

THE RENAISSANCE
 CULTURE IS BORN AGAIN - and this time, let's get it right!

WRITERS

Dante 1265-1321 Florence author	Famous for <i>Divine Comedy</i> (imaginary journey through Hell, Purgatory and Heaven) written in the VERNACULAR that became "Italian." His muse was Beatrice.
Petrarch 1304-1374 Italian	Considered the "first man of letters." His muse was Laura.
Boccaccio 1313-1375 Italian	Friend of Petrarch, he is known as the father of classic Italian prose. His <i>Decameron</i> , in Italian, contains a classic description of the Black Death.
Benvenuto Cellini 1500-1571 Florence sculptor, goldsmith and author.	His <i>Autobiography</i> , and excellent record of life in Renaissance Italy, shows why he was the prime exemplar of "virtu." He worked under Michelangelo and under the patronage of Clement VII.
Lorenzo Valla 1406-1457 Italian humanist	He was the founder of textual criticism, the one who proved that the "Donation of Constantine" was a forgery.
Pico della Mirandola 1463-1494 Italian humanist	Leading scholar of the Italian Renaissance. He was the protege of Lorenzo the Magnificent. He looked for truth outside Christian scriptures, was accused by Pope Innocent III of heresy and later cleared by Alexander VI.
Baldassare Castiglione 1478-1529 Milan and Urbino	Wrote <i>The Courtier</i> , the first book of etiquette for nobles.
Niccolo Machiavelli 1469-1527 Florence	Author of <i>The Prince</i> , the first modern work on political science. it was notable for being descriptive rather than prescriptive. His model for the ideal Prince was Cesare Borgia. He hoped the Medicis would learn from his example.
Thomas More 1478-1535 England	Author of <i>Utopia</i> , he opposed Henry VIII's break from the Catholic church even though he was the lord chancellor of England. Bad move. He lost his head for his principles.

Erasmus of Rotterdam 1466-1536 Catholic author and scholar	He made a new Greek and Latin translations of the New Testament; he wrote <i>Praise of Folly</i> and <i>Handbook of a Christian Knight</i> . He and Luther were enemies. He and Thomas More were buddies. Wanted reform within the Catholic Church. Leader in Renaissance learning in Northern Europe.
Thomas a Kempis 1380-1471 German ecclesiastic and writer	Wrote <i>Imitation of Christ</i> . Mysticism holds had the individual soul would commune directly with God in perfect solitude, without sacraments, people or church.
Leonardo Bruni 1369-1444 Italian humanist	Wrote a history of Florence, noted for a new sense of the need for authentic sources in history. "Glory of man lies in activity." He translated Plutarch, Demosthenes, Aristotle and Plato from Greek into Latin. Especially notable for his history of Florence.
Giorgio Vasari 1511-1574 Art historian - Florence	He wrote <i>The Lives of the Artists</i> , the first book of art history. He was also a painter and an architect.
Marsilio Ficino 1433-1499 Florence	With Pico della Mirandola he edited and published the complete works of Plato. He was a leading figure in the revival of Platonism and the Florentine Academy under the patronage of Cosimo De Medici.

ARTISTS

Raphael 1483-1520 Urbino, Italy	Worked for Popes Julius II and Leo X, chief architect of St. Peter's.
Michelangelo 1474-1564 Painter, sculptor, architect and poet	Worked for Pope Julius II on ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, famous for "Pieta," "David," "The Last Judgment," "Moses," and a million others.
Leonardo da Vinci 1452-1519 Florence painter, sculptor, architect, engineer and scientist	Michelangelo's rival, his patrons were Lorenzo the Magnificent and Lodovico Sforza. Famous for "The Last Supper," "Mona Lisa" and tones more.
Donatello 1386-1466 Florence Sculptor	leading sculptor of the early Renaissance, he broke with classicism and moved on to realism. He associated with Ghiberti and Brunelleschi.

Masaccio 1410-1428 Florence Painter	Sometimes called "The Father of Modern Art," his works mark the advance from medieval to Renaissance painting.
Brunelleschi 1377-1446 Florence Architect	Reputed founder of Renaissance architecture and FIRST TO ESTABLISH SOUNDLY SCIENTIFIC THEORY OF PERSPECTIVE.
Botticelli 1444-1510 Florence Painter	Most famous for his "Birth of Venus" he assisted at decorating the Sistine Chapel. He was also a follower of Savonarola.
Giovanni Bellini 1430-1516 Venice Painter	Leading painter of the Venetian school he was the master of Giorgione and Titian. He is known chiefly for his altarpieces and his madonnas.
Ghirlandiao 1449-1494 Florence Painter	He was the founder of a school of painting, and was the teacher of Michelangelo.
Giotto 1266-1336 Florence Painter	Most important pre-Renaissance painter, he was a friend of Dante. He is sometimes called the "Father of Renaissance Painting." His work is notable for its use of realistic reproduction of scenes of nature.
Artemesia Gentileschi (1590-1642) Italian Painter	Her father was also a painter whose patrons included King Charles I of England and his favorite the Duke of Buckingham. She is especially noted for her "Judith" paintings.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Nicholas of Cusa 1401-1464 Rhineland (Germany) churchman, focus on mystical philosophy	Roman Catholic prelate and philosopher. He anticipated Copernicus by his belief in the earth's rotation and revolution around the sun.
Meister Eckhart 1260-1327 German Dominican theologian	Founder of German mysticism and father of German philosophical language. His philosophy was influenced by scholasticism, neo-Platonism and Arabic and Jewish ideas.

<p>Pope Nicholas V (rule: 1447-1455) Italian</p>	<p>A great patron of art and literature</p>
<p>Pope Pius II (rule: 1458-1464) Italian</p>	<p>Also known as Aeneas Silvius. He was a patron of learning and author himself. His work on geography is said to have influenced Columbus.</p>
<p>Pope Innocent VIII (rule: 1484-1492) Italian</p>	<p>A busy guy, he declared Henry VII to be the lawful King of England and appointed Torquemada as the Grand Inquisitor of Spain.</p>
<p>Pope Alexander VI (rule: 1492-1503) Spanish</p>	<p>He used bribery to get himself elected to the papacy. His kids were Cesare Borgia and Lucretia Borgia. He ordered the execution of Savonarola. Great patron of the arts, especially Bramante, Michelangelo and Raphael.</p>
<p>Pope Julius II (rule: 1503-1513) Italian</p>	<p>He commenced to rebuild St. Peter's, patronized the arts and aided Raphael, Michelangelo, Bramante and others.</p>
<p>Pope Leo X (rule: 1513-1521) Italian</p>	<p>He was the second son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was a patron of the arts. He failed to realize the importance of the Reformation and he issued the bull excommunicating Luther. He is alleged to have said, "God has given us the papacy. Now let us enjoy it!"</p>
<p>Savonarola 1452-1498 Ferrara, Italy Dominican monk and church reformer</p>	<p>He denounced in vehement sermons the corruption of secular life, the licentiousness of the ruling class and the worldliness of the clergy. He drove Piero Medici from power in Florence and became the virtual dictator of the city, preaching a crusade for the establishment of an ideal Christian state. He was denounced by Pope Alexander VI, lost power in Florence to the aristocrats and was ultimately captured by them. He was tried for sedition and heresy, then tortured, hanged and burned.</p>

SCIENTISTS

<p>Regiomontanus (His real name was Johann Muller) 1436-1476 Germany mathematician and scientist</p>	<p>An influential thinker, he laid the foundation for mathematical conception of the universe.</p>
<p>Nicholas Copernicus 1473-1543 Poland Scientist</p>	<p>He concluded that the earth moves around the sun (heliocentric theory) and not the other way around (geocentric theory.) Realizing the dangerous - to him - implications of his ideas, his were not published until after his death.</p>
<p>Paracelsus (His real name was Hohenheim)</p>	<p>He undertook to revolutionize medicine at the University of Basel. He was an interesting mix of scientist and charlatan.</p>
<p>Behaim and Schoner German cartographers</p>	<p>They made world maps that influenced the course of world-wide exploration.</p>
<p>Gutenberg German</p>	<p>He was the first to produce books with movable type, about 1450.</p>

POLITICAL LEADERS

<p>Giovanni de Medici 1360-1429 Florence</p>	<p>Merchant who made lots of money, strong supporter of smaller guilds and common people. He was the virtual ruler of Florence between 1421-29.</p>
<p>Cosimo de Medici 1389-1464, son of Giovanni Florence</p>	<p>Banker, patron of the arts and "father of his country"</p>
<p>Lorenzo de Medici aka "The Magnificent" 1449-1492, grandson of Giovanni, but not son of Cosimo Florence</p>	<p>Big time patron of the arts, father of a Pope and general aggrandizer of his family. He is alleged to have been an immoral and tyrannical ruler. What was Machiavelli complaining about?</p>
<p>Cesare Borgia 1475-1507 Originally Spanish</p>	<p>He was the son of Pope Alexander VI; conquered much of central Italy, including Urbino, and acted with cruelty and treachery. He was Machiavelli's ideal "Prince."</p>
<p>Isabelle d'Este 1474-1539 Marchioness of Mantua</p>	<p>Married to Giovanni Gonzaga she was an outstanding diplomat and patron of learning.</p>

OTHER IMPORTANT FAMILIES

Sforza Milan	They ruled Milan from 1450-1535. Famous among them is Lodovico "Il Moro" (1451-1508) who was patron to Leonardo da Vinci. Another important one was Giovanni who married Lucretia Borgia in 1493.
Visconti Milan	Powerful Lombard family, of the Ghibelline faction, ruled Milan from 1311-1447 until beaten by the Sforza.
Gonzaga Mantua	Descended from Luigi Gonzaga, they controlled Mantua throughout the Renaissance.