

AHST 2331-001 (21626)

Understanding Art

Dr. Charissa N. Terranova

Spring 2020

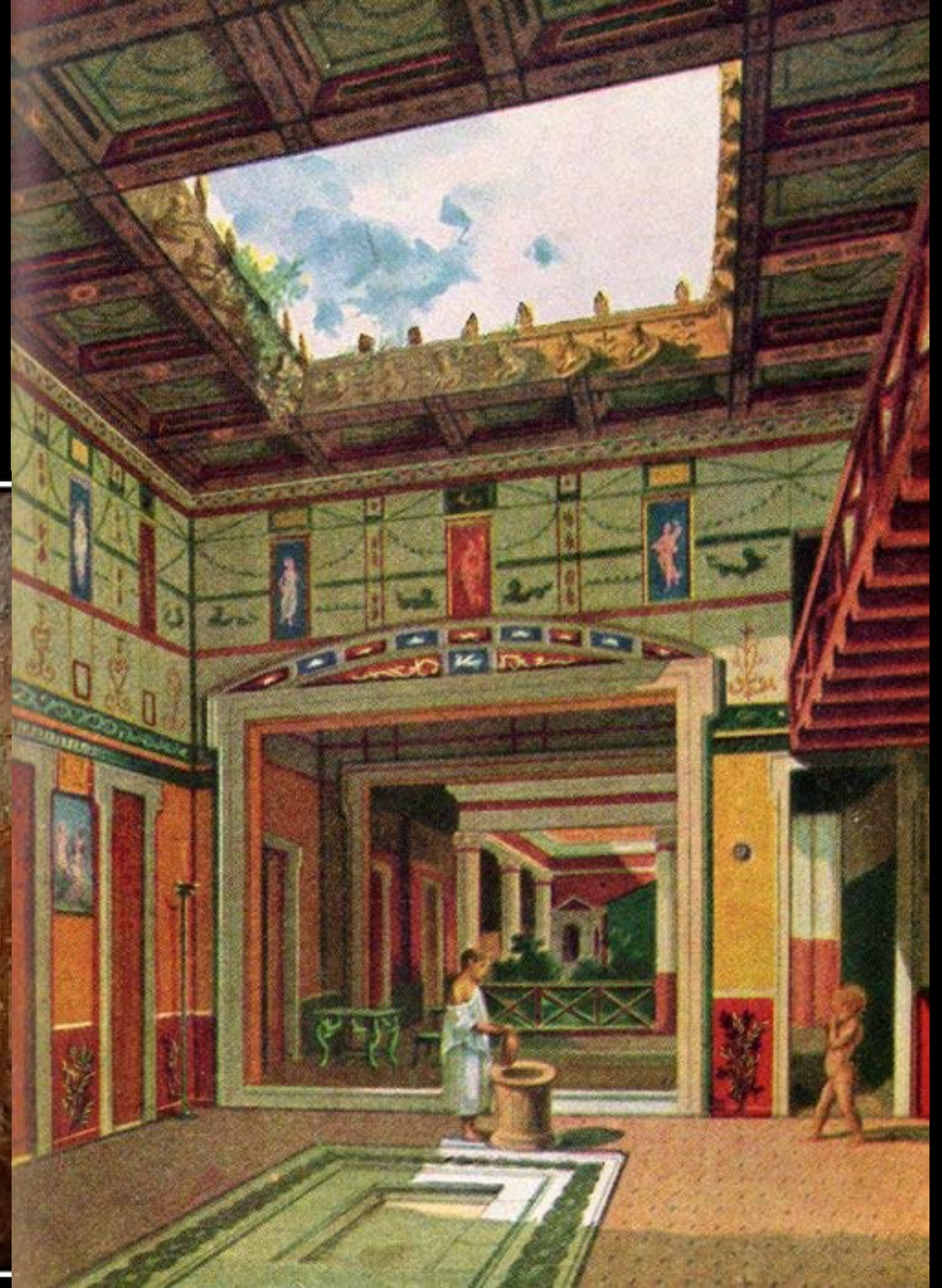
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30-12:45

ATC 1.102

Tuesday January 28, 2020

Roman Interiors and Paintings

IMMERSIVE INTERIORS IN ANCIENT ROMAN HOMES







View of the Forum
with Mount
Vesuvius in the
distance, Pompeii



Above: Pompeii and Mt. Vesuvius, the Volcano that destroyed the city in the 79 CE

Left: Annotated map of Pompeii, founded between 4th and 2nd century BCE



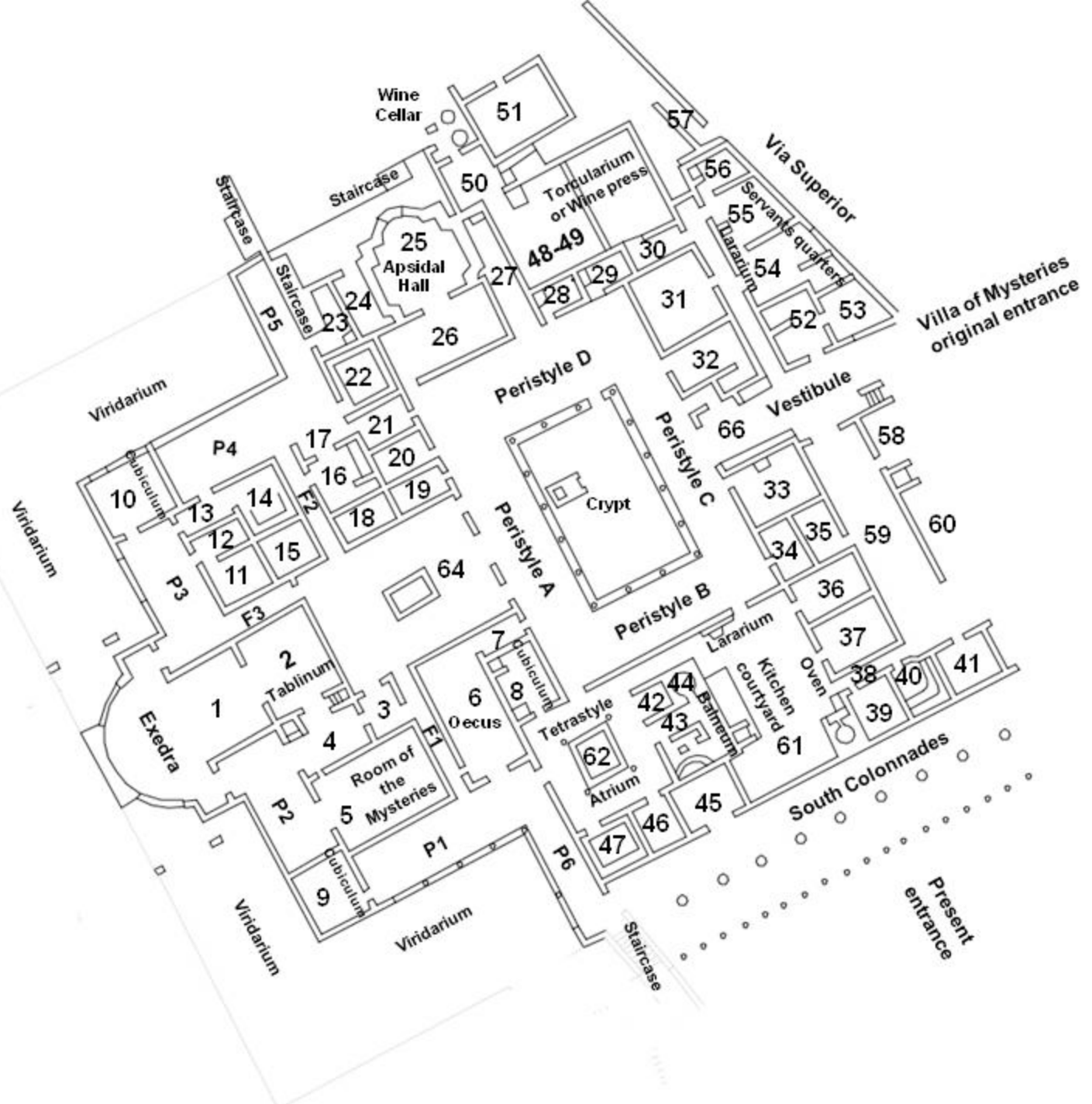
Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii, 1st c. CE



In A.D. 79, the house was already more than two hundred years old and had likely had several different owners. At various times the villa functioned, as many ancient Roman estates did, as both luxury home and working farm. There were areas for pressing grapes into wine, several large kitchens and baths, gardens, shrines, marble statues, and all the spaces necessary for a wealthy patron to welcome guests for both business and pleasure. Many rooms were covered in frescoes, including a bedroom with simple black walls, an atrium decorated with panels painted to resemble stone, several rooms that contain fantastical architecture and landscapes, and scenes of sacrifices, gods, and satyrs.

Plan of the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii, 1st c. CE

Built just outside one of Pompeii's main gates in the first half of the second century B.C., the Villa of the Mysteries covered about 40,000 square feet and had at least 60 rooms.





The *Second style, architectural style*, or 'illusionism' dominated the 1st century BC, where walls were decorated with architectural features

FRESCO PAINTING

Trompe l'oeil
“fooling the
eye”

Architectural views
and colonnades set
against a red ground

Fresco

Fresco (Italian for *Fresh*) painting is done with the use of earth pigments mixed with water and applied to fresh plaster or glue which attaches the color to the surface like a wall.

1. When the plaster is wet, the painting is described as ***buon fresco*** or **true fresco**.
2. On the other hand, when the plaster is dry the painting is described as ***fresco secco*** or **dry fresco**.

Note:

The Fresco paintings are durable. It is quick to dry. Fresco paintings are not movable because they are permanently attached to the walls; and fresco paintings are subject to loss in the event that the walls are destroyed.



Trompe l'oeil
Trick of the eye
Fooling the eye
tromper – to fool
or to trump
oeil – eye

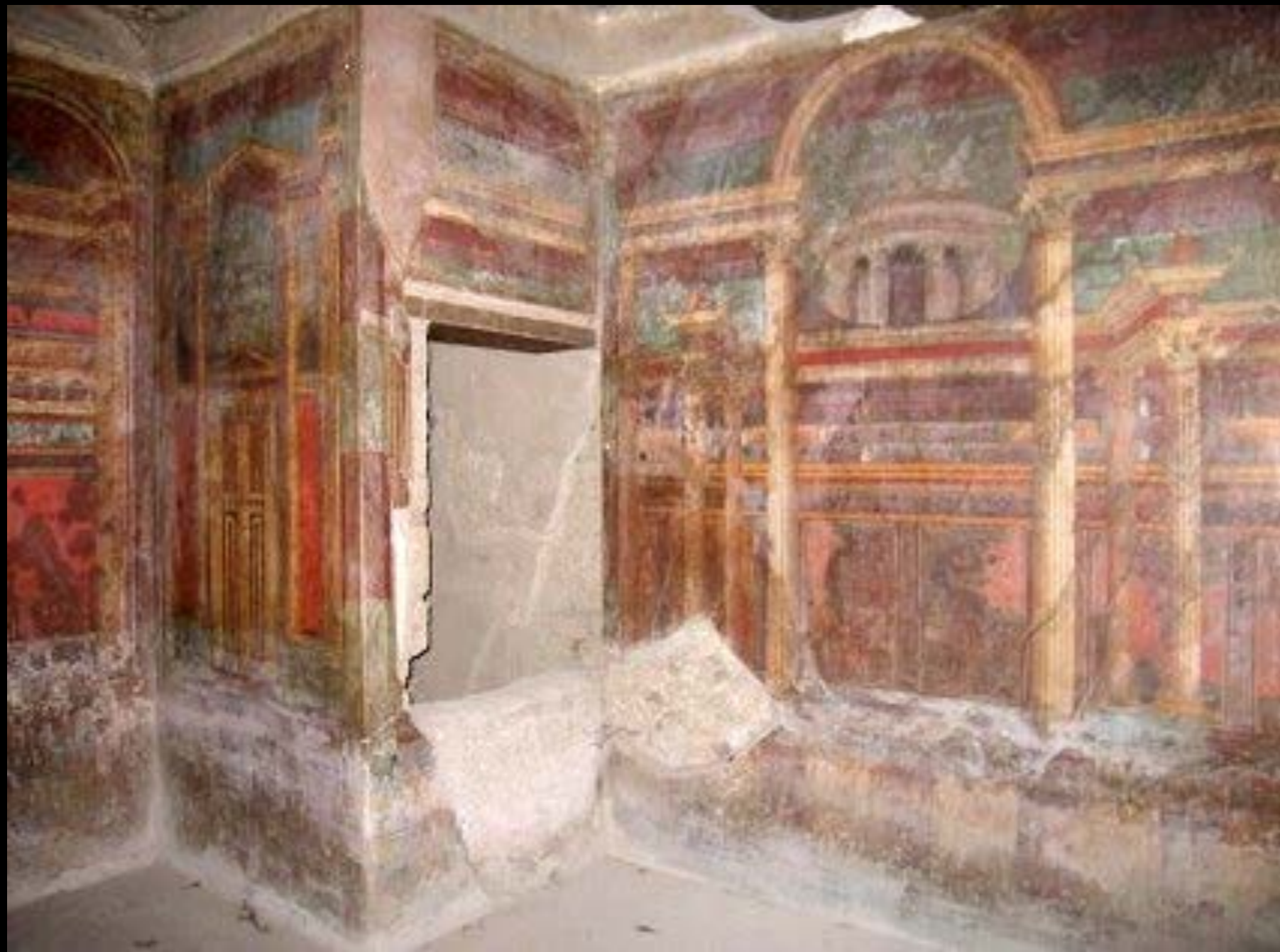


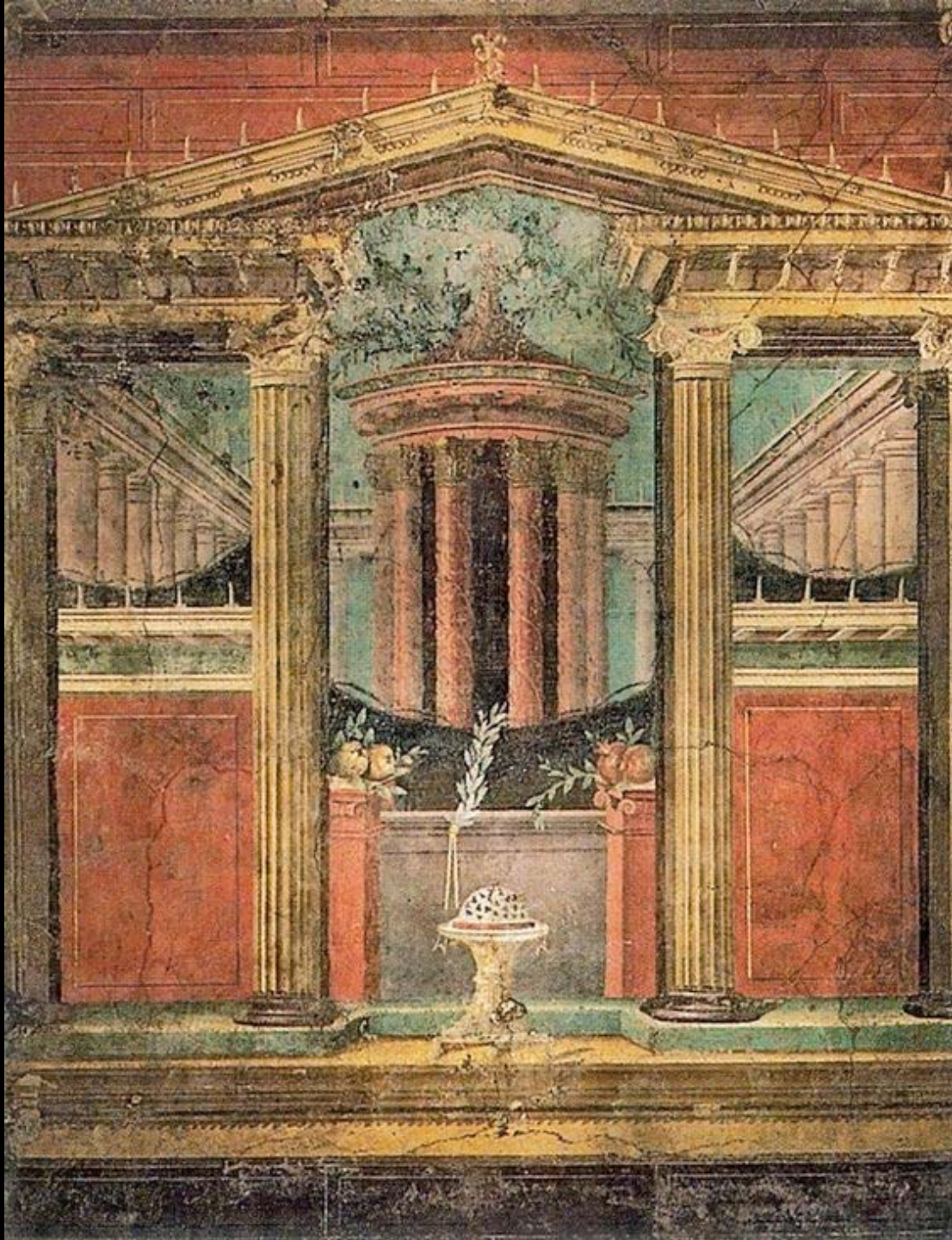


© Jackie and Bob Dunn



architectural views and colonnades set against a red ground





Wall painting from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale – Pompeii, 1st c. CE

The *Second style*, *architectural style*, or 'illusionism' dominated the 1st century BC, where walls were decorated with architectural features

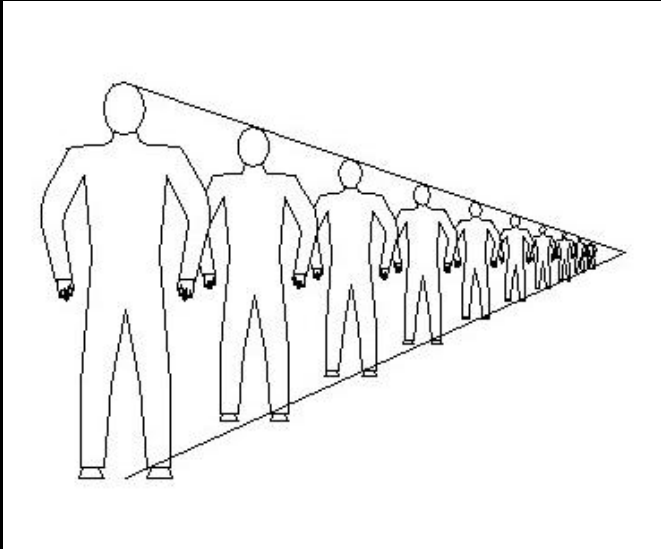
Trompe l'oeil

Relative Perspective

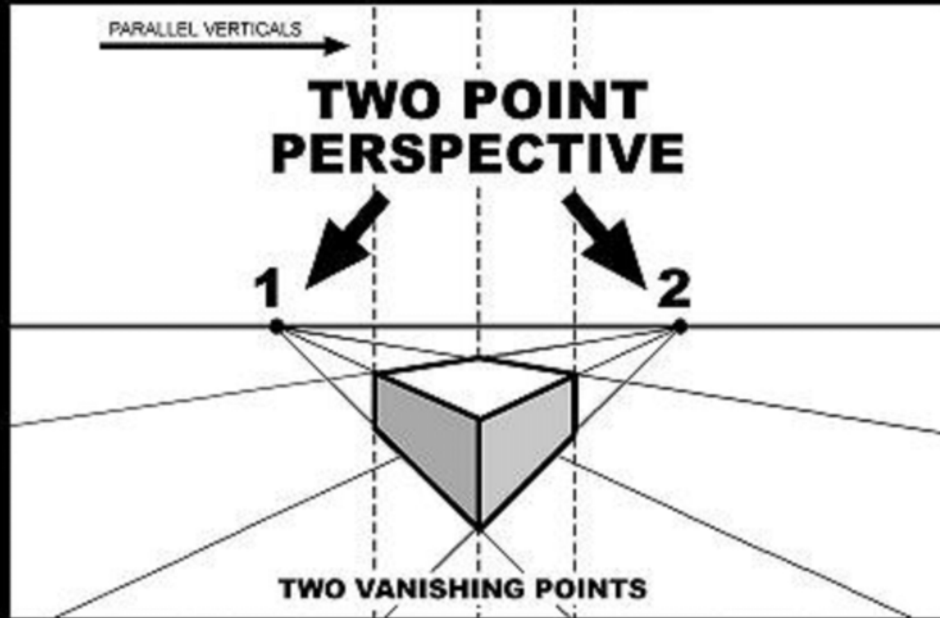
One-point Perspective



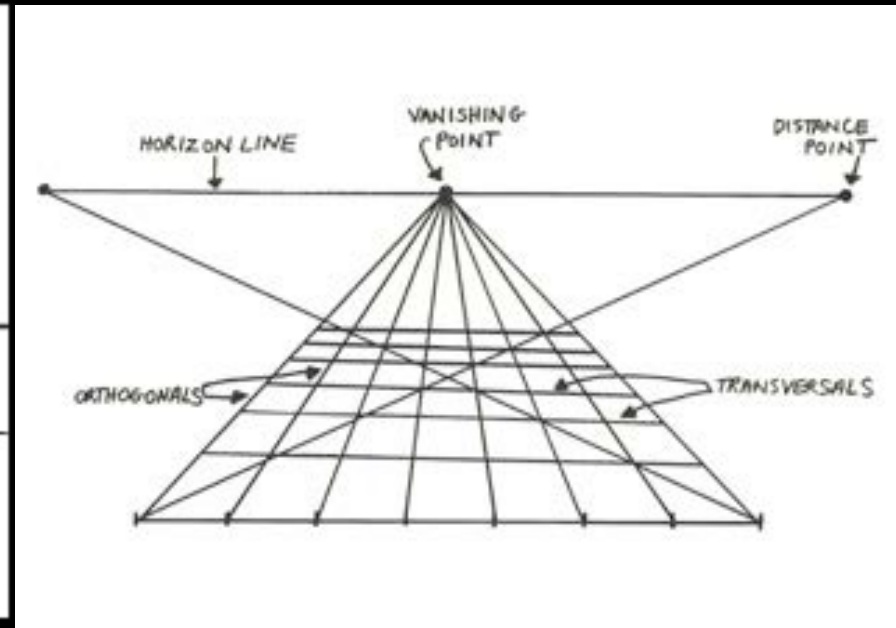
Still Life in the
Second style. Fresco
from the home of
Julia Felix, Pompeii



Relative or informal perspective



Two-point Perspective



Filippo Brunelleschi, Linear, or one-point/formal perspective, c. 1420

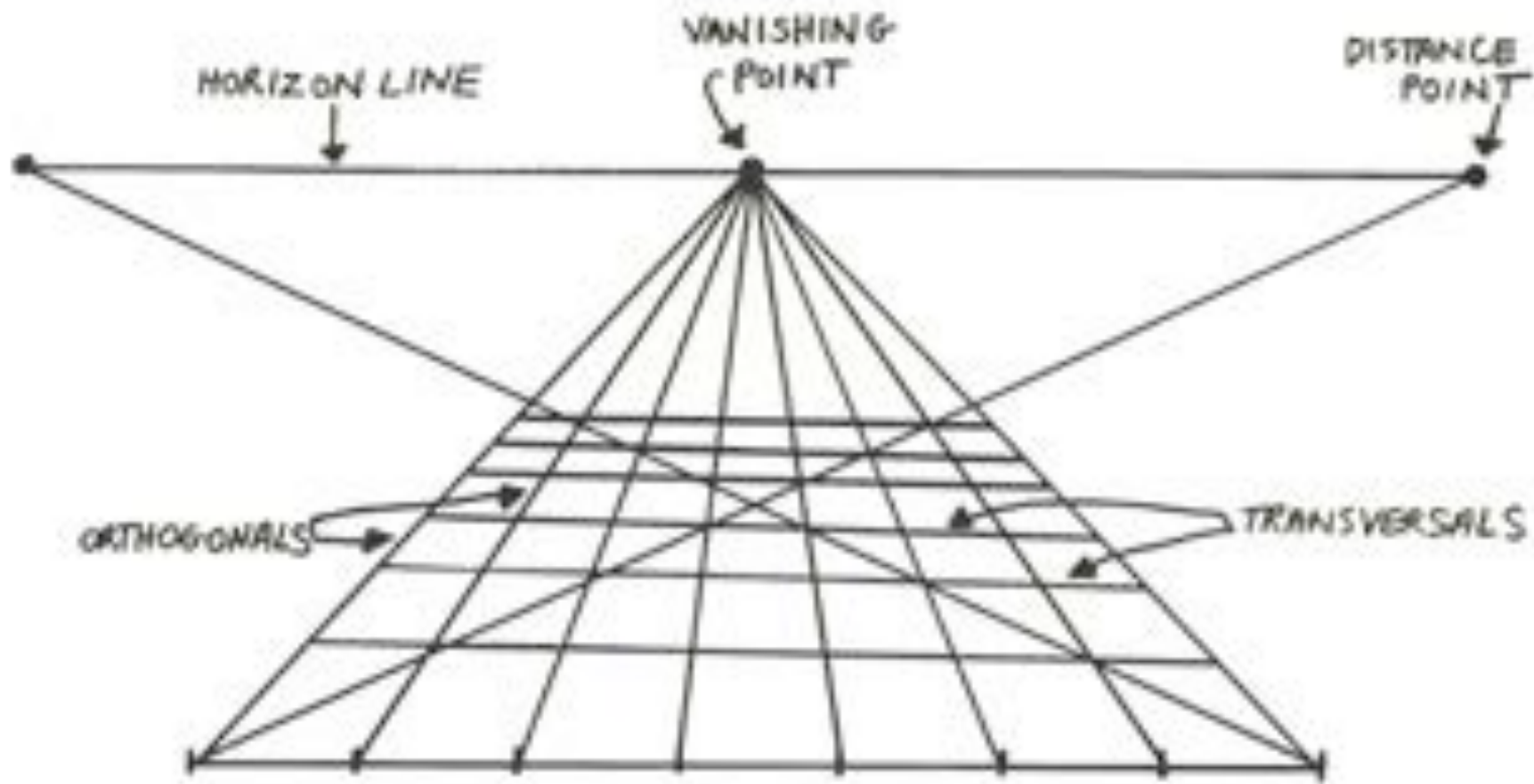
PERSPECTIVE

RATIONALIZATION OF SPACE

MAKING ORDER

FROM 2-D to 3-D

PAINTING AS A WINDOW ONTO REALITY



Filippo Brunelleschi, Linear, or one-point perspective, c. 1420



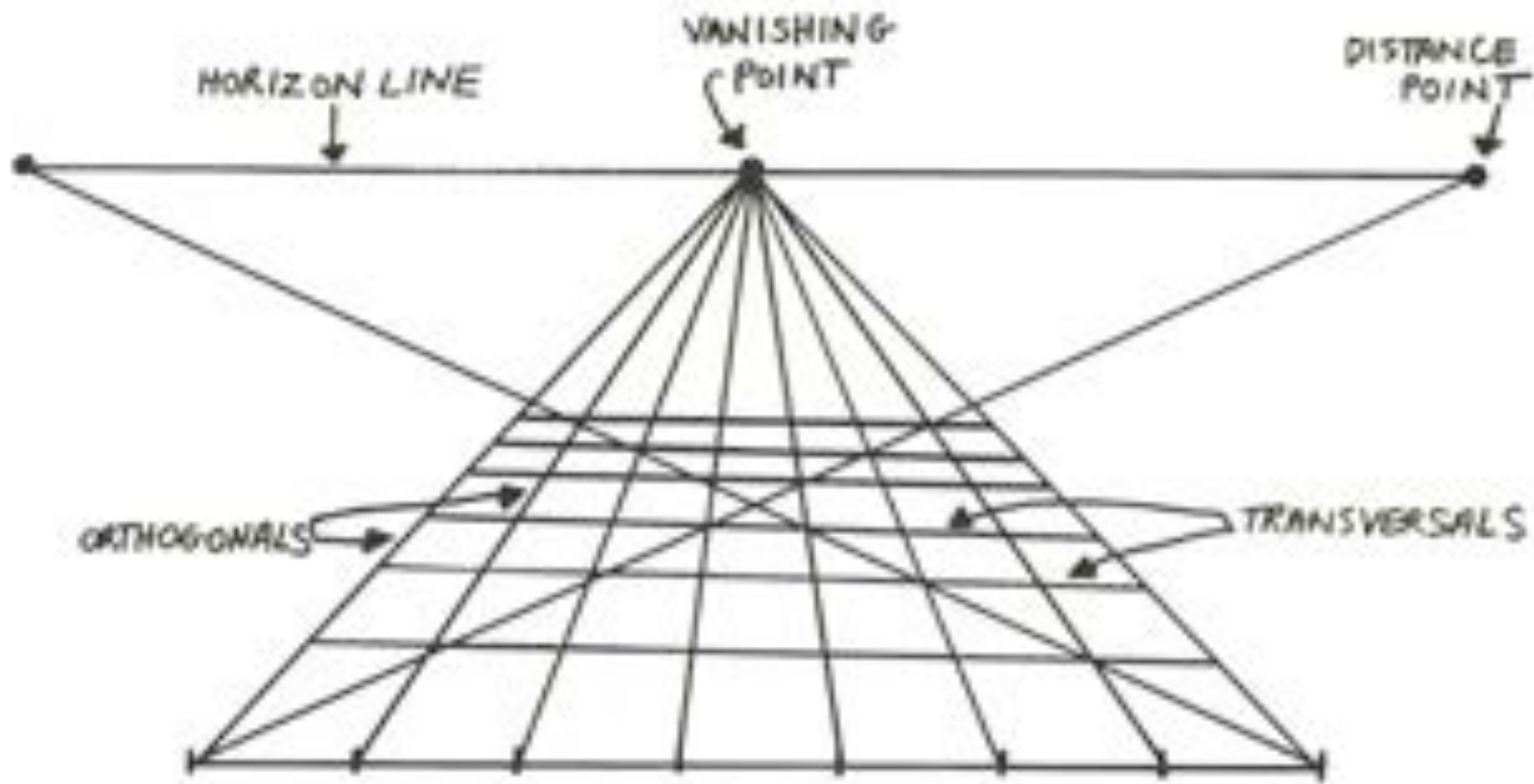
Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446)

“Which man, whatever harsh or jealous, would not praise Filippo when seeing this enormous construction rise to the heavens, so vast that it could cover all the people of Tuscany with its shadow, and executed without the aid of beams or wooden struts.” -- Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), in the prologue of his treatise on perspective, “De Pictura” (1435)

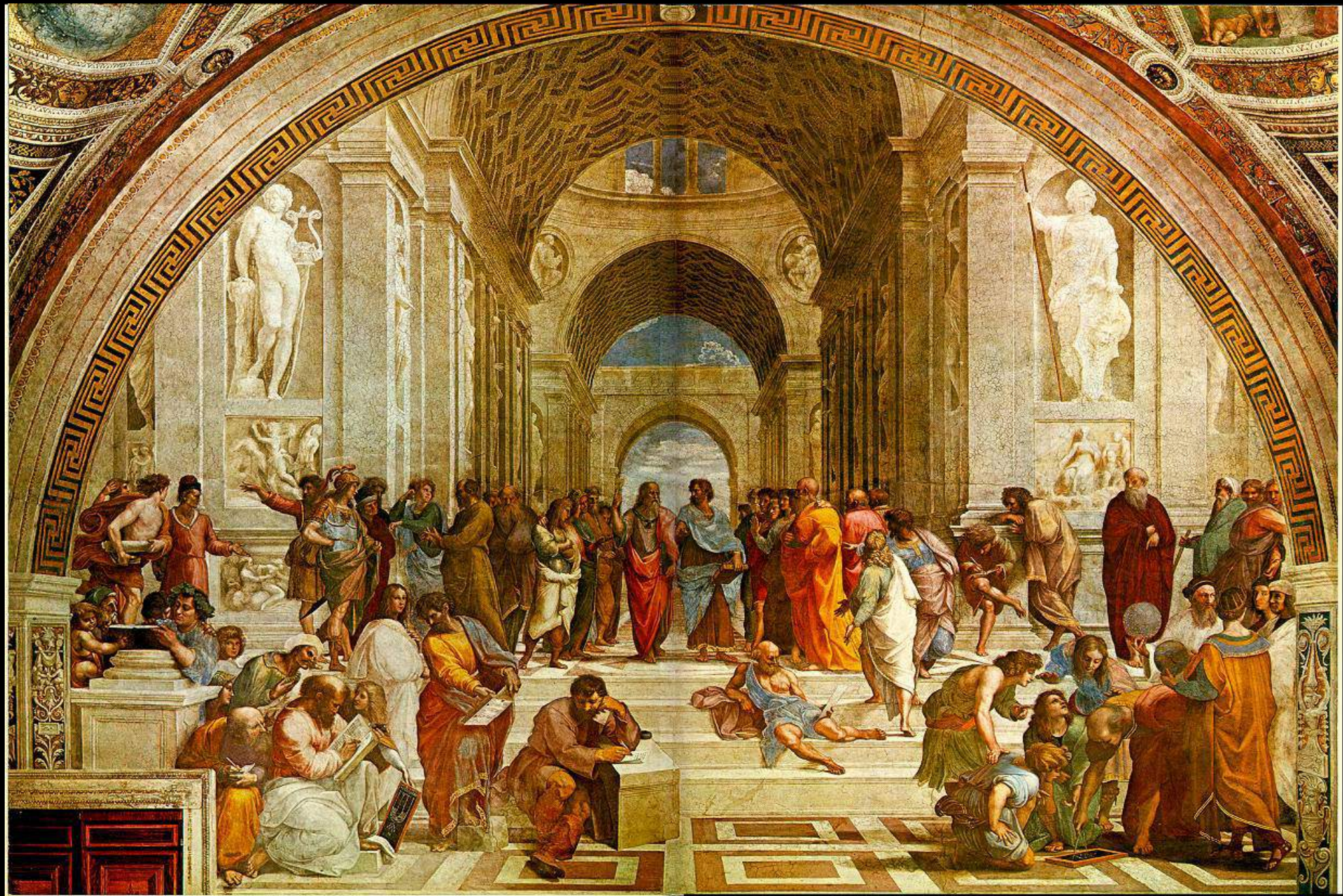


Filippo Brunelleschi, Duomo, 1480, Florence, Italy



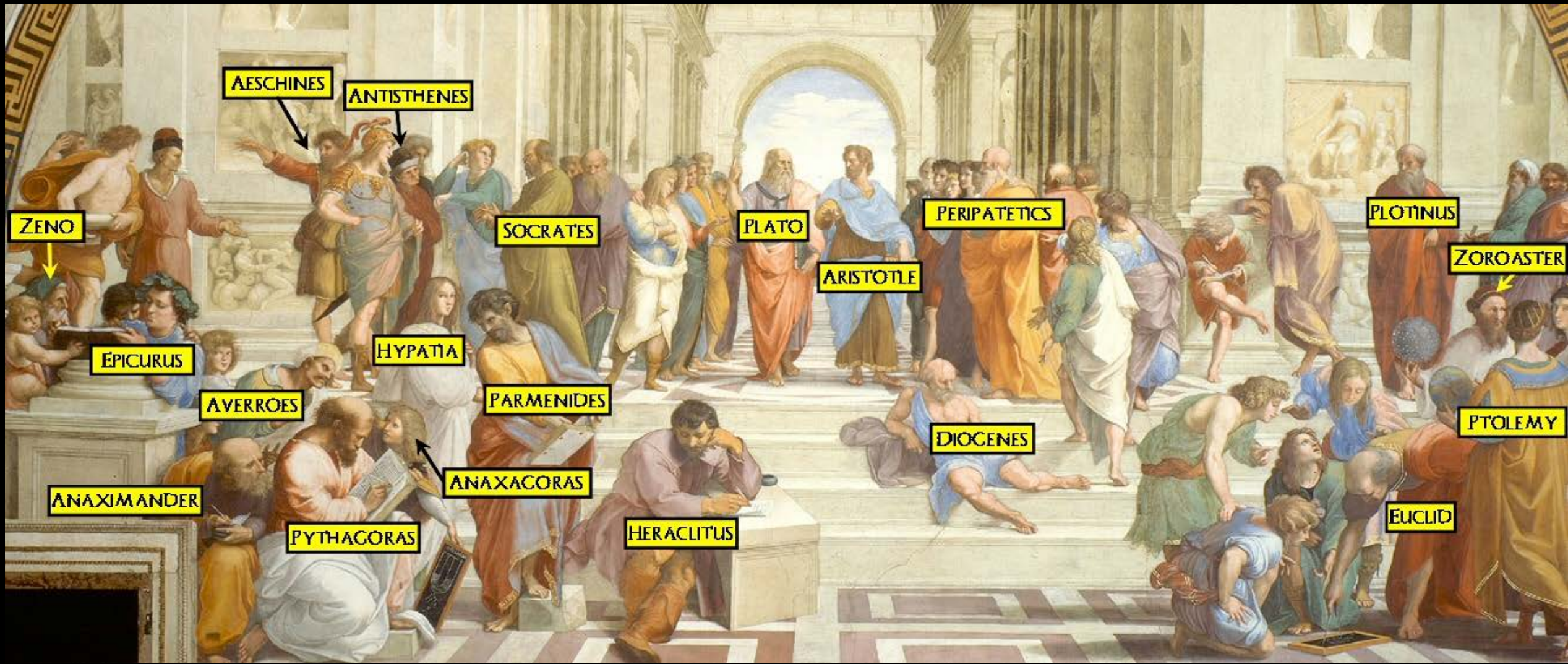


Filippo Brunelleschi, Linear, or one-point perspective, c. 1420



Raphael, School of Athens, 1509-10





AESCHINES

ANTISTHENES

ZENO

SOCRATES

PLATO

PERIPATETICS

PLOTINUS

ZOROASTER

EPICURUS

HYPATIA

ARISTOTLE

AVERROES

PARMENIDES

DIOGENES

PTOLEMY

ANAXIMANDER

PYTHAGORAS

ANAXACORAS

HERACLITUS

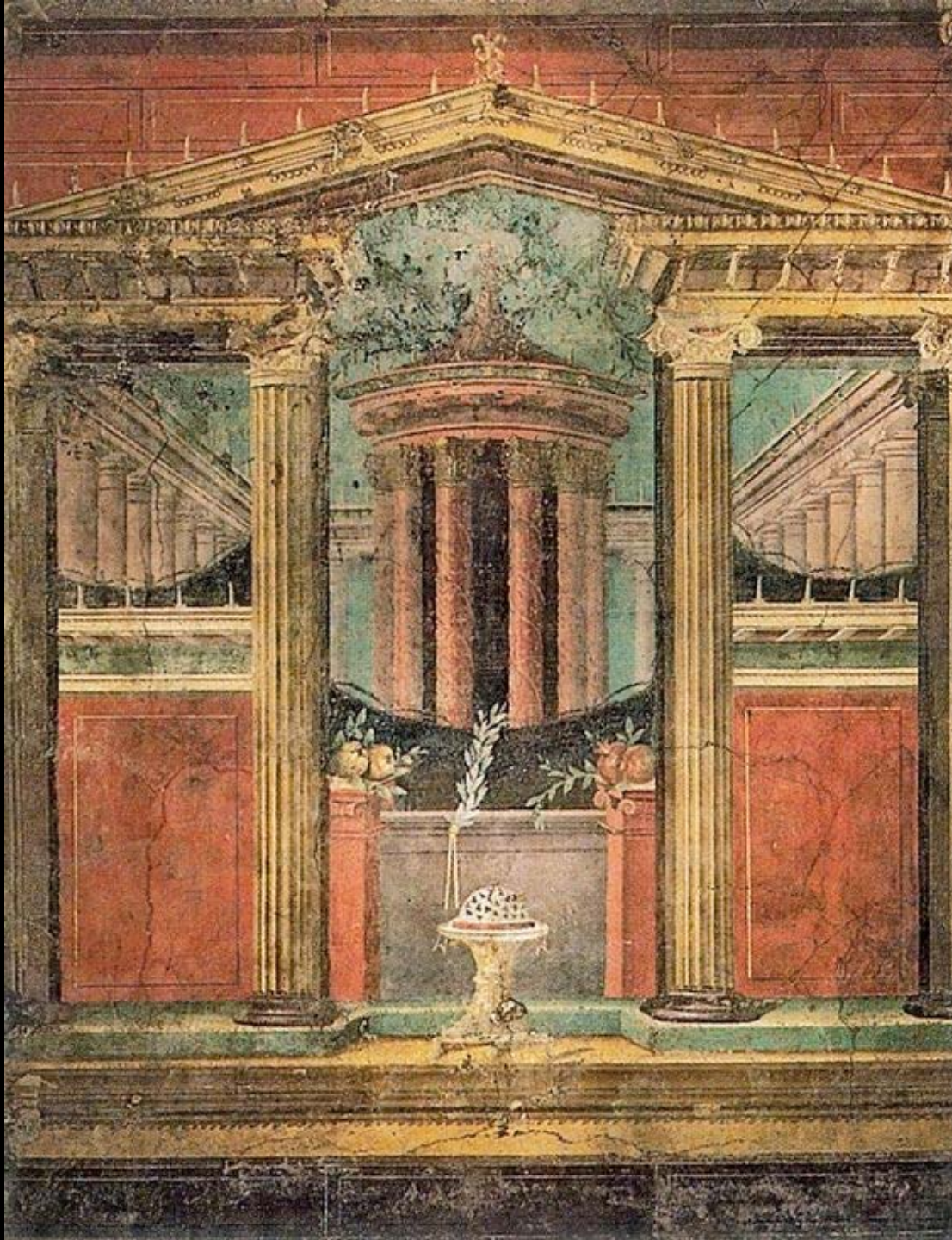
EUCLID



Polymath Hypatia in School of Athens



Self-portrait of painter
Raphael within School of
Athens



Wall painting from the Villa of P.
Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale –
Pompeii, 1st c. CE

The *Second style, architectural style,*
or 'illusionism' dominated the 1st
century BC, where walls were
decorated with architectural features

Trompe l'oeil

Relative Perspective

One-point Perspective



Still Life in the Second style. Fresco from the home of Julia Felix, Pompeii



Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii,
1st c. CE,
Wall cycle shows the rites of
initiation to the Dionysiac
mysteries

vermilion pigment

The first documented use of vermilion pigment, made with ground cinnabar, dates to 8000–7000 BCE. Cinnabar was used to paint the walls vermilion in the Villa of the Mysteries.

In Rome, the precious pigment was used to paint frescoes, decorate statues, and as a cosmetic. Victorious Roman soldiers had their faces covered with vermilion powder.



Villa of the Mysteries,
Pompeii, 1st c. CE,
Wall cycle shows the rites
of initiation to the
Dionysiac mysteries

**DIONYSIAN
CULT
RITUAL**

or

MYSTERY CULT

Religion from the East;
Not official state-
sanctioned religion



Ritual of Dionysus

Maenads: the female followers of Dionysus and the most significant members of the god's retinue. Their name literally translates as "raving ones."

Continuous space and time; ground plane



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Above: Statue of Old Bacchus (Dionysus), Roman statue (marble), 1st–2nd century AD
Left: Dionysus with Silenus and Satyrs from Initiation into the Cult of Dionysus Fresco Cycle

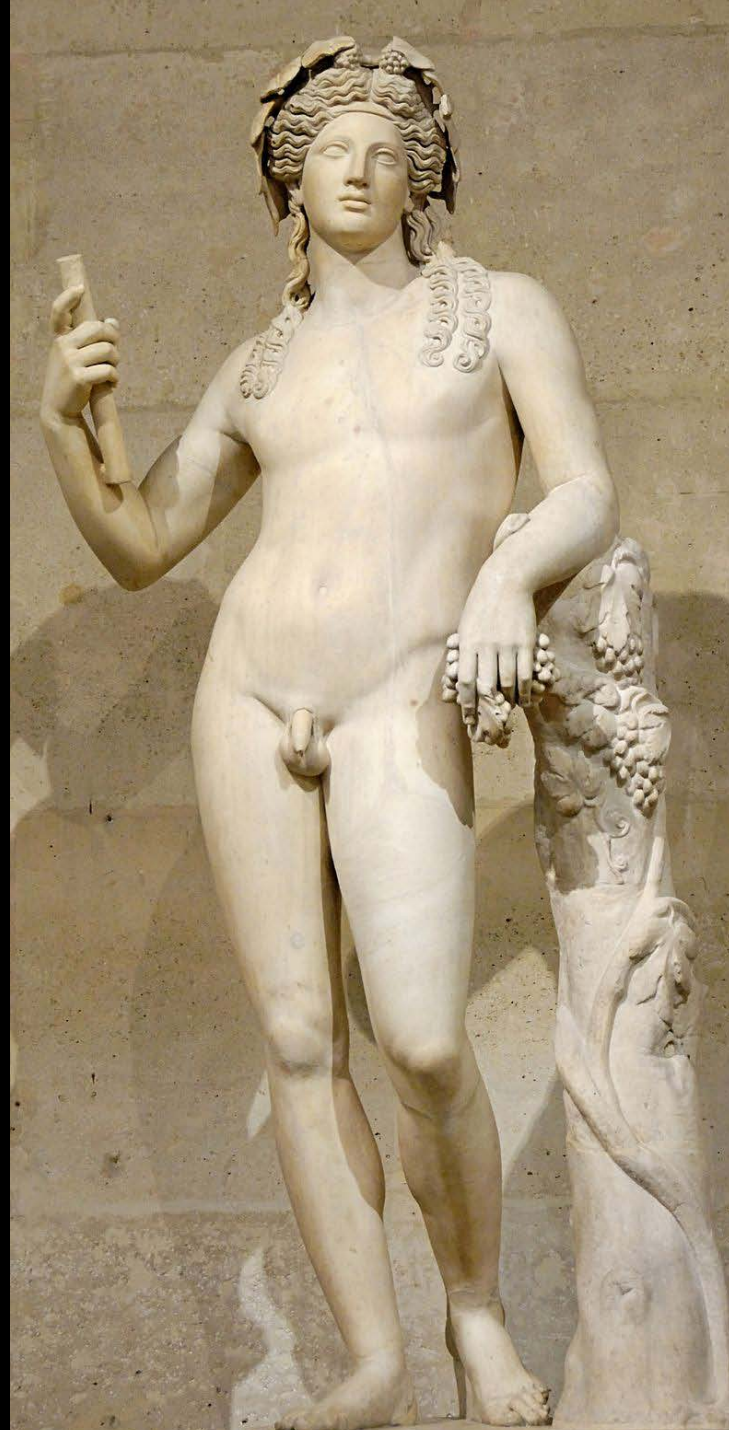
Cult of Dionysus

- Dionysus: God of the Wine Harvest, Fertility, Drunkenness, and Pleasure
- Patron of the forces of growth in nature
- Associated with Liber the god of viticulture and wine, fertility, and freedom. He was a patron deity of Rome's plebeians.
- The festival Liberalia became associated with free speech and the rights attached to coming of age.
- His cult and functions were increasingly associated with Romanized forms of the Greek Dionysus/Bacchus, whose mythology he came to share.

Bacchanalia

Left: Statue of a drunken Silenus, 2nd century Roman, aka Papposilenus

Right: Statue of Dionysus, 2nd century Roman





Ancient Roman Mosaic depicting
Bacchanalia, c. 2nd CE



Michel-Ange Houasse, Bacchanalia, 1719
Rococo style



Thomas Couture,
The Romans of the
Decadence, 1847

Classical Revival

Academic Style
Painting



Peter Paul Rubens, Bacchanalia, 1615:
Dionysus/Bacchus and his retinue, the aged
Silenus, his tutor, and goat-legged satyrs

Baroque Style

Rubenesque Figures



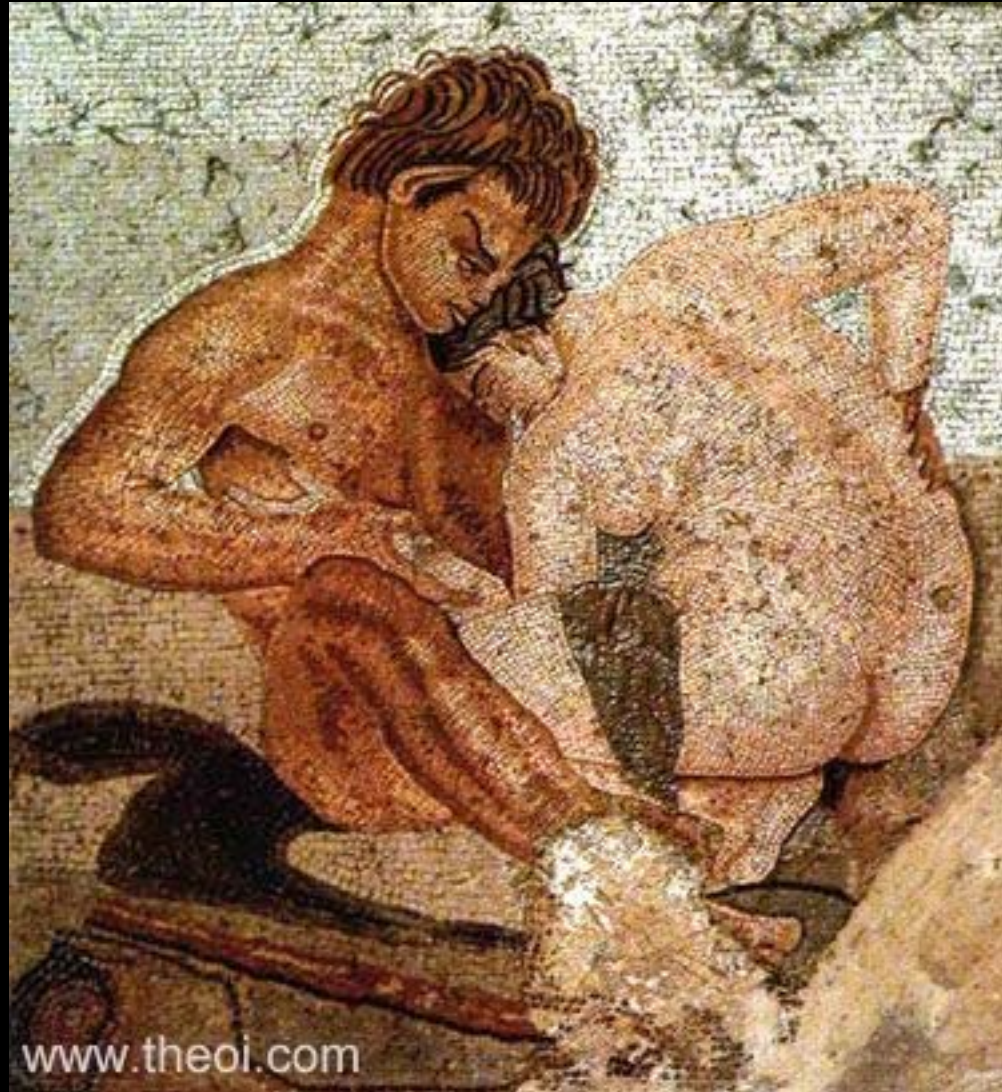
Peter Paul Rubens, Bacchanalia, 1638-1640



Sarcophagus with scenes of bacchanalia, Roman, white marble 140—160 CE



A dancing satyr, fresco from the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii, 1st C CE



Satyr and Maenad, Greco-Roman mosaic from Pompeii C1st A.D.

THE SATYROI
(Satyrs) were rustic
fertility spirits of
the countryside
and wilds. They
consorted with the
Nymphs and were
companions of the
gods Dionysos,
Hermes,
Hephaistos, Pan,
and Gaia



**Reconstruction of the
Triclinium**

Triclinium: a formal dining
room in a Roman building



The chamber is entered through an opening located between the first and last scenes of the fresco.



Villa de Misteri (Pompeii) Initiation into the Dionysian Mysteries



Scene 1



The first mural shows a noble Roman woman (possibly the initiate's mother, who can cross no further) approaching a priestess or matron seated on a throne, by which stands a small boy reading a scroll – presumably the declaration of the initiation. On the other side of the throne the young initiate is shown in a purple robe and myrtle crown, holding a sprig of laurel and a tray of cakes. She appears to have been transformed into a serving girl, but may be bringing an offering to the god or goddess.



Scene 2

The second mural depicts another priestess and her assistants preparing a ritual basket

A drunken Silenus, aka Papposilenus, is at far right with lyre. Silenus was the tutor and companion of Dionysus.



Scene 2
and
Scene 3



www.rome101.com

Scene 4

Scene 5



Above: Statue of Old Bacchus (Dionysus), Roman statue (marble), 1st–2nd century AD

Left: To the left, a young satyr is being offered a bowl of wine by Silenus while behind him, another satyr holds up a frightening mask which the drinking satyr sees reflected in the bowl. To the right, Dionysus is lounging on lap of his mortal lover Ariadne with Silenus and Satyrs from Initiation into the Cult of Dionysus Fresco Cycle.

Scene 6

The next mural shows the initiate returning. She kneels before the priestess, and appears to be whipped by a winged female figure.







Scene 7

The two themes of this scene are torture and transfiguration, the evocative climax of the rite.

Notice the complete abandonment to agony on the face of the initiate. She is consoled by a woman identified as a nurse. To the right a nude woman clashes celebratory cymbals and another woman is about to give to the initiate a thyrsus, symbolizing the successful completion of the rite.

Scene 8

This scene represents an event after the completion of the ritual drama. The transformed initiate or bride prepares, with the help of an attendant, for marriage. A young Eros figure holds a mirror which reflects the image of the bride. Both the bride and her reflected image stare out inquiringly at us, the observers.





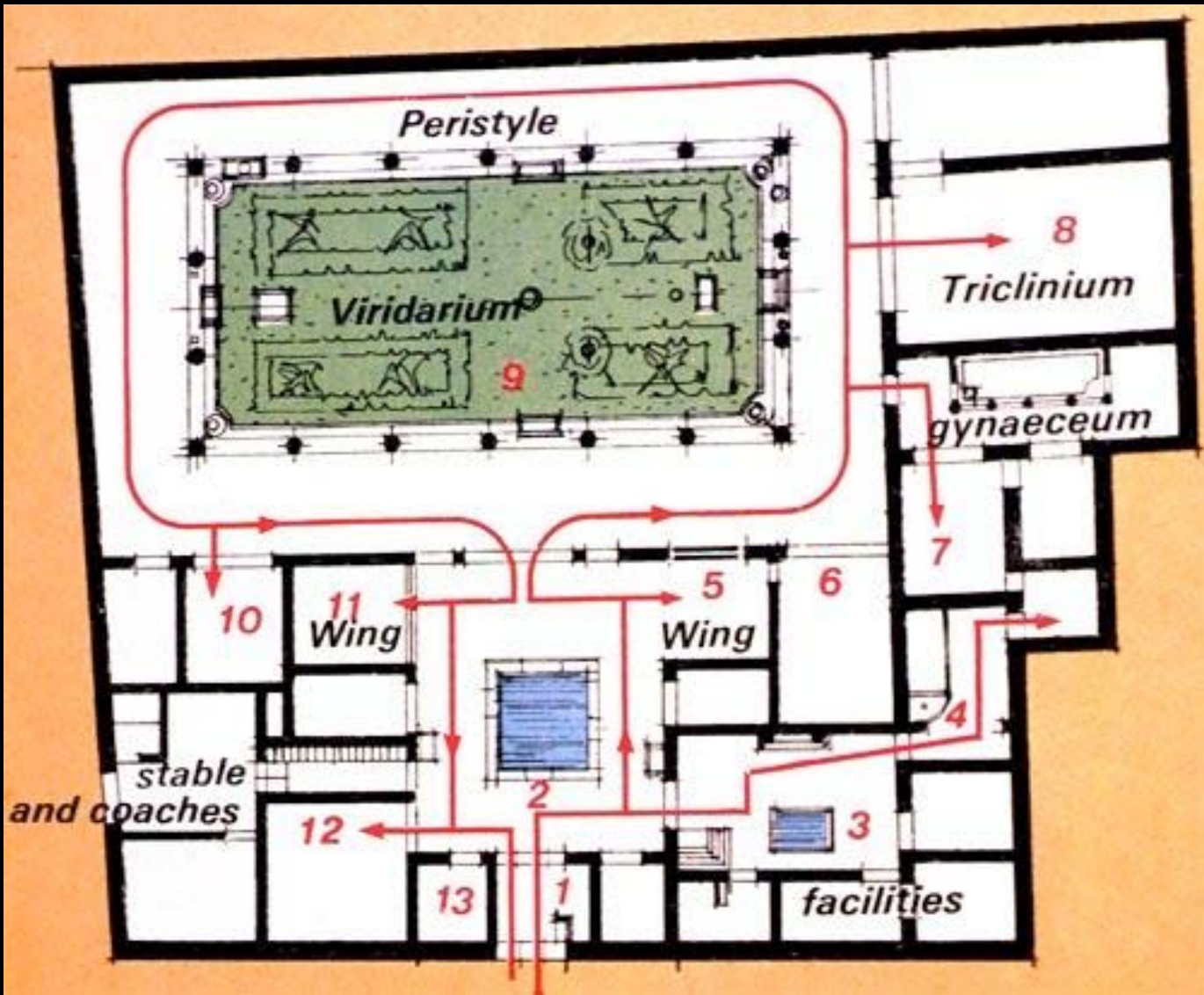
Scene 9: the mother of the bride, the mistress of the villa, or the bride herself



Scene 10: Eros, god of Love, is the final figure in the narrative.

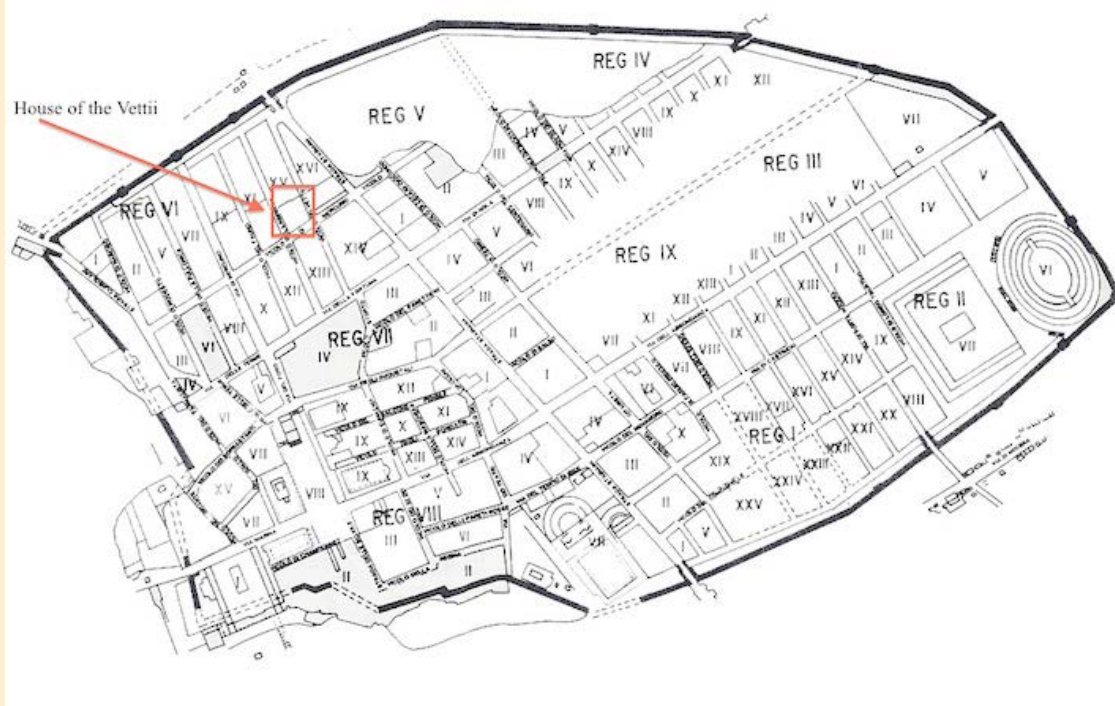
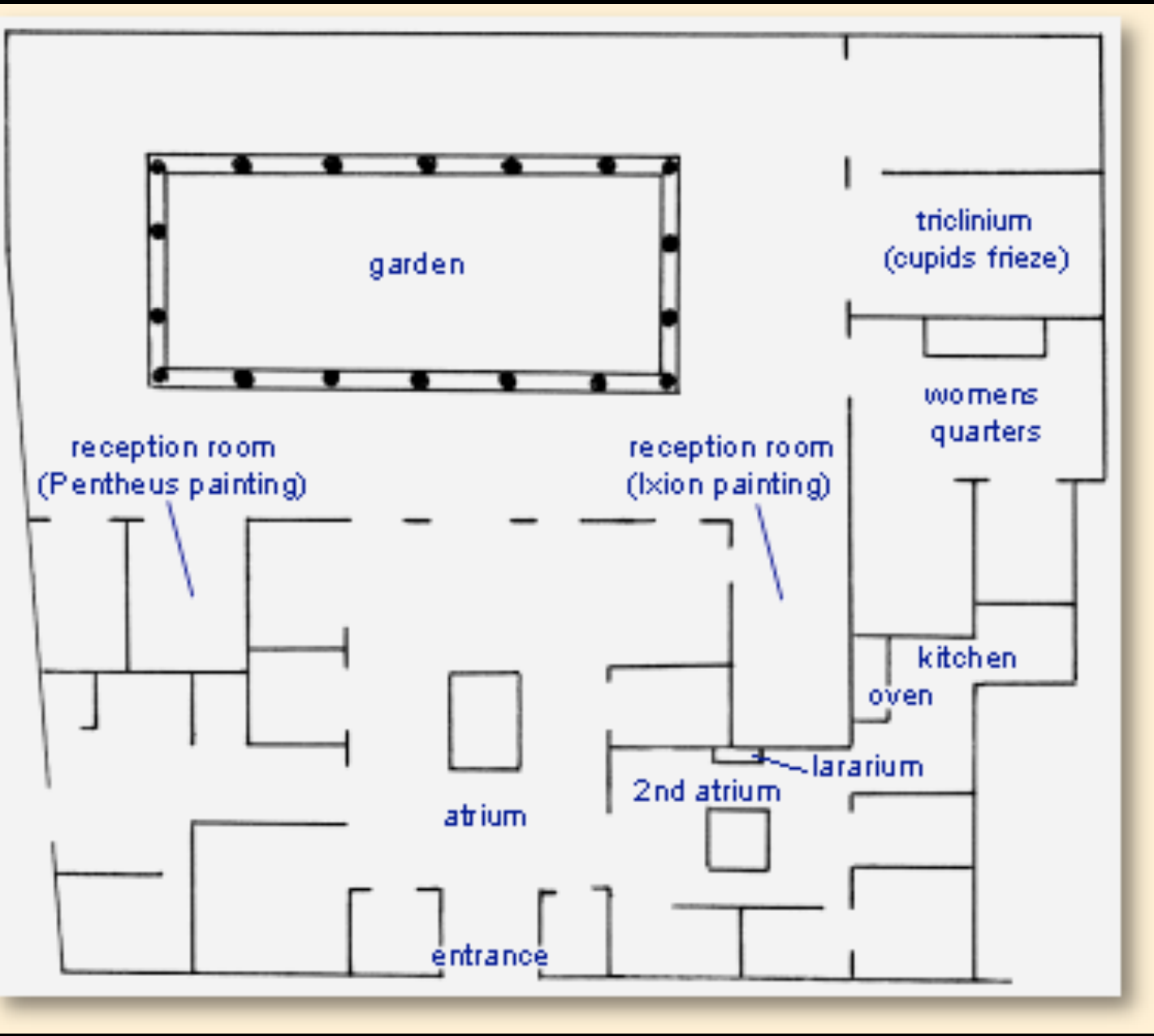


Annotated map of Pompeii, founded between 4th and 2nd century BCE



House of the Vettii Brothers, Pompeii, 1st c. AD
 Compluvium and Impluvium: The compluvium is a square opening in the roof of the ancient Roman atrium toward which the roof sloped and through which the rain fell into the impluvium

Garden of the House of the Vettii





CREATING THE ILLUSION OF FRAMED ART ON
THE WALL

House of the Vettii. Pompeii, Fourth style mural
painting sequence from the Oeci. Ca. 62-79 CE;
in the Fourth Style of Pompeian painting
Above: General View
Left: The Ixion Room



Fourth style

The overall feeling of the walls typically formed a mosaic of *framed* pictures that took up entire walls.



Priapus

One of the more common examples of wall paintings is the one of Priapus. Priapus was the god of fertility and in the image, is weighing his penis against a money sack. Behind him is a basket full of fruits. The painting is found in the entranceway to the house and one can conclude that not only did the Vettii want this image to be visible, but that, since the society was so obsessed with status, this image might highlight some quality the Vettii believed they had, or strived to achieve. A statue of Priapus is also found in the garden. Clarke notes that "Priapus' phallus wards way the Evil Eye."

<http://web.mit.edu/course/21/21h.405/www/vettii/art.html>



Wall painting in the Triclinium, Cupid's Frieze, House of the Vettii, Pompeii, 1st c. CE



Cupids making perfume, House of the Vettii, Pompeii, 1st c. CE



View of the Forum
with Mount
Vesuvius in the
distance, Pompeii





Left: The March 1944 eruption of Vesuvius by Jack Reinhardt, B24 tailgunner

Vesuvio in Southern Italy and alarmingly close to the huge conurbation of Naples has been dormant since 1944. It was not always so quiet; as well as numerous and sometimes hugely devastating eruptions documented since 79 AD, the last 285 years have seen significant eruptions in: 1631, 1660, 1682, 1694, 1698, 1707, 1737, 1760, 1767, 1779, 1794, 1822, 1834, 1839, 1850, 1855, 1861, 1868, 1872, 1906, 1926 and 1929 and 1944. There have been few periods of actual dormancy and these have been mostly short lived, the repose since 1944 is the longest since before the major eruption of 1631.



Charles Francois Lacroix de Marseilles, Eruption of Mount Vesuvius, 1762



This amazing mountain continues to exhibit such various scenes of sublimity and beauty at exactly the distance one would choose to observe it from—a distance which almost admits examination and certainly excludes immediate fear. When in the silent night, however, one listens to its groaning, while hollow sighs, as of gigantic sorrow, are often heard distinctly in my apartment, nothing can surpass one's sensation of amazement . . .
--Hester Thrale, 1786

Pierre Jacques Volaire, Eruption of Mount Vesuvius, 1777 – Volaire painted more than thirty scenes of Mt. Vesuvius, among the principal natural attractions of the continent because it erupted periodically throughout the century.



JMW Turner, Mount
Vesuvius in Eruption,
1817



Eruption of
Mt. Vesuvius
79 CE

Karl Brullov, The
Last Day of
Pompeii, 1830-
33



John Martin, Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum, 1822



Andy Warhol, Vesuvius, 1985



Eruption of Mt. Vesuvius 79 CE

Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as other cities affected by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. The black cloud represents the general distribution of ash, pumice and cinders.







Loaf of bread
Source: © William Starling, Alabamba, USA

CLOSE X

