

Key Features of Life in the Middle Ages

- **The Feudal System** -- a system of government involving an exchange of land in return for a pledge of military service
- **The Catholic Church** – a religious institution that shaped people’s lives from birth to death
- **The Manor System** – a system of exchange between a land owner and serfs whereby the land owner promised protection and basic safety and the serfs paid a portion of their crops as rent

Challenges of the 14th Century

- **100 Years War** (1337-1453) -- weakens the feudal system and creates stronger central governments
- **The Great Schism** (1378 – 1417) – confusion and conflict within the Catholic Church as 3 different people claim to be the Pope
- **The Black Plague** (1347+) – disease ravages Europe killing 30 – 50+% of the population, weakens/eliminates serfdom in places



THE RENAISSANCE

What Was the Renaissance?

- It was a change in thinking about the world and the place people occupy in it
- A new philosophy called **HUMANISM** came to dominate people's thinking
 - Humanism emphasizes the importance of human activity instead of the divine, looks to the arts to give voice to the human experience, looks to Greek and Roman learning for inspiration, and considers the individual to be of the utmost importance
 - Began at first among educated elites in Northern Italy
 - Spread to the remainder of Europe over the next few hundred years

How Did This New Outlook Emerge?

- The Crisis of the 14th Century weakened the institutions of the Middle Ages that had dominated Europe from 500 to 1400
 - The Plague kills off 50% of the population of Europe and weakens the Manorial system
 - The 100 Years War strengthens Kings and weakens the Feudal system
 - The Great Schism weakens the power of the Catholic church
- Northern Italy is at the crossroads of Europe and the East making it rich in both money and ideas

Italy in the Renaissance

- The wealthy city states of Italy fought constantly with each other
- They also competed for wealth, to attract the most talented artists and to build the best buildings
- The competition drove their achievements ever higher



Florence: Queen City of the Renaissance

- Florence was the most successful city of the Renaissance
- Most of the major people of Renaissance Italy were either from there or worked there at some point
- Florence was ruled by the powerful Medici family off and on
- Petrarch, Machiavelli, Dante, Michelangelo, and Botticelli are just some of the famous names from this important city



More About Humanism

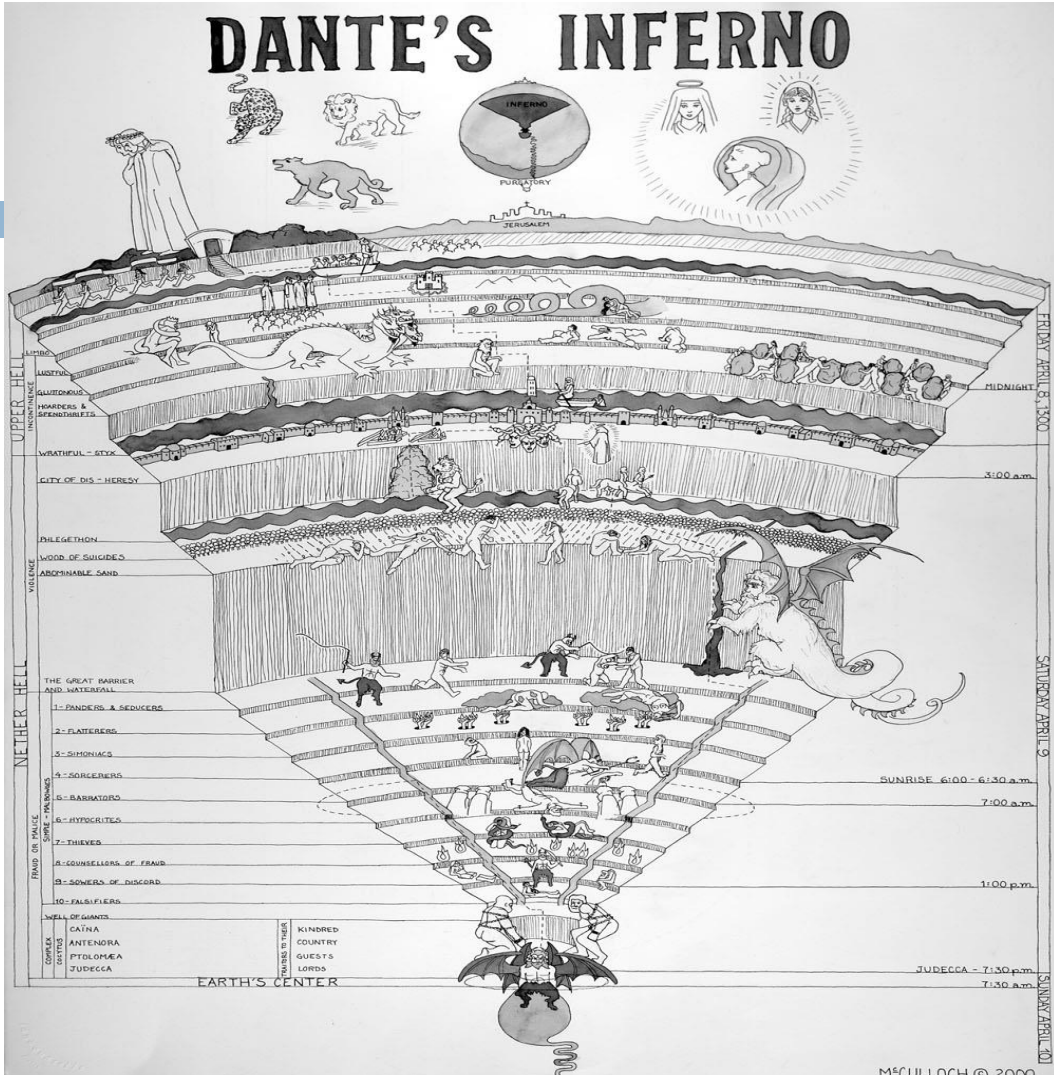
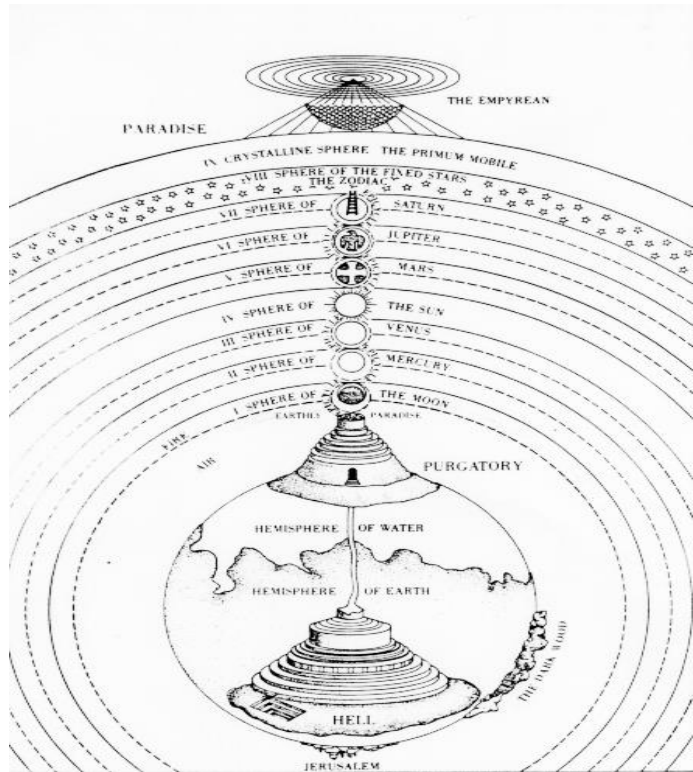
- In the Middle Ages the human experience was viewed as something to be endured until the salvation of the next life came
- Humanists viewed the world as a place to be celebrated – they viewed humanity as creative and proud and sought to celebrate humanities achievements
- Religion still played an important role, but its relative importance diminished significantly

Dante and “The Divine Comedy”

- Lived from 1265 – 1321 in Florence
- Wrote both poetry and prose
- His most famous work is called the “Divine Comedy” and is about his journey through hell, purgatory and heaven
- The poem was written in Italian (making it one of the best early examples of writing in this language) and also outlined in detail the way people of the late Middle Ages viewed the cosmos
- His work stands in between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance



Dante's Universe



Petrarch – The First Humanist

- Born in 1304 and died in 1374
- First person to talk of the Middle Ages as a “Dark Age”
- He was a poet, author, prolific letter writer, and scholar of Greek and Roman texts
- He created and popularized the literary style and way of thinking that would come to dominate Italy and Europe in the coming centuries
- There were others, but he was the most celebrated and is the most well known



Machiavelli and “The Prince”

- Lived from 1469 to 1527 in Florence
- Worked in government for the Republic of Florence until the overthrew the government
- Sent to live in exile where he wrote “The Prince” which essentially created the field of political science
- “The Prince” is meant as a handbook for rulers to help them get and retain power
- One of the main ideas is that “the ends justifies the means” – in other words if the end goal is good it is okay to use any method to reach it



Art in the Renaissance

- The Renaissance also witnessed a return to classical (Greek and Roman) ideals in painting and sculpture
- The art created during the Renaissance is viewed as some of the finest ever created surpassing even the Greek and Roman masters
- They used **perspective** to create depth in painting
- Their art contained both Christian and Classical themes
- Humanity – our emotions, our strengths and accomplishments were often prominently featured

RENAISSANCE ART ASSIGNMENT



Art and Artists

- 1) Giotto “Joachim Among the Shepherds”
- 2) Raphael “The School of Athens”
- 3) Da Vinci “The Last Supper”
- 4) Michelangelo “Sistine Chapel Ceiling”
- 5) Botticelli “Birth of Venus”
- 6) Titian “Bacchus and Ariadne”
- 7) Jan Van Eyck “The Arnolfini Wedding Portrait”
- 8) Albrecht Durer “Self Portrait” (28 years old)
- 9) Vermeer “The Geographer”
- 10) Hans Holbein the Younger “Portrait of Erasmus”

The Task:

- ❑ In small groups **research** your painter and assigned painting
- ❑ **Complete** the information sheet
- ❑ **Prepare to present** your painting to the class (I will have the painting on the screen...you can have your notes, but don't just read to the class!!)

Renaissance Art Characteristics

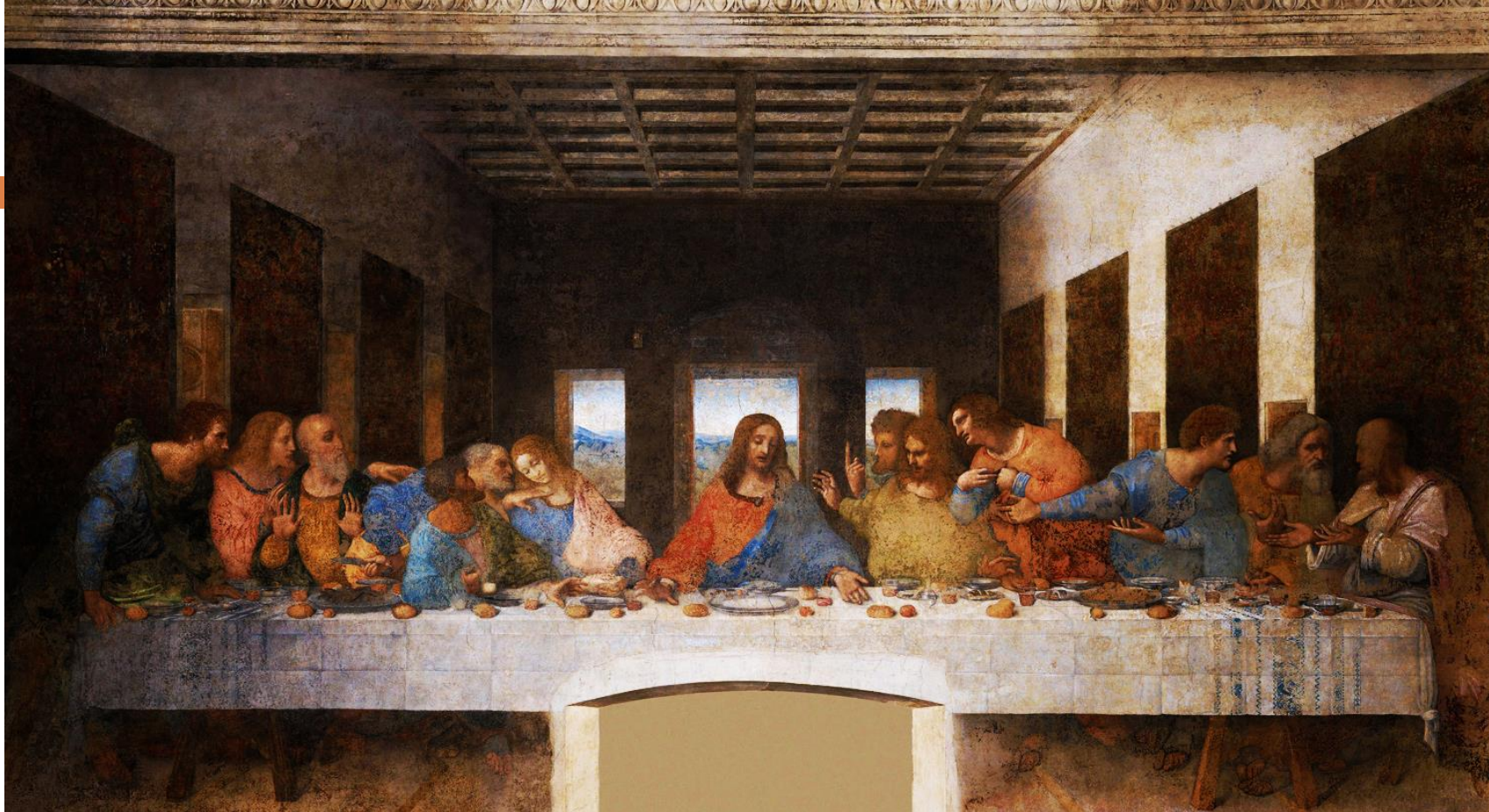
- **Perspective**
 - ▣ Vanishing Points, three dimensional looking
- **Chiaroscuro**
 - ▣ Blending of light and shadow to add depth
- **Greater Emphasis on Realism**
 - ▣ The above two items and scientific study of the human body led to more accurate representations of the world and the human form
- **Pyramid Configuration**
 - ▣ Action in the painting often portrayed in a pyramid shape
- **Classical forms and Christian Subjects**
 - ▣ Themes drawn from Greek/Roman mythology; Christian themes often included people in classical clothing; Greek and Roman ideals of beauty took a leading role in the new art

Giotto
“Joachim among
the Shepherds”



Raphael
“The
School of
Athens”

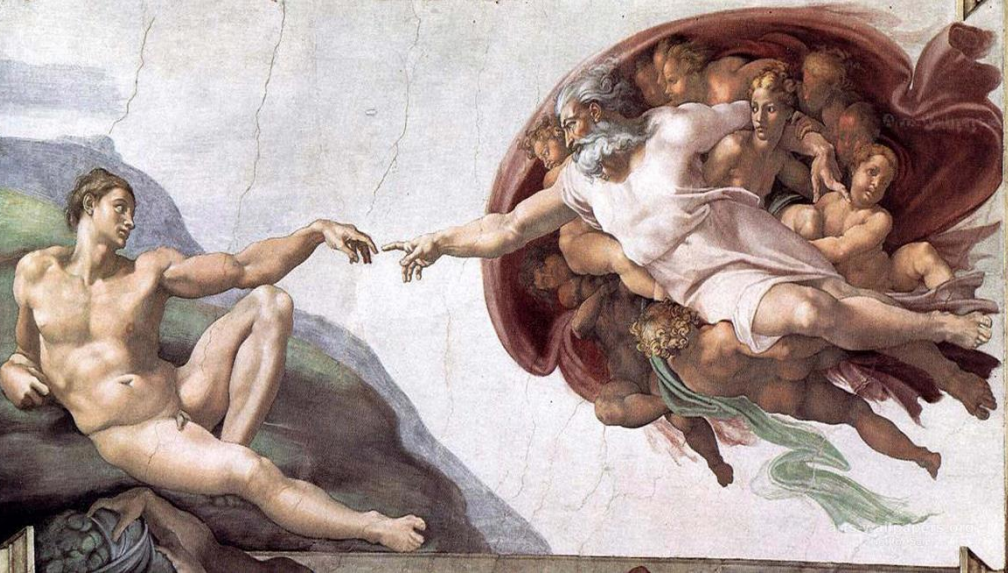




Da Vinci
"The Last Supper"



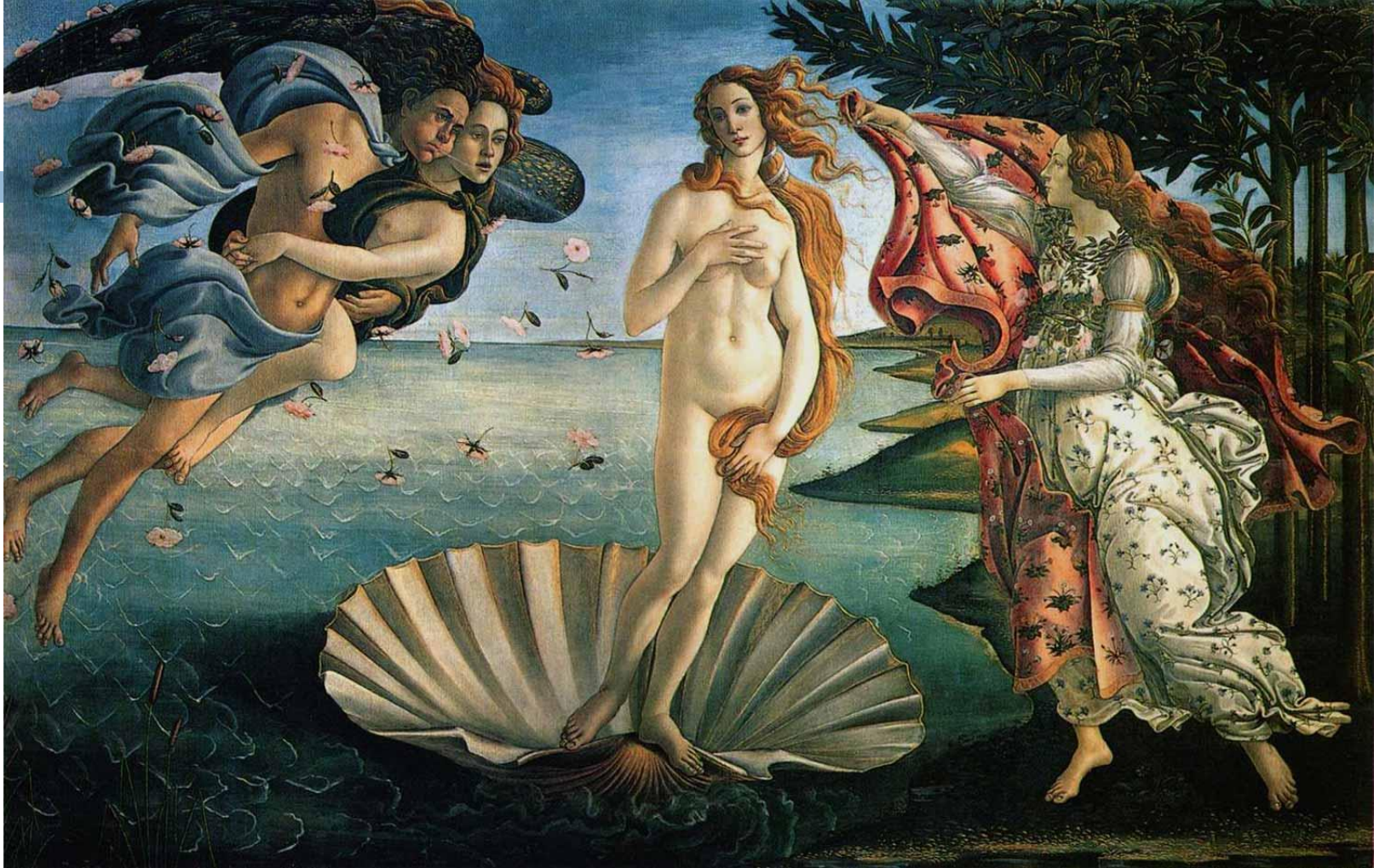
Michelangelo
“Sistine Chapel”



Michelangelo
"Sistine Chapel"
(Close up)



Botticelli
"Birth of Venus"



Titian
“Bacchus and
Ariadne”





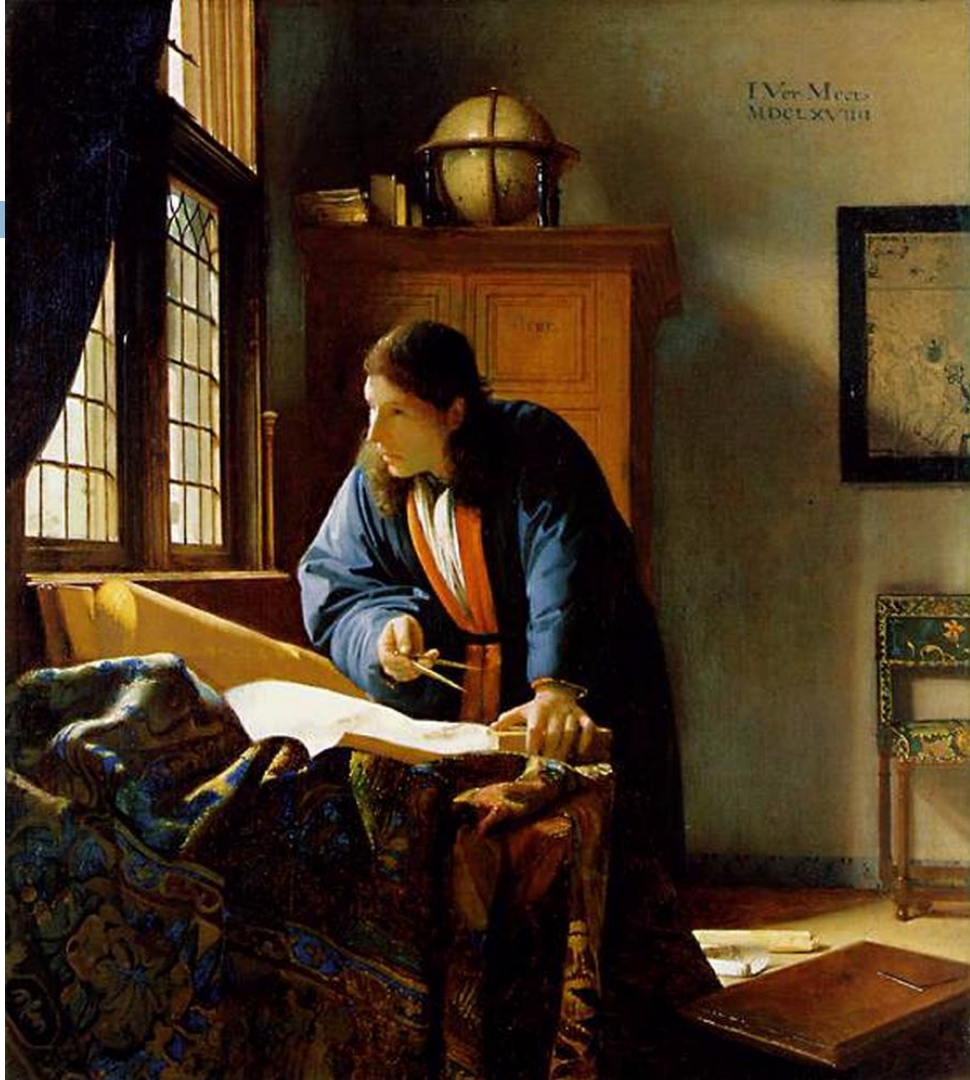
Jan Van Eyck
“The Arnolfini
Wedding Portrait”



Albrecht Durer
“Self Portrait”



Vermeer
“The Geographer”



**Hans Holbein the
Younger**
“Portrait of Erasmus”











