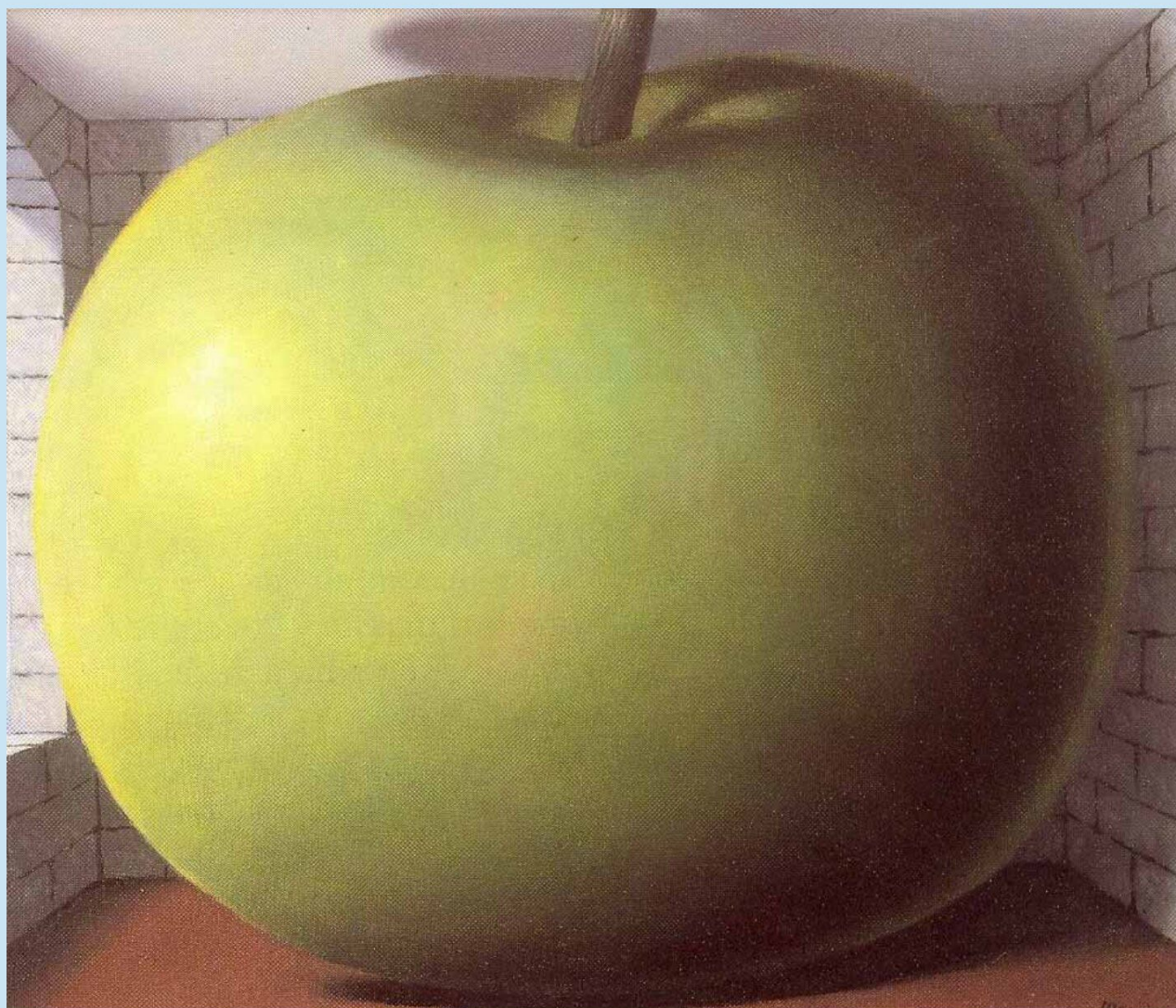
**Palette of King
Narmer (front)**
Detail



Claes Oldenburg
Clothespin, 1976
Cor-Ten and
stainless steels
height 45'
Centre Square
Plaza, Philadelphia

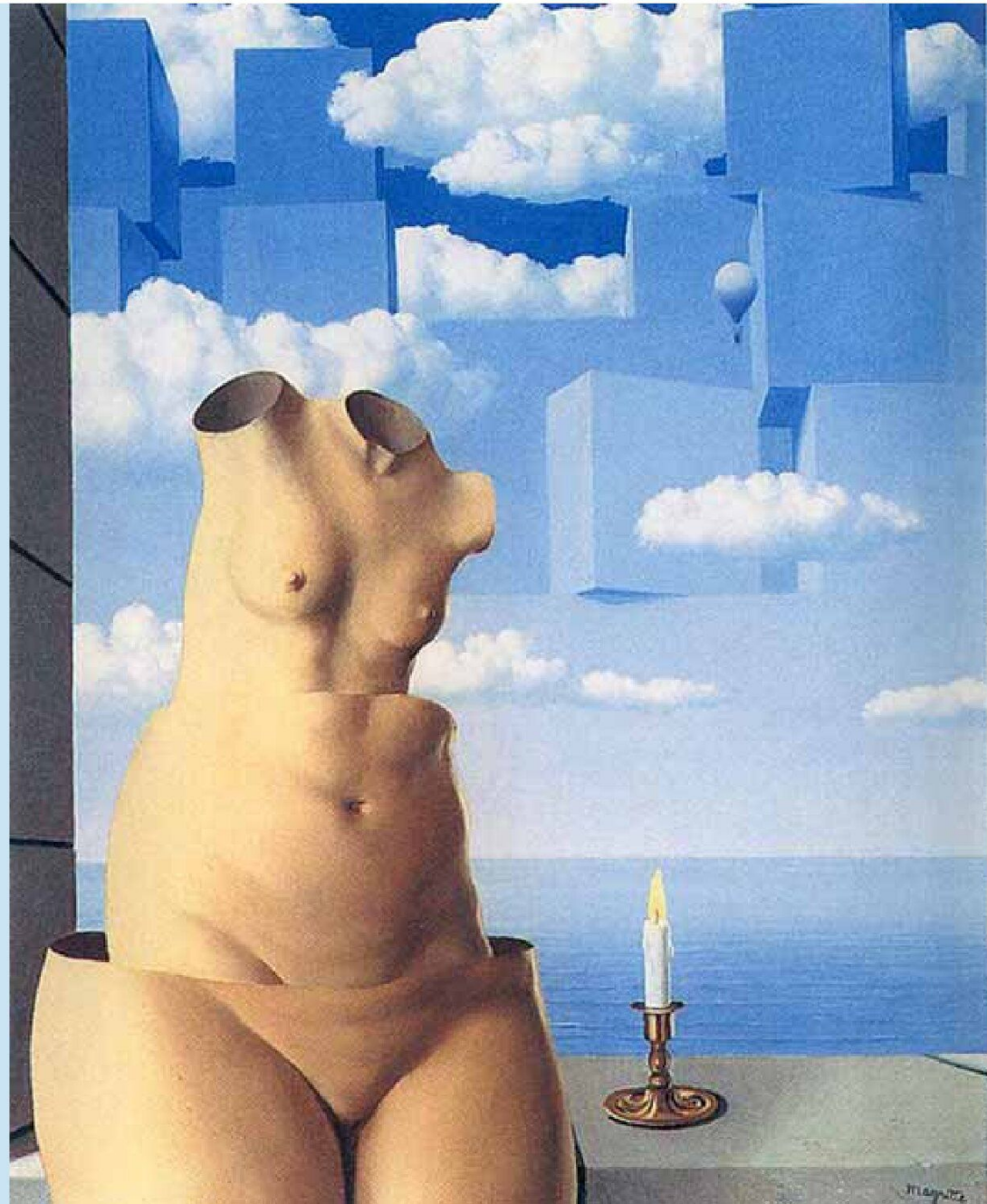


**Claes Oldenburg and
Coosje van Bruggen.**
Plantoir. 2001. Stainless
steel, aluminum, plastic;
height 23'11"



René Magritte. *The Listening Room*, 1958.

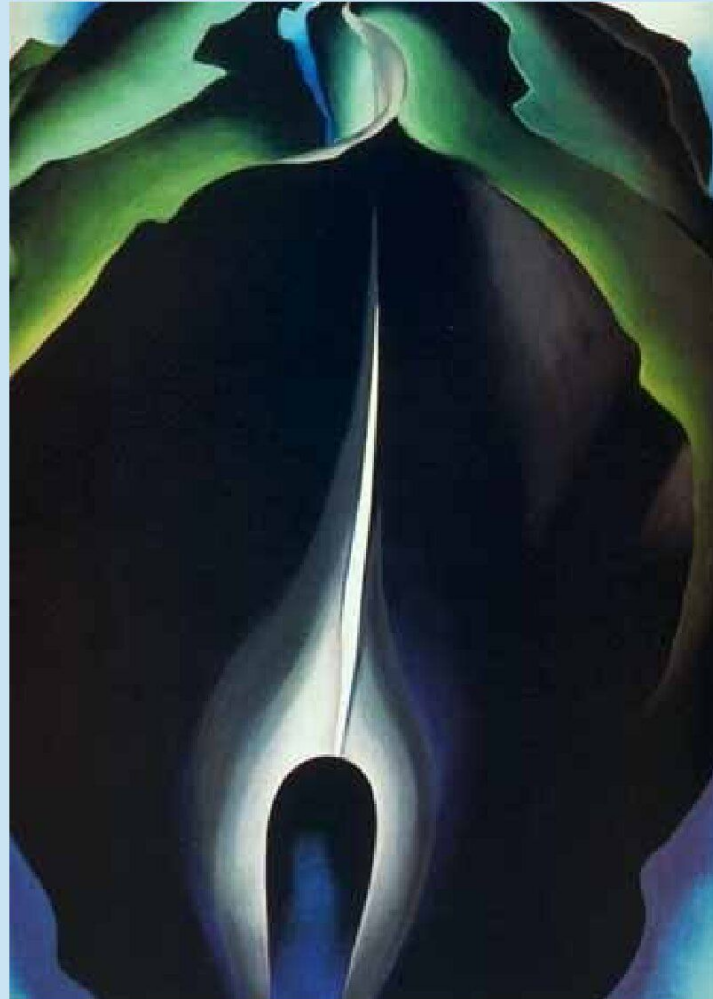
Rene Magritte. *Delusions of Grandeur II.*
1948. Oil on Canvas, 39x32"



"I'll paint what the flower means to me-but I'll paint it big and people will be surprised into taking time to look at it." Georgia O'Keeffe.



Georgia O'Keeffe. *Jack-in-the-Pulpit No. V*. 1930. Oil on Canvas.

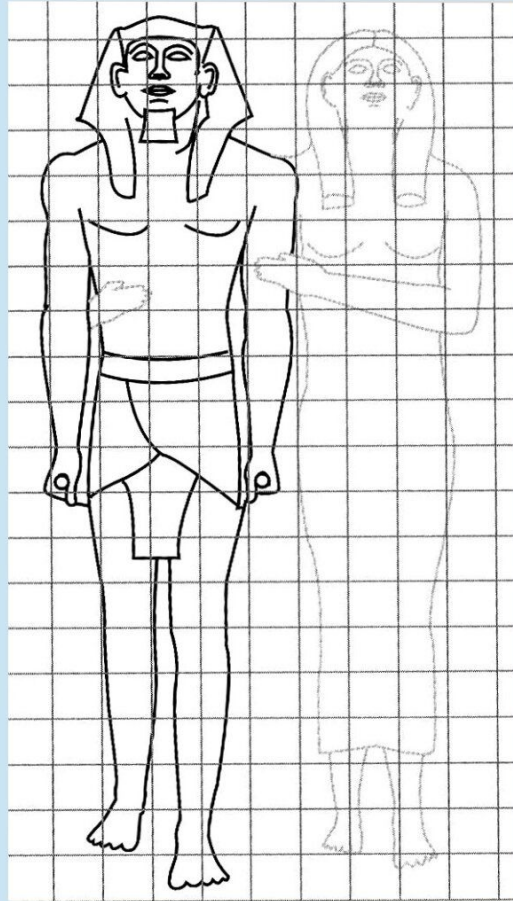


Georgia O'Keeffe. *Jack-in-the-Pulpit No. IV*, 1930. Oil on canvas, 101.6 x 76.2 cm

El Greco. *Resurrection*.
c. 1600-05. Oil on Canvas,
9X4'. Museo del Prado, Madrid



The Egyptian
Canon (system
of proportions)



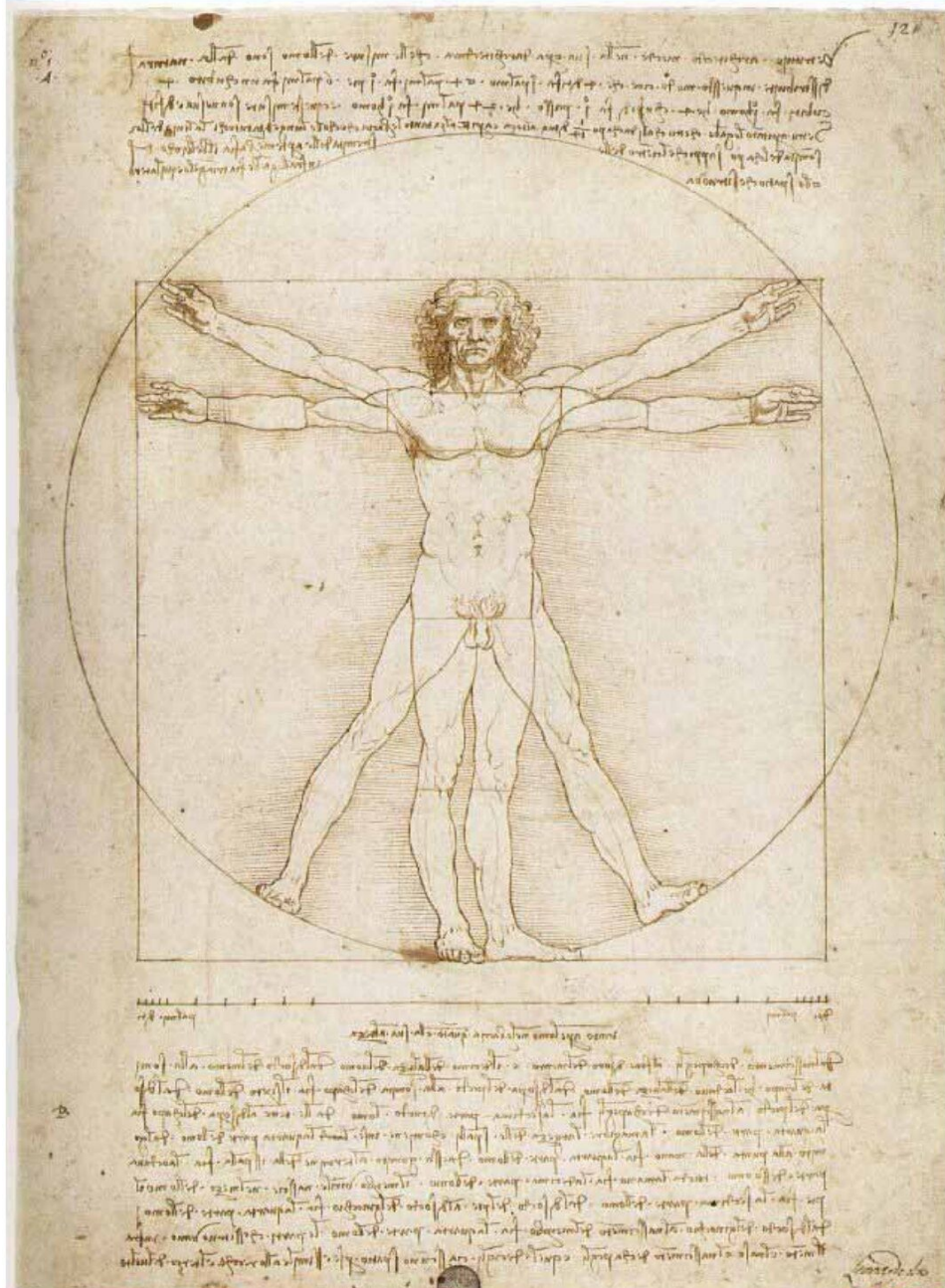
Menkaure and Queen Khamerernebtj (?)
from Gizeh, Egypt, Dynasty IV, ca. 2490–2472
BCE. Graywacke, approx. 4' 6 1/2" high.
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Polykleitos, *Doryphoros (Spear Bearer)*.

Roman marble copy from Pompeii, Italy, after a bronze original of ca. 450–440 BCE, 6' 11" high. Museo Nazionale, Naples.





**Leonardo da Vinci. *Vitruvian Man*.
1485-90. Pen and ink. 13X9"**

The navel is naturally placed in the centre of the human body, and, if in a man lying with his face upward, and his hands and feet extended, from his navel as the centre, a circle be described, it will touch his fingers and toes. It is not alone by a circle, that the human body is thus circumscribed, as may be seen by placing it within a square. For measuring from the feet to the crown of the head, and then across the arms fully extended, we find the latter measure equal to the former; so that lines at right angles to each other, enclosing the figure, will form a square.

Vitruvius (Roman Architect, 1st c. BCE)

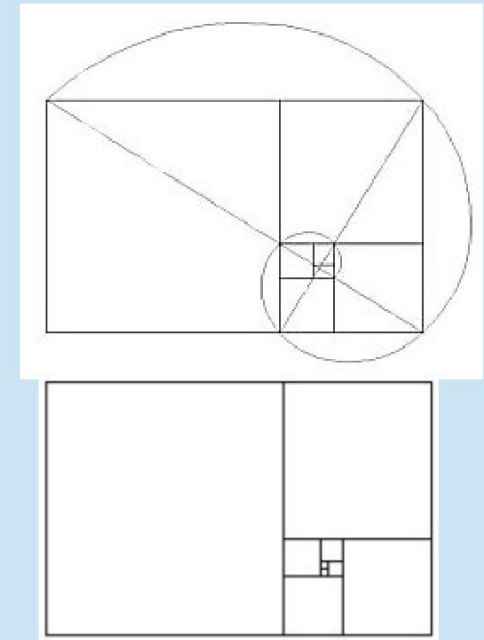
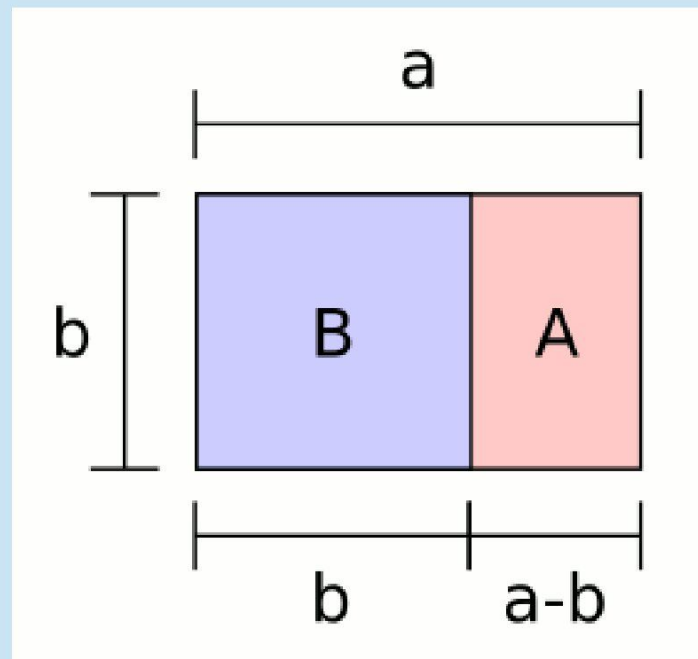
Golden Section: A mathematical proportion where the ratio between a small section (A-B) and a larger section (B-C) is equal to the ratio between the larger section (B-C) and both sections (A-C) put together.



Golden Ratio - 1.61803....:1 (Phi, pronounced "fee")

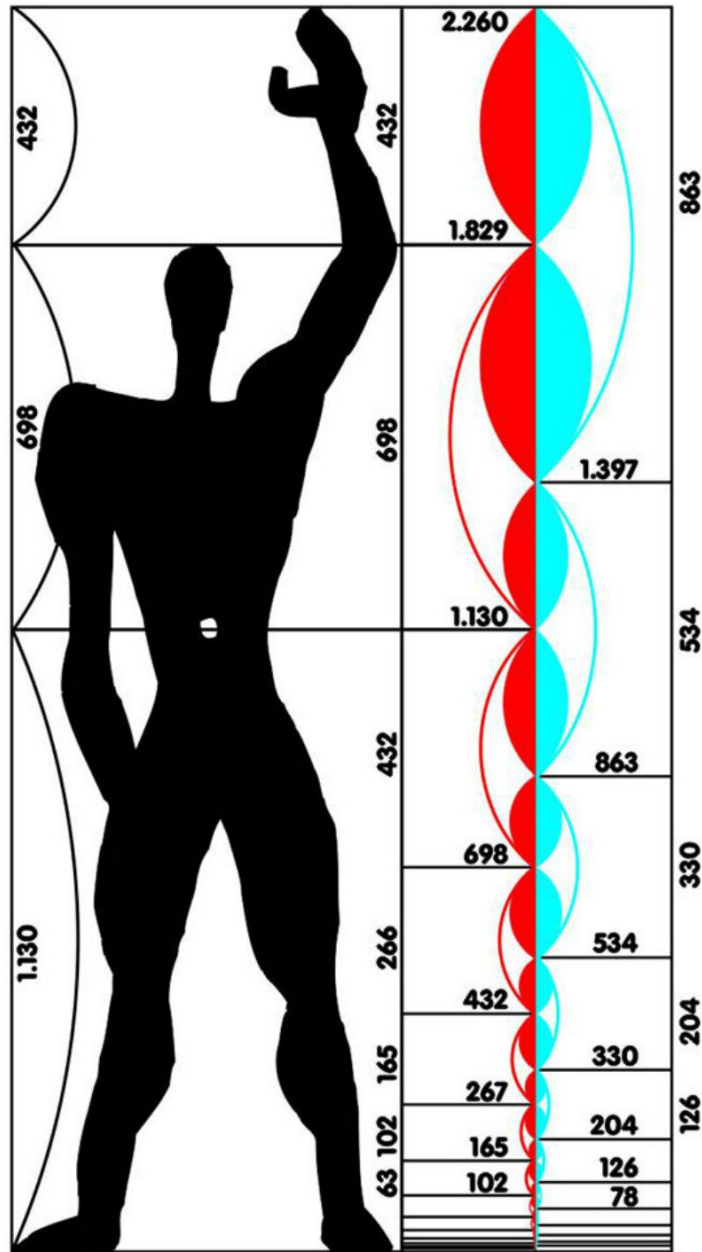
A Golden Rectangle is a rectangle with dimensions which are of the golden ratio, $1 : \phi$ (i.e., 1.61803...). It has been claimed to be the most aesthetically pleasing shape of a rectangle.

The large rectangle BA is a golden rectangle. If we remove square B, what is left, A, is another golden rectangle.



Donald in Mathmagic Land:

<http://youtu.be/YVODhFLe0mw>



Le Corbusier, *The Modulor*



The **Modulor** is a scale of proportions devised by Le Corbusier. He used the golden ratio in his Modular system for the scale of architectural proportion.

Can you find the Golden Ratio?



IKTINOS and KALLIKRATES, **Parthenon**, the Temple of Athena Parthenos
Reconstructed model of the west facade. Acropolis, Athens, Greece, 447–438 BCE.



IKTINOS and KALLIKRATES, **Parthenon**, the Temple of Athena Parthenos Acropolis, Athens, Greece, 447–438 BCE.

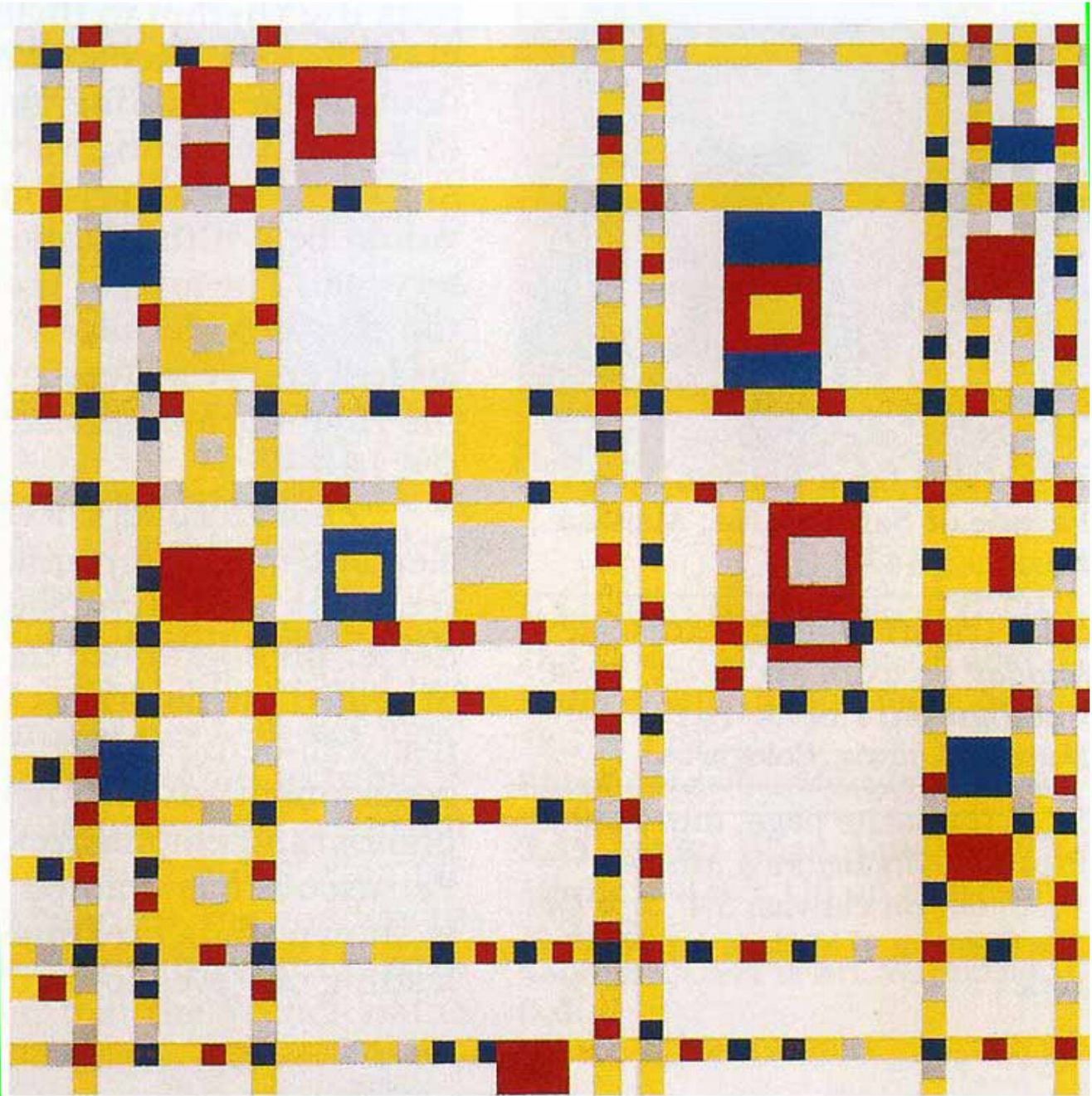
Rhythm

Rhythm is the repetition or alternation of elements, usually shapes, often with defined intervals between them. Rhythm can create a sense of movement, and can establish pattern and texture. There are many different kinds of rhythm, such as random rhythm, regular rhythm and alternating rhythm.

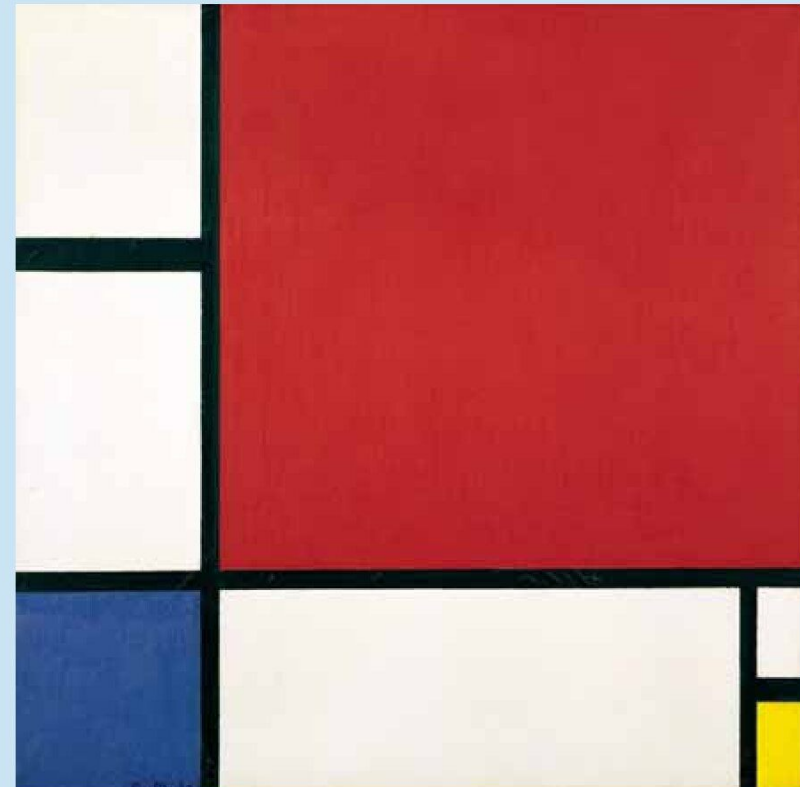
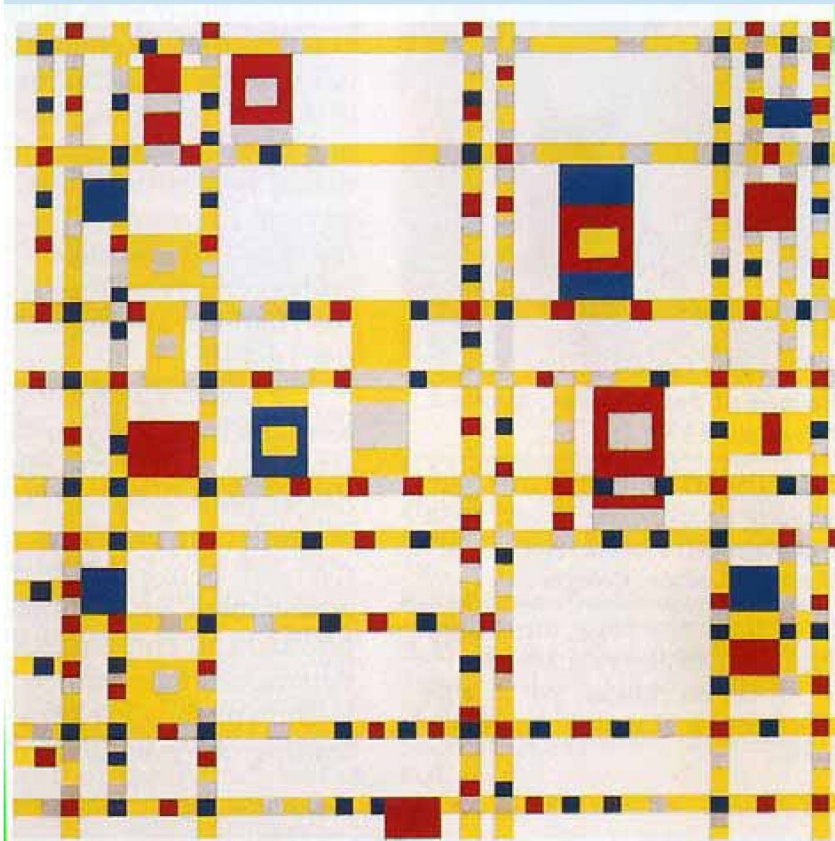
Piet Mondrian,
Broadway Boogie-
Woogie, 1942-43.

Oil on Canvas,
50X50". Museum of
Modern Art, NY

Boogie-woogie is a
style of piano-
based blues that
became very
popular in the late
1930s and early
1940s.



Piet Mondrian, *Broadway Boogie-Woogie*, 1942-43. Oil on Canvas, 50X50". Museum of Modern Art, NY

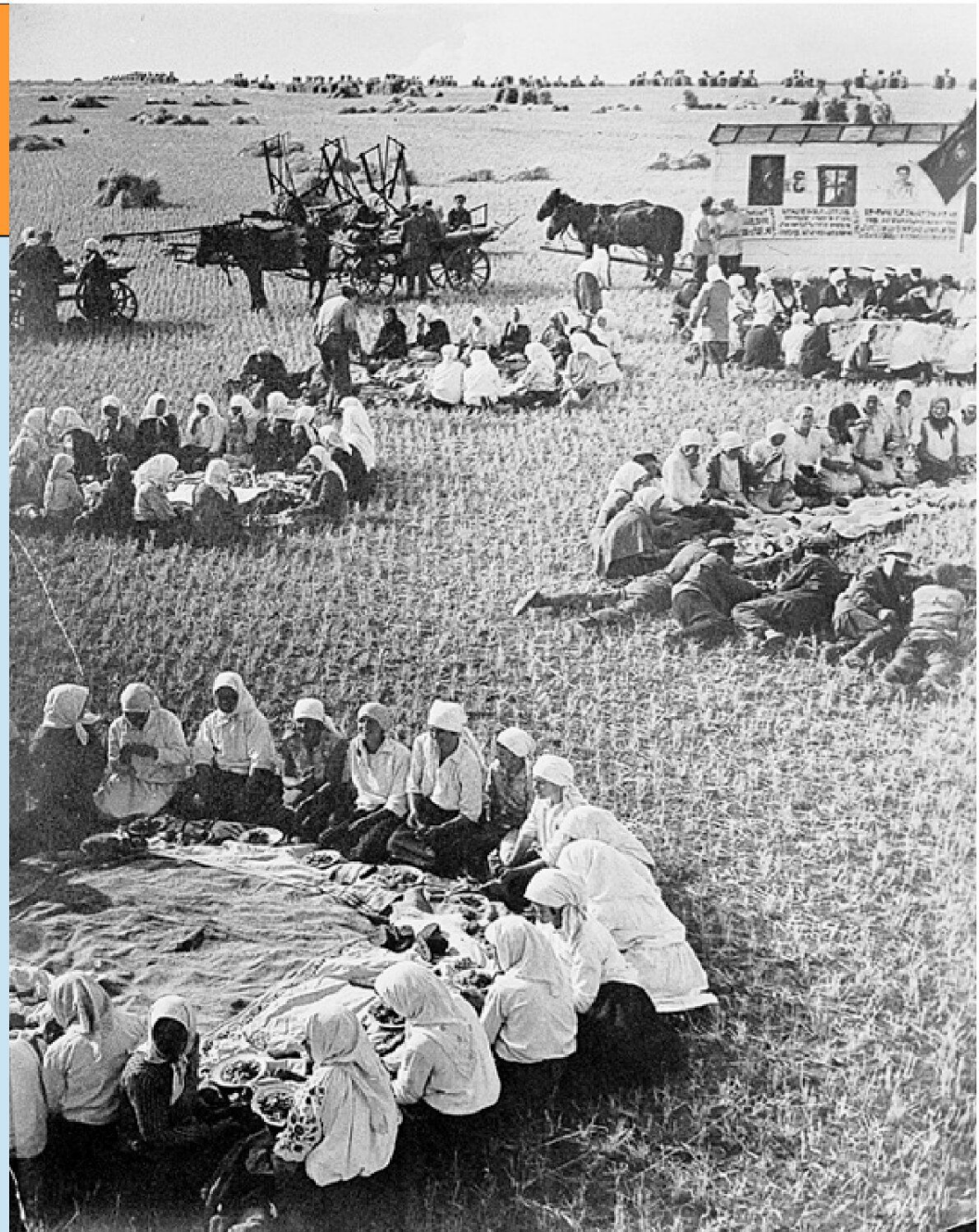


Piet Mondrian, *Composition with Red, Blue and Yellow*, 1930, oil on canvas, 50.8 x 50.8 cm

Leon Battista Alberti.
Façade of Sant'Andrea,
Mantua. Designed 1470



Geogij Petruscow,
Midday Break in the Fields,
1934.



The Viewpoint



Pieter Bruegel the Elder. *The Corn Harvest (August)*.
1565. Oil on panel. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA .





Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Hunters in the Snow

1565. Oil on Panel. H 117 cm, W 162 cm



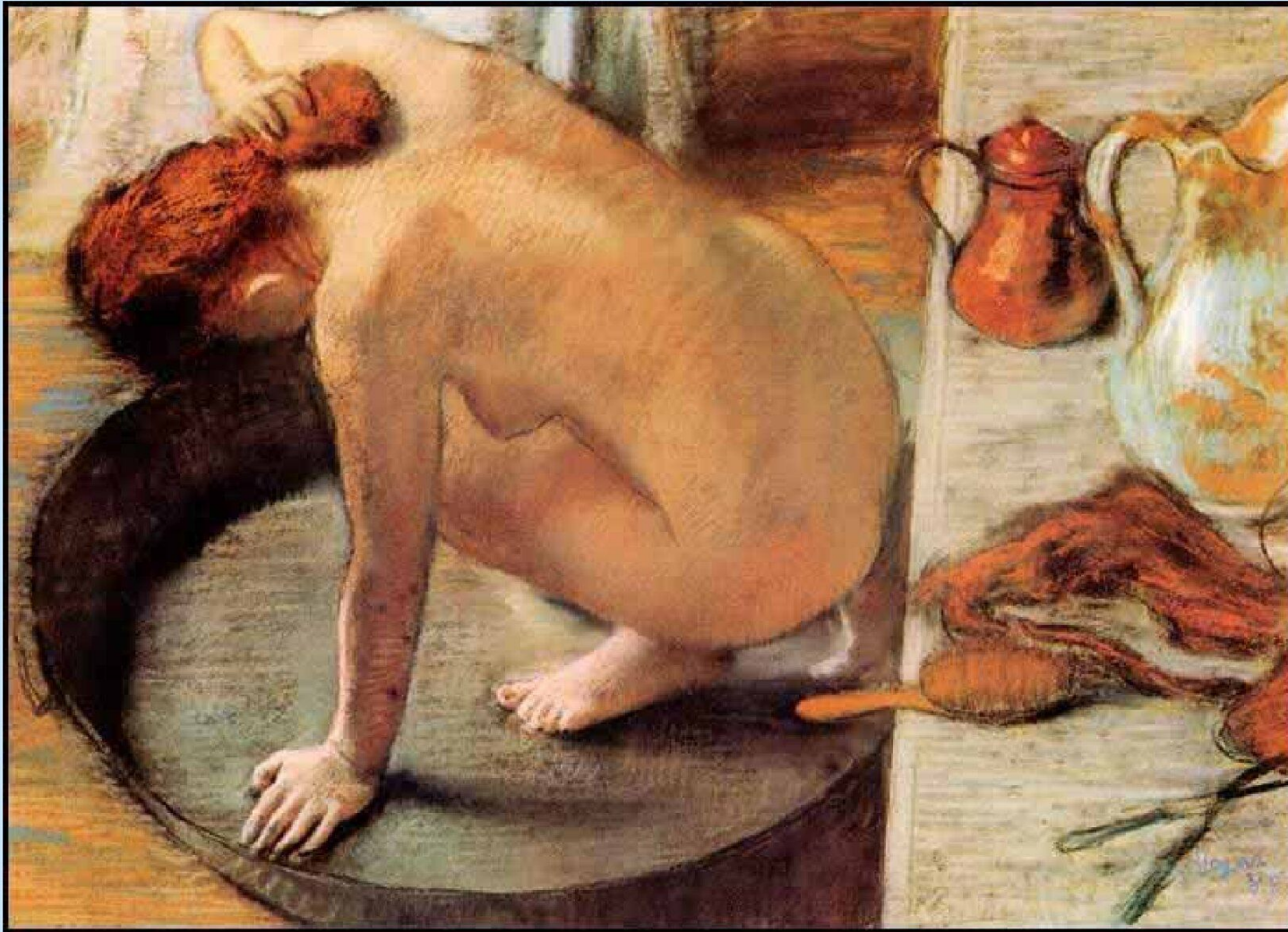
Pissarro, *Boulevard Montmartre: afternoon, sunshine.*
1897. 74 x 92.8", The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg



Pissarro. ***Boulevard Montmartre: rainy weather, afternoon.*** 1897.
52.5 x 66"



Gustave Caillebotte. *The Floor Scrapers*
1875. Oil on canvas 102x146cm. Musee d'Orsay



Degas. *The Tub*, 1886. Pastel Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

Antonio da Correggio.
Assumption of the Virgin
1526-1530. Fresco.
Cathedral of Parma

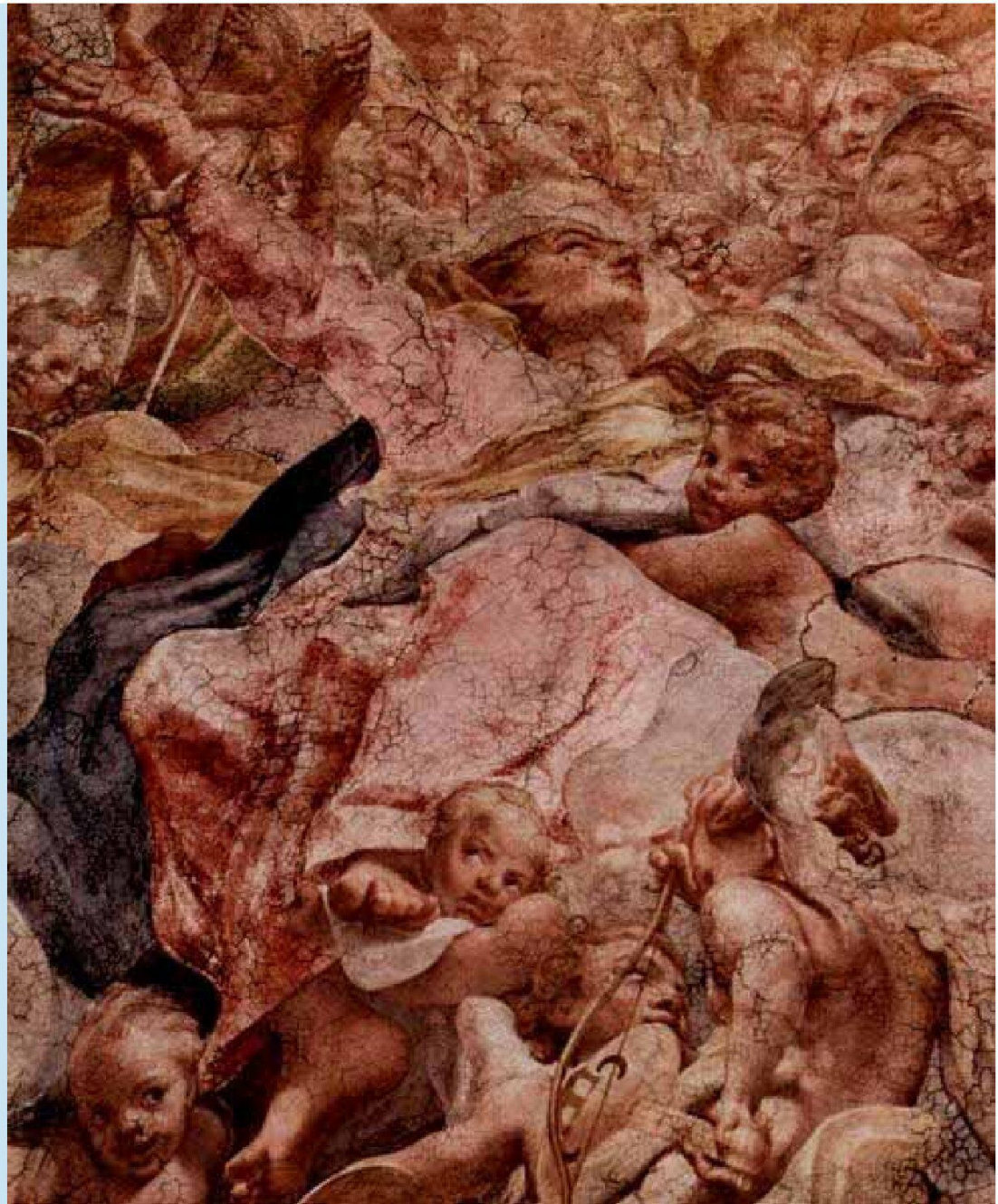
Di sotto in sù means
"seen from below" or
"from below, upward"
in Italian.
A type of illusionism in
painting, achieved by
means of sharp
foreshortening, in
which the figures and
architecture seem to be
high above and
receding from the
spectator.



Antonio da Correggio.
Assumption of the Virgin
1526-1530. Fresco.
Cathedral of Parma



Antonio da Correggio.
Assumption of the Virgin.
Detail: Virgin and angles.
1526-1530. Fresco.
Cathedral of Parma



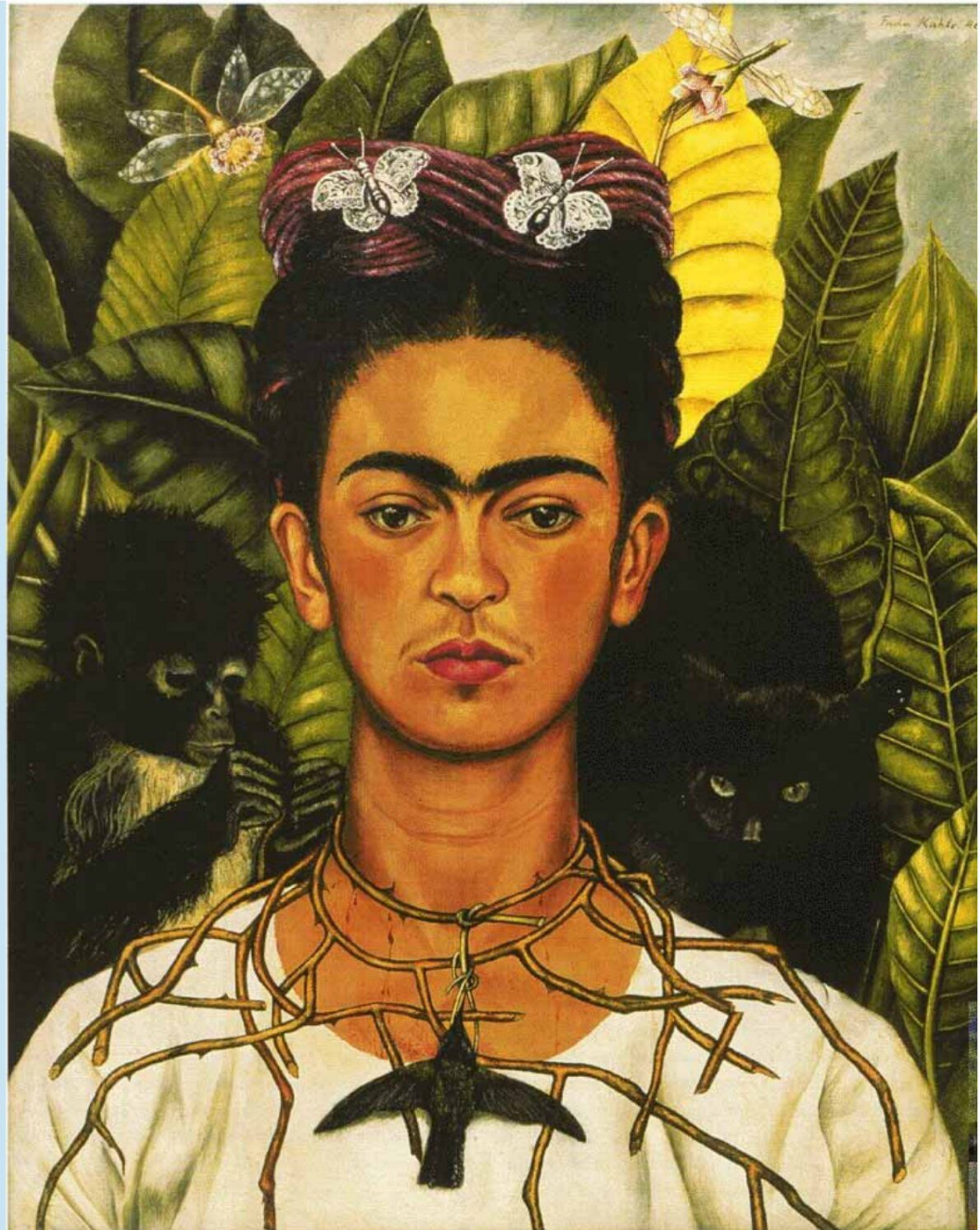


Peter Paul Rubens. *The Sacrifice Of Isaac*. 1620

Sketch for the Jesuit ceiling. Oil on panel 19 3/8 x 25 3/8



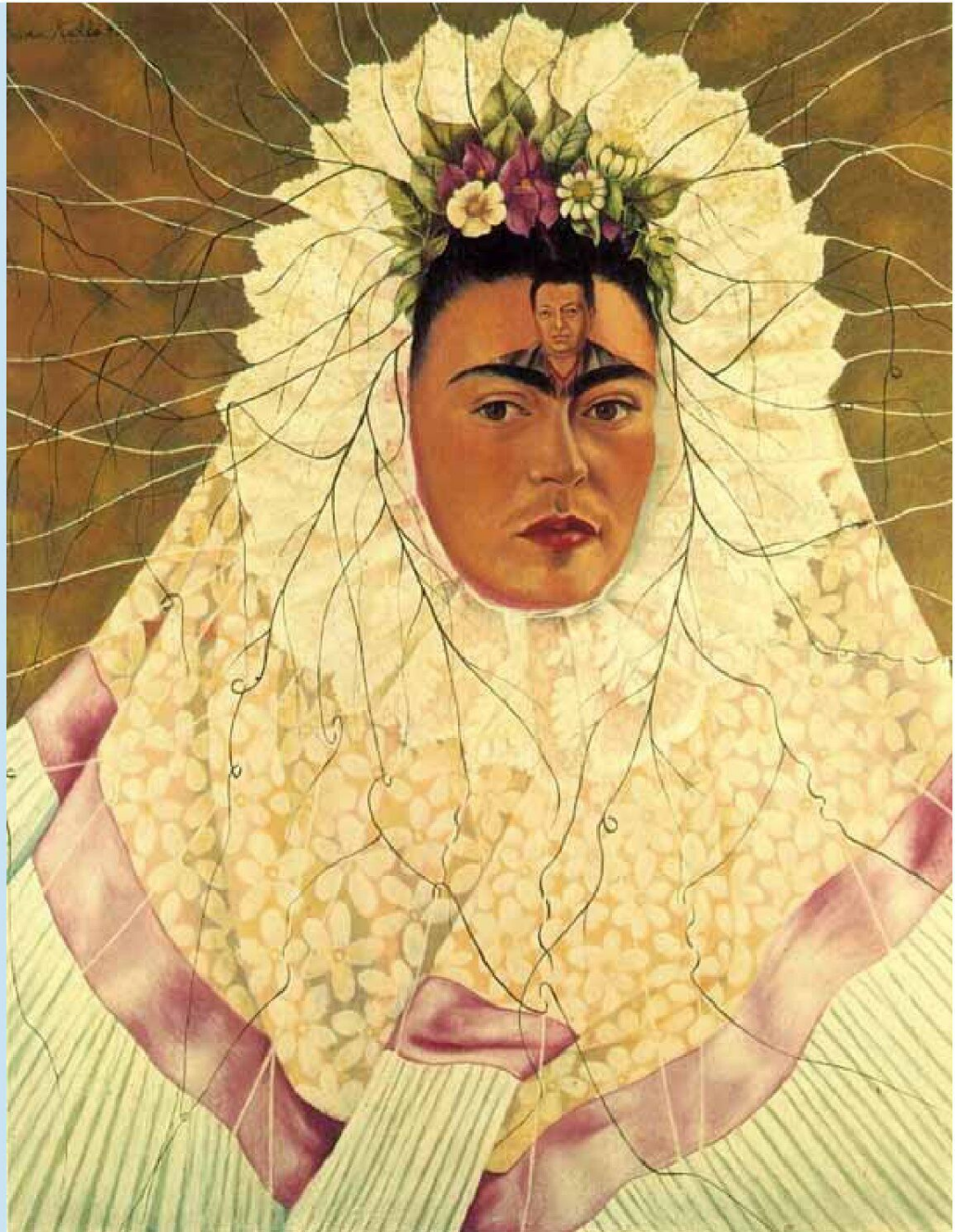
Frida Kahlo. *Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird*. Oil on canvas. 1940
24 1/2" x 18 3/4".
University of Texas, Austin

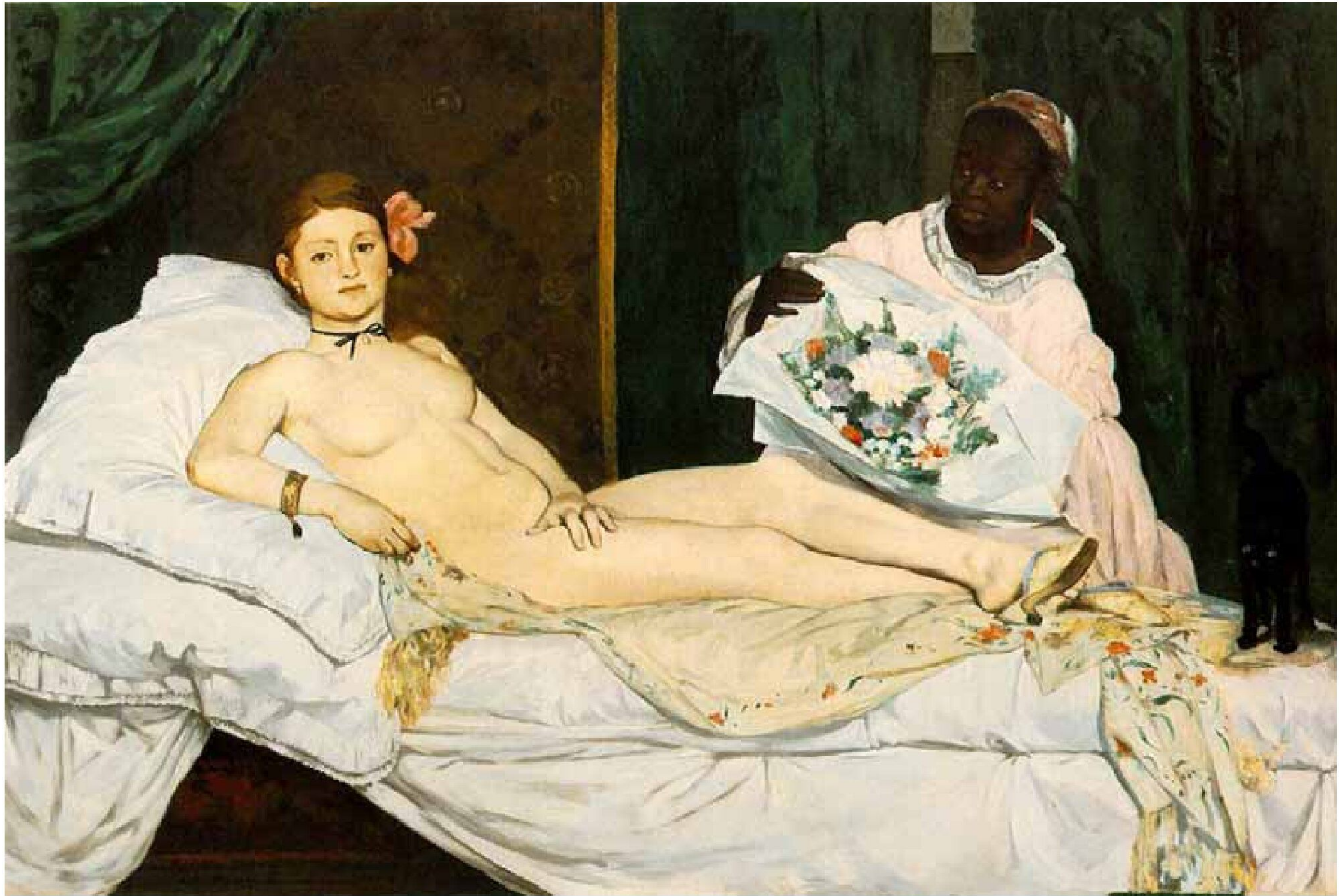


Kahlo Frida
Self Portrait with
Monkeys
Oil on canvas 1943



Frida Kahlo. *Diego in my Thoughts*. 1943 Oil on masonite. 11 5/8" X 8 13/16"





Edouard Manet, *Olympia*. 1865. Oil on canvas. 1 3/8 x 74 3/4". Musee d'Orsay, Paris



ÉDOUARD MANET,
Olympia, 1863



Titian, *Venus of Urbino*, 1540s

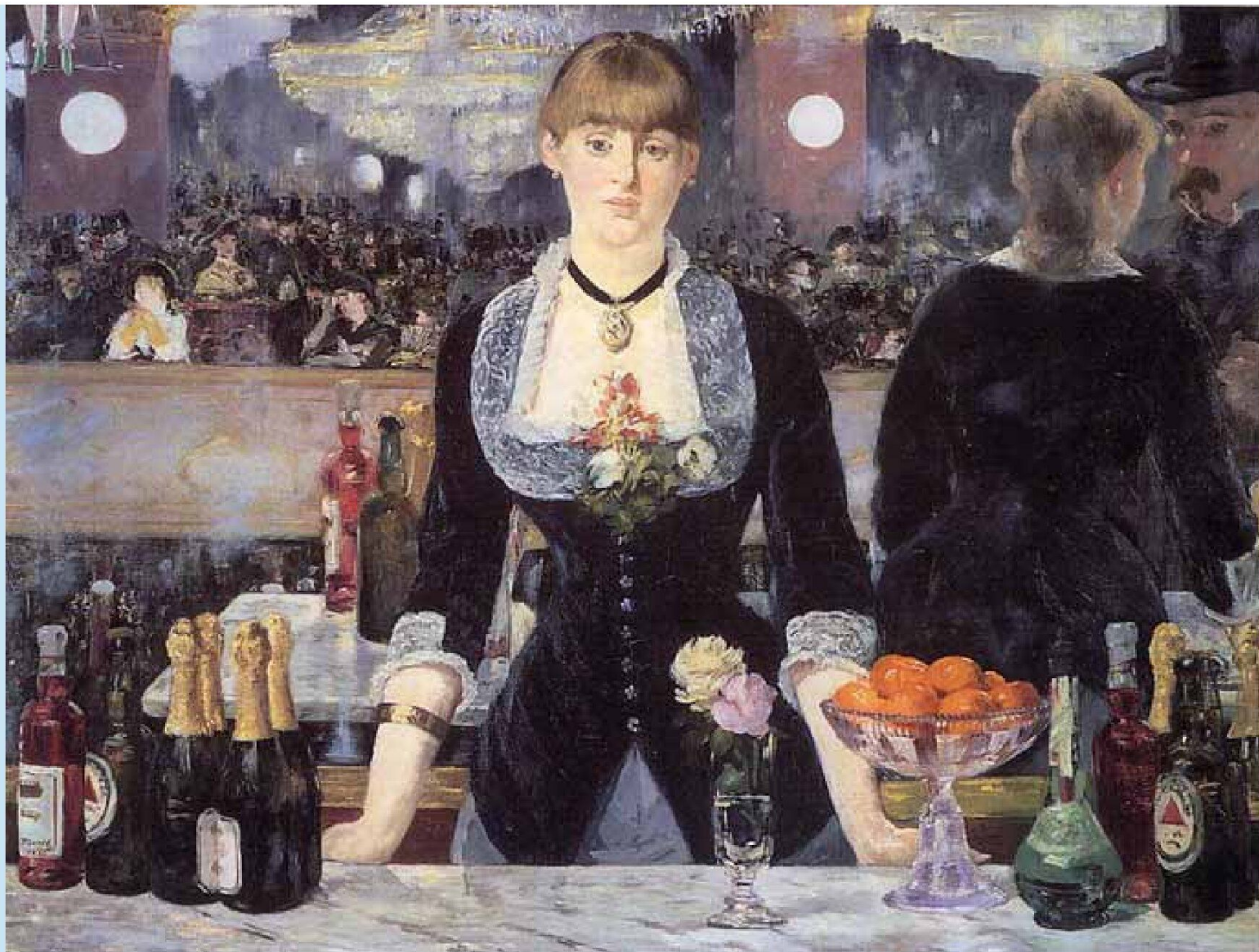


**Ingres, *La Grand Odalisque*,
1814**

Yasumasa Morimura *Portrait (Futago)*, 1988; photograph; chromogenic print with acrylic paint and gel medium, 82 3/4 in. x 118 in.; SFMOMA

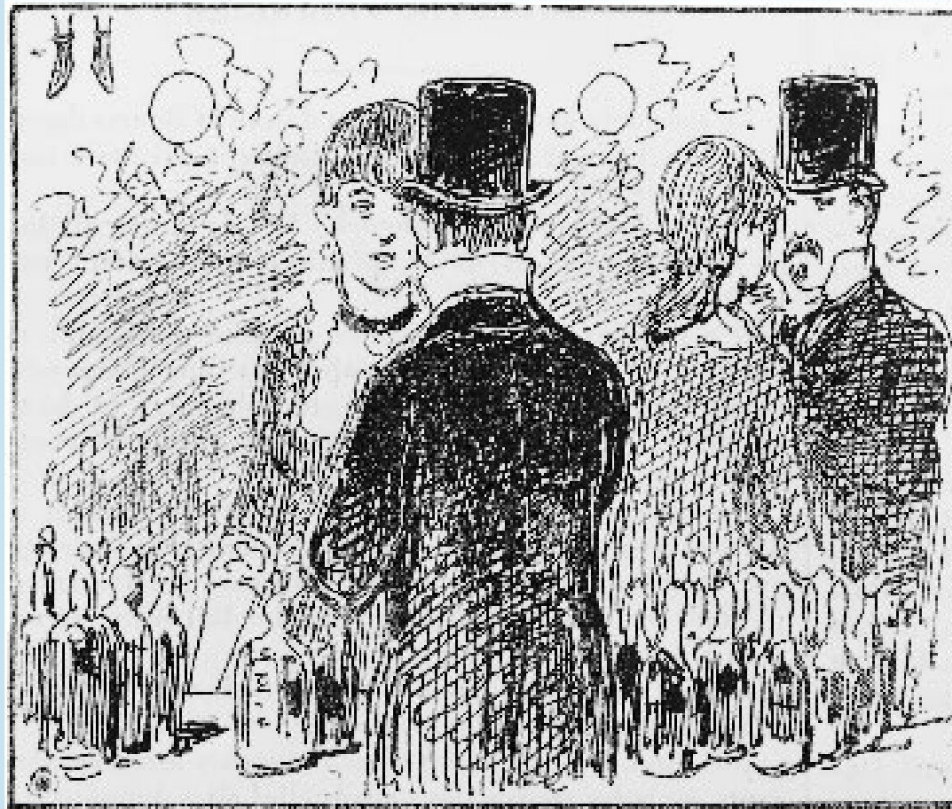


**ÉDOUARD MANET,
Olympia, 1863**



Edouard Manet. *A Bar at the Folies-Bergere*.

1881-82. Oil on Canvas, 37x51".



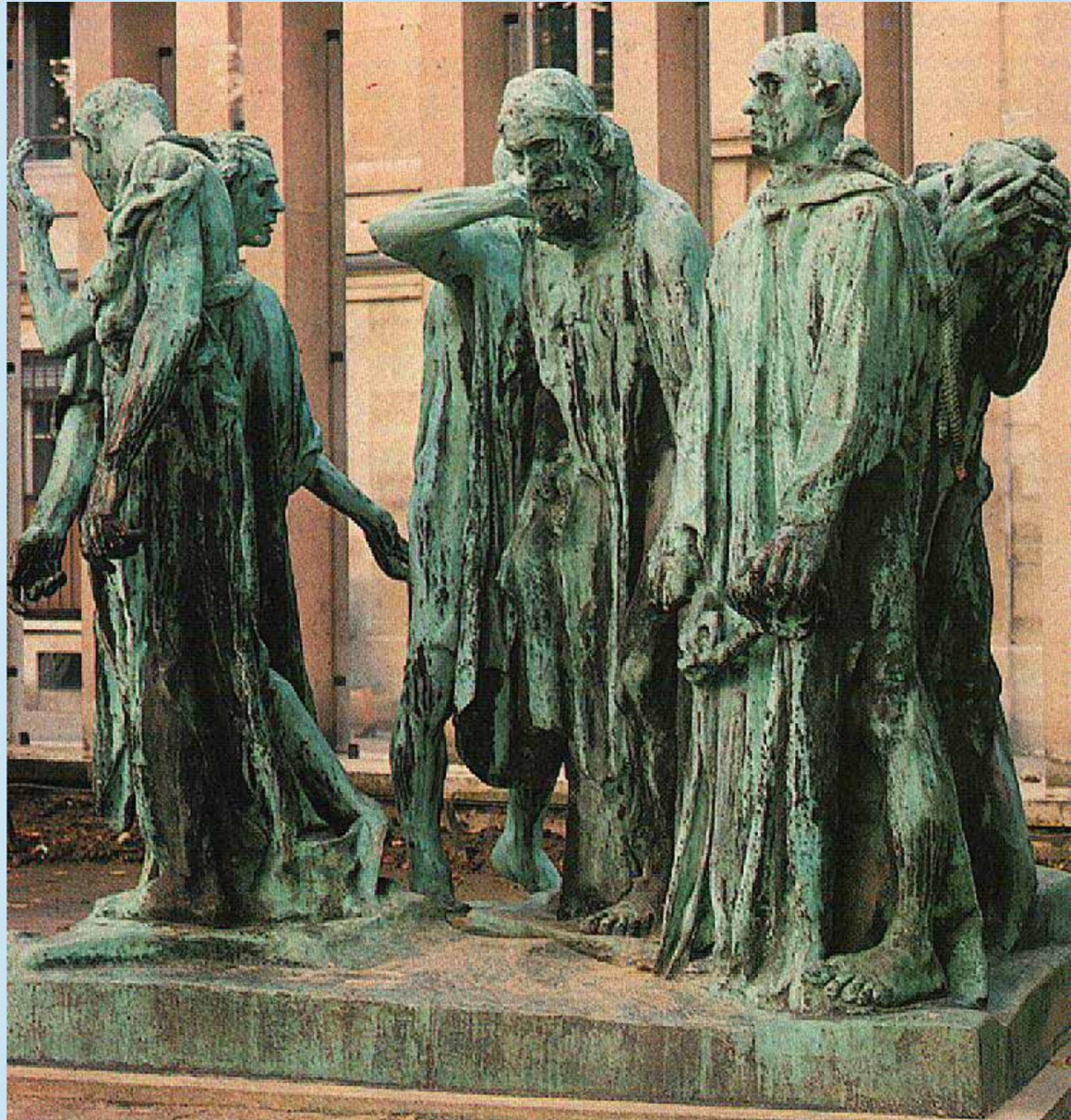
Stop. Edouard Manet, *Une Marchande de Consolation aux Folies-Bergère*. Wood engraving from Le Journal Ausant, May 27, 1882

**Auguste Rodin, *The
Burghers of Calais***

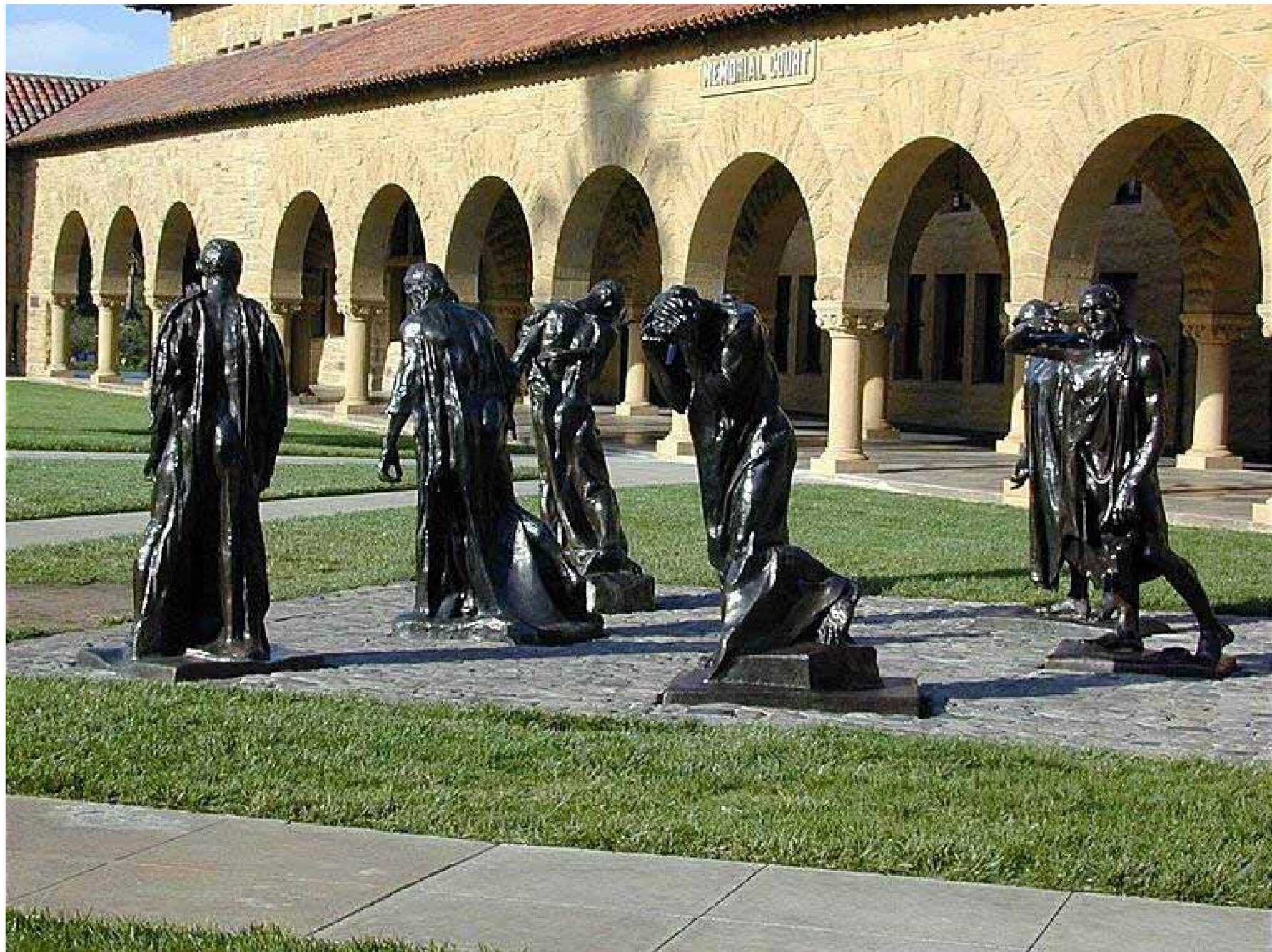
1884-86

Bronze

82 1/2 x 95 x 78 in.



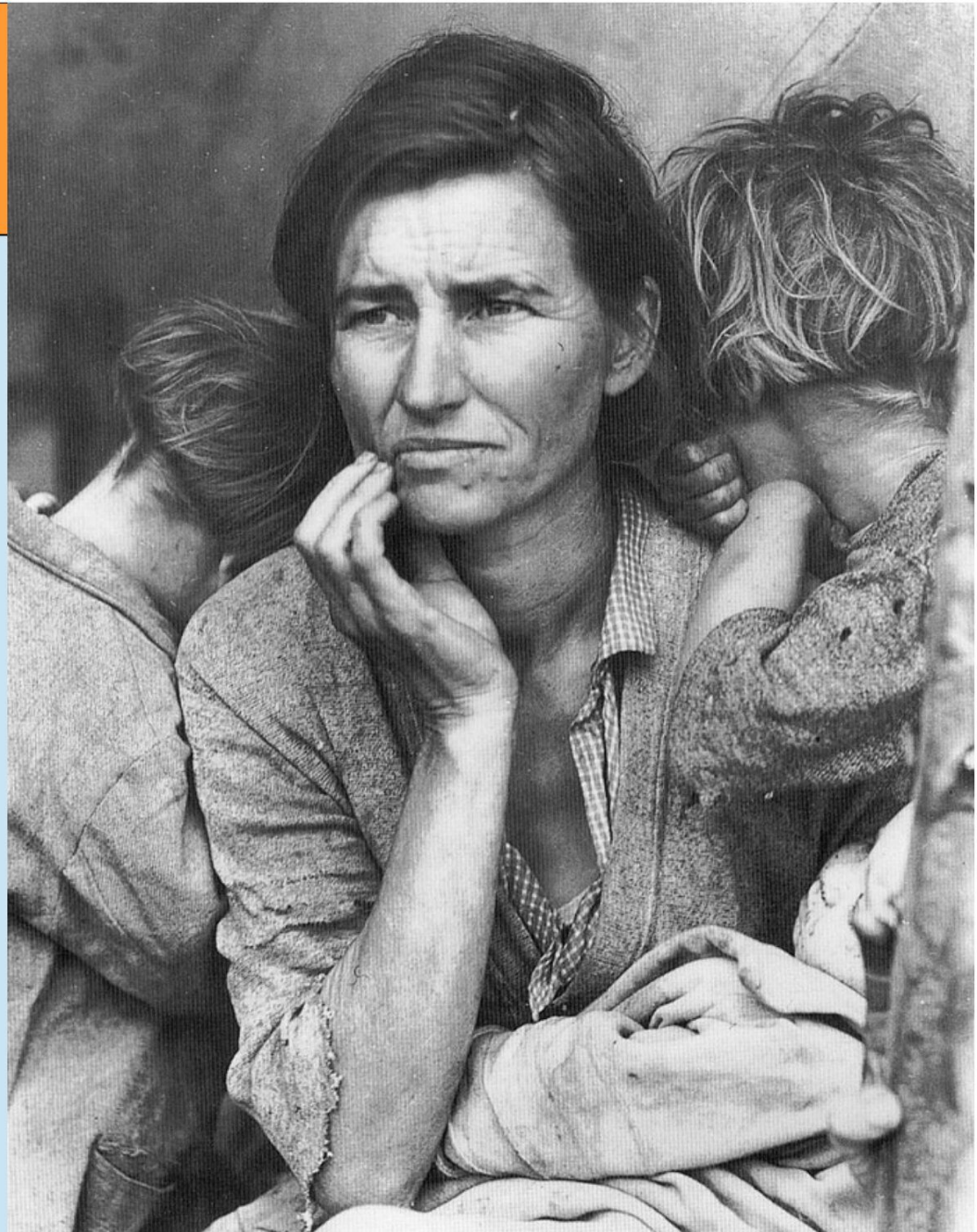








Dorothea Lang. *Migrant Mother*
(Florence Owens Thompson)
1936. Library of Congress,
Washington D.C.



**El Greco. *The Burial of
the Count of Orgaz*,**

1586-88. Oil on canvas,
480 x 360 cm. Santo
Tomé, Toledo

According to the legend,
at the time he was
buried, Saint Stephen
and Saint Augustine
descended in person
from the heavens and
buried him by their own
hands.







