

Baroque Art

TIME PERIOD: 1690–1700

The term “Baroque” means “irregularly shaped” or “odd,” a negative word that evolved in the eighteenth century to describe the Baroque’s departure from the Italian Renaissance.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: Modern European art emerges from an interaction with cultures on a global scale. Prior studies highlighted a more narrow geographic or chronological approach.

Essential Knowledge:

- Western Europe and the American colonies are at the center of Renaissance and Baroque studies.
- Europe and the Americas are brought into closer alignment with this new course of study. One is not considered more important than the other.
- Europeans brought goods and culture to the Western hemisphere with their trade and conquest.
- Europeans began to collect and organize knowledge from their various expansions around the globe. European influence is on the rise at home and abroad.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: Seventeenth century art can be characterized by a taste for the theatrical and a stress on movement and compositional variety. Many artists experiment with psychological and emotional portrayals.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: The Reformation and Counter-Reformation caused a rift in Christian art of Western Europe.

Essential Knowledge:

- In Northern Europe there was an emphasis on non-religious subjects like portraits, genre paintings, and still lifes. In Southern Europe there was an emphasis on religious subjects with much more active and dynamic compositions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1600, the artistic center of Europe was Rome, particularly at the court of the popes. The completion of Saint Peter’s became a crusade for the Catholic Church, both as an evocation of faith and as a symbol of the Church on earth. By 1650, however, the increased power and

influence of the French kings, first at Paris and then at their capital in Versailles, shifted the art world to France. While Rome still kept its allure as the keeper of the masterpieces for both the ancient world and the Renaissance, France became the center of modern art and innovation, a position it kept unchallenged until the beginning of World War II.

The most important political watershed of the seventeenth century was the Thirty Years' War, which ended in 1648. Ostensibly started over religion, and featuring a Catholic resurgence called the Counter-Reformation, the Thirty Years' War also had active political, economic, and social components as well. The war succeeded in devastating central Europe so effectively that economic activity and artistic production ground to a halt in this region for the balance of the seventeenth century.

The Counter-Reformation movement reaffirmed all the things the Protestant Reformation was against. Protestants were largely iconoclasts, breaking painted and sculpted images in churches; Catholics endorsed the place of images and were reinspired to create new ones. Protestants derided saints; Catholics reaffirmed the communion of saints and glorified their images. Protestants played down miracles; Catholics made them visible and palpable as in the *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* (Figures 17.4a and 17.4b).

Patronage and Artistic Life

Even with all the religious conflict, the Catholic Church was still the greatest source of artistic commissions in the seventeenth century, closely followed by royalty and their autocratic governments. Huge churches and massive palaces had big spaces that needed to be filled with large paintings commanding high prices. However, artists were not just interested in monetary gain; many Baroque artists such as **Rubens** and **Bernini** were intensely religious people, who were acting out of a firm commitment to their faith as well as to their art. Credit must be given to the highly cultivated and farsighted patrons who allowed artists to flourish; Pope Urban VIII, for example, sponsored some of Bernini's best work.

BAROQUE ARCHITECTURE

Landscape architecture becomes an important artistic expression in the Baroque. Starting at **Versailles** (Figure 17.3e) and continuing throughout the eighteenth century, palaces are envisioned as the principal feature in an ensemble with gardens that are imaginatively arranged to enhance the buildings they framed. Long views are important. Key windows are viewing stations upon which gardens spread out before the viewer in an imaginatively orchestrated display that suggests man's control over his environment. Views look down extended avenues carpeted by lawns and embraced by bordering trees, usually terminating in a statue or a fountain. The purpose is to impress the viewer with a sense of limitlessness.

Baroque architecture relies on movement. Façades undulate, creating symmetrical cavities of shadow alternating with projecting pilasters that capture the sun. Emphasis is on the center of the façade with wavelike forms that accentuate the entrance. Usually entrances are topped by pediments or tympana to reinforce their importance. A careful interplay of concave and convex shapes marks the most experimental buildings by **Borromini**. Interiors are richly designed to combine all the arts; painting and sculpture service the architectural members in a choreographed ensemble. The aim of Baroque buildings is a dramatically unified effect.

Baroque architecture is large; it seeks to impress with its size and its elaborate ornamentation. In this regard, the Baroque style represents the imperial or papal achievements of its patrons—

proclaiming their power and wealth. Buildings are erected at high points accessible by elaborately carved staircases, ones that spill out toward the spectator and change direction—and view—as they rise.

Carlo Maderno, Santa Maria della Vittoria, 1605–1620, Rome (Figure 17.1)

- Church was originally dedicated to Saint Paul
- Rededicated to the Virgin Mary in gratitude for a military victory in Bohemia in 1620
- Turkish standards captured in Siege of Vienna in 1683 on display
- Single wide nave; one of the side chapels houses Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* (Figures 17.4a and 17.4b)
- First story: six Ionic pilasters; emphasis placed on center of façade
- Round and triangular pediments; broken pediments; swags and scrollwork

Francesco Borromini, Saint Charles of the Four Fountains (San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane), 1638–1646, stone and stucco, Rome (Figures 17.2a, 17.2b, and 17.2c)

- So named because it is on a square in Rome with four fountains
- Unusually small site
- Alternating convex and concave patterns and undulating volumes in ground plan and façade
- Façade higher than the rest of the building
- Interior side chapels merge into central space
- Interior dome oval shaped and coffered
- Walls treated sculpturally
- Borromini worked in shades of white, avoided colors used in many Baroque buildings
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Architectural Sculpture**
 - Temple of Amun-Re (Figures 3.8a, 3.8b, 3.8c)
 - Parthenon (Figures 4.4, 4.16b)
 - Lakshmana Temple (Figures 23.7a, 23.7b)



Figure 17.1: Carlo Maderno, Santa Maria della Vittoria, 1605–1620, Rome



Figures 17.2a: Francesco Borromini, Saint Charles of the Four Fountains (San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane), 1638–1646, stone and stucco, Rome



Figure 17.2b: Francesco Borromini, interior of Saint Charles of the Four Fountains (San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane), 1638–1646, stone and stucco, Rome, Italy

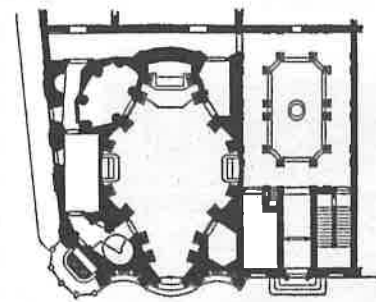


Figure 17.2c: Francesco Borromini, plan of Saint Charles of the Four Fountains (San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane)



Figure 17.3a: Louis Le Vau and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Versailles, begun 1669, masonry, stone, wood, iron, and gold leaf, Versailles, France



Figure 17.3b: Louis Le Vau and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Versailles façade, begun 1669, masonry, stone, wood, iron, and gold leaf, Versailles, France

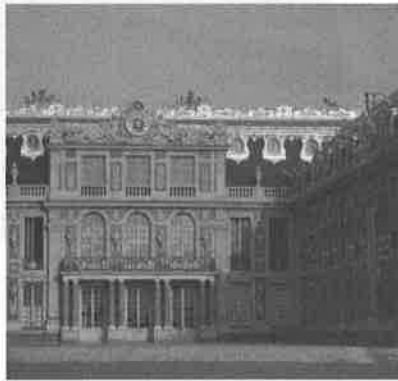


Figure 17.3c: Louis Le Vau and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Versailles courtyard, begun 1669, masonry, stone, wood, iron, and gold leaf, Versailles, France



Figure 17.3d: Louis Le Vau and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Versailles, Hall of Mirrors, begun 1669, masonry, stone, wood, iron, and gold leaf, Versailles, France



Figure 17.3e: Versailles gardens, begun 1669, Versailles, France

Louis Le Vau and Jules Hardouin-Mansart, Versailles, begun 1669, masonry, stone, wood, iron, and gold leaf; gardens, Versailles, France (Figures 17.3a–17.3e)

- Reorganization and remodeling of a hunting lodge into an elaborate palace
- Center of the building was Louis XIV's bedroom, or audience chamber, from which all aspects of the design radiate like rays from the sun (hence Louis's sobriquet "the Sun King")
- Versailles corresponds to Louis XIV's political and economic ambitions
- Building was centered in a vast garden and town complex radiating from it
- Subdued exterior decoration on façade; undulation of projecting members is understated
- Hall of Mirrors: 240-foot long; barrel-vaulted painted ceiling; light comes in from one side and ricochets off the largest panes of glass that could be made at the time; flickering use of light in an architectural setting; ceiling paintings illustrate civil and military achievements of Louis XIV
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: National Capitals**
 - Nan Madol (Figures 28.1a, 28.1b)
 - Great Zimbabwe (Figures 27.1a, 27.1b)
 - Forbidden City (Figures 24.2a, 24.2b, 24.2c, 24.2d)
- Gardens:
 - Classically and harmoniously arranged
 - Formal gardens near palace; more wooded and less elaborate plantings at distances farther from palace
 - Baroque characteristics:
 - size
 - long vistas
 - terminal views in fountains and statuary
 - Mile-long canal crossed by another canal forms the main axis of the gardens
 - Only the fountains near the palace played all the time; others turned on for the king if he progressed through the gardens

BAROQUE PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Baroque artists explored subjects born in the Renaissance but previously considered too humble for serious painters to indulge in. These subjects, still life, genre, and landscape painting, flourished in the seventeenth-century as never before. While religious and historical paintings were still considered the highest form of expression, even great artists such as **Rembrandt** and **Rubens** painted landscapes and genre scenes. Still lifes were a specialty of the Dutch school.

Landscapes and still lifes exist not in and of themselves, but to express a higher meaning. Still lifes frequently contain a **vanitas** theme, which stresses the brevity of life and the folly of human vanity. Broad open landscapes feature small figures in the foreground acting out a Biblical or mythological passage. Genre paintings often had an allegorical commentary on a contemporary or historical issue.

Landscapes were never actual views of a particular site; instead they were composed in a studio from sketches done in the field. The artist was free to select trees from one place and put them with buildings from another. Landscape painters felt they had to reach beyond the visual into a world of creation that relies on the thoughtful combination of disparate elements to make an artistic statement.

Painters were fascinated by **Caravaggio's** use of **tenebrism**—even the greatest painters of the century experimented with it. The handling of light and shadow became a trademark of the Baroque, not only for painters, but for sculptors and architects as well. Northern artists specialized in **impasto** brushwork, which created a feeling of spontaneity with a vibrant use of visible brushwork. Similarly, sculptors animated the texture of surfaces by variously polishing or abrading surfaces.

Painters like **Caravaggio** painted with an expressive sense of movement. Figures are dramatically rendered, even in what would appear to be a simple portrait. Light effects are key, as offstage sources illuminated parts of figures in a strong dark light contrast called **tenebroso**. Colors are descriptive and evocative. Inspiration comes from the Venetian Renaissance, and passes through **Caravaggio** and onto **Rubens** and his followers, who are called **Rubénistes**. Naturalists reject what they perceive as the contortions and artificiality of the Mannerists.

As in the other arts, Baroque sculpture stressed movement. Figures are caught in mid-motion, mouths open, with the flesh of one figure yielding to the touch of another. Some large works, particularly those by **Bernini**, were often meant to be placed in the middle of the floor or at a slight distance from a wall and be seen in the round. Sculptors employ negative space, carving large openings in a work so that the viewer can contemplate a multiplicity of angles. Marble is treated with a tactile sense: human skin given a high polish, angel wings shown with a feathery touch, animal skins reveal a coarser feel. Baroque sculptors found inspiration in the major works of the Greek Hellenistic period.

Italian Baroque Art

Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, 1647–1652, marble, stucco and gilt bronze, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome (Figures 17.4a and 17.4b)

- A sculptural interpretation of Saint Teresa's diary in which she tells of her visions of God, many involving an angel descending with an arrow and plunging it into her



Figure 17.4a: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Cornaro Chapel, *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, 1647–1652, marble, stucco, and gilt bronze, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome



Figure 17.4b: Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, 1647–1652, marble, Santa Maria della Vittoria, Rome

- Natural light redirected onto the sculpture from a window hidden above the work
- Marble handled in a tactile way to reveal textures: skin is high gloss, feathers of angel are rougher, drapery is animated and fluid, clouds are roughly cut
- Carved from a single block of marble
- Figures seem to float in their space, with the rays of God's light symbolically illuminating the scene from behind
- Saint Teresa's pose suggests sexual exhaustion, a feeling that is consistent with her description of spiritual ecstasy described in her diary entries
- Stagelike setting with the patrons, members of the Cornaro family, sitting in theatre boxes looking on and commenting
- **Cross-Cultural Connections: Use of Light and Dark**
 - Lanzón Stele (Figure 26.1b)
 - Court of the Lions (Figure 9.15b)
 - Pantheon (Figures 6.11a, 6.11b)



Figure 17.5: Caravaggio, *Calling of Saint Matthew*, 1597–1601, oil on canvas, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome

Caravaggio, *Calling of Saint Matthew*, 1597–1601, oil on canvas, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome (Figure 17.5)

- One of three paintings illustrating the life of Saint Matthew in a chapel dedicated to him by the Contarelli family
- Light comes in from two sources on right, creating a tenebroso effect on figures
- Diagonal shaft of light points directly to Saint Matthew, who points to himself as if unsure that Christ would select a tax collector, depicting a moment in time
- Christ's hand gesture similar to Adam's on the Sistine Chapel ceiling
- Foppishly dressed figures are in the latest Baroque fashion
- Narrow stage for figures to sit and stand on
- Only slight suggestion of halo on Christ's head indicates sanctity of the scene
- Sensual figures, everyday characteristics
- Naturalist approach to the Baroque
- **Cross-Cultural Connections: Light Effects**
 - Viola, *Crossing* (Figures 29.18a, 29.18b)
 - Walker, *Darkytown Rebellion* (Figure 29.21)
 - *Notre Dame de la Belle Verriere* (Figure 12.8)



Figure 17.6: Giovanni Battista Gaulli, *Triumph of the Name of Jesus*, 1676–1679, fresco and stucco, Il Gesù, Rome

Giovanni Battista Gaulli, *Triumph of the Name of Jesus*, 1676–1679, Il Gesù, Rome (Figure 17.6)

- On the ceiling in the main nave of Il Gesù, Rome (Figure 16.6b)
- Monogram of Jesus's "IHS" in a brilliantly lit sea of golden color
- Figures tumbling below the name; some carved in stucco enhancing the three-dimensional effect
- Some cast long shadows across the barrel vault
- Some painted figures are not stucco, but maintain a vibrant three-dimensional illusion

- As if the ceiling were open to the sky and the figures were spiraling around Jesus's name
- Di sotto in sù
- The damned are cast into hell; the saved rise heavenward; a Last Judgment
- Influence of Bernini's dramatic emotionalism in the style; Gaulli was Bernini's pupil
- **Cross-Cultural Connections: Ceiling Paintings**
 - Michelangelo, *Flood* (Figure 16.2c)
 - Catacomb of Priscilla Good Shepherd (Figure 7.1c)
 - Lascaux Caves (Figure 1.8)

Spanish Baroque Art

Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, 1656, oil on canvas, Prado, Madrid (Figure 17.7)

- Group portrait of the artist in his studio at work; he steps back from the canvas and looks at the viewer
- Velázquez wears the cross of the Royal Order of Santiago, elevating him to knighthood
- Central is the Infanta Margarita of Spain with her meninas, or attendants, a dog, a dwarf, and a midget. Behind are two chaperones in half-shadow. In the doorway is perhaps José Nieto, who was head of the queen's tapestry works (hence his hand on a curtain)
- King and queen appear in a mirror. But what is the mirror reflecting: Velázquez's canvas? The king and queen standing in our space (is this why people have turned around)? Or is it reflecting a painting of the king and queen on our wall of the room?
- Alternating darks and lights draw us deeper into the canvas; the mirror simultaneously reflects out into our space
- Dappled effect of light on shimmering surfaces
- Painting originally hung in Philip IV's study
- **Cross-Cultural Connections: Self-Portraits**
 - Morie, *Pure Land* (Figure 29.19)
 - Raphael, *School of Athens* (Figure 16.3)
 - Bichitr, *Jahangir Preferring a Sufi Sheikh to Kings* (Figure 23.9)



Figure 17.7: Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*, 1656, oil on canvas, Prado, Madrid



Figure 17.8: Peter Paul Rubens, *Henry IV Receives the Portrait of Marie de' Medici*, 1621-1625, oil on canvas, Louvre, Paris

Flemish Baroque Art

Peter Paul Rubens, *Marie de' Medici Cycle*, 1621-1625, oil on canvas, Louvre, Paris (Figure 17.8)

- Heroic gestures, demonstrative spiraling figures
- Mellow intensity of color, inspired by Titian and Caravaggio
- Sumptuous full-fleshed women
- Twenty-one huge historical paintings allegorically retelling the life of Marie de' Medici, Queen of France, wife of Henry IV
- Splendid costumes suggest opulent theatrical production
- Allegories assist in telling the story and mix freely with historical people

- **Henry IV Receives the Portrait of Marie de'Medici**
 - Henry IV is smitten by the portrait of his intended
 - Portrait held by Cupid (god of love) and Hymen (god of marriage)
 - Jupiter and Juno look down from below; symbolic of marital harmony; they express support
 - Royalty considered demi-gods; approval of mythological gods in concert with their beliefs about themselves
 - Portraits were exchanged before the marriage
 - Married by proxy in 1600
 - Behind Henry is the personification of France
 - France is a female figure with a masculine helmet and manly legs
 - Whispers to Henry to take love over war
 - **Cross-Cultural Connections: Relationships**
 - Klimt, *The Kiss* (Figure 21.12)
 - Veranda post (Figure 27.14)
 - *Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and Three Daughters* (Figure 3.10)

Dutch Baroque Art

While the Baroque is often associated with stately court art, it also flourished in mercantile Holland. Dutch paintings are harbingers of modern taste: landscapes, portraits, and genre paintings flourished; religious ecstasies, great myths, and historical subjects were avoided. In contrast to the massive buildings in other countries, Dutch houses are small and wall space scarce, so painters designed their works to hang in more intimate settings. Even though commerce and trade boomed, the Dutch did not want industry portrayed in their works. Ships are sailboats, not merchant vessels, which courageously braved the weather, not unloaded cargo. Animals are shown quietly grazing rather than giving milk or being shorn for wool. A featureless flat Dutch landscape is animated by powerful and evocative skies.

Dutch painting, however, has several things in common with the rest of European art. Most significantly, Dutch art features many layers of symbolism that provokes the viewer to intellectual consideration. Still life paintings, for example, are not the mere arrangement of inanimate objects, but a cause to ponder the passing and fleetness of life. Stark church interiors often symbolized the triumph of Protestantism over Catholicism. Indeed, while Dutch art may seem outside the mainstream of the Baroque, it does have important parallels with contemporary art in the rest of Europe.



Figure 17.9: Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait with Saskia*, 1636, etching, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait with Saskia*, 1636, etching, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Figure 17.9)

- Only image of Rembrandt with his wife together in an etching
- 30-year-old Rembrandt with his new bride
- Not wearing contemporary dress; fanciful dress
- Images of Saskia abundant in Rembrandt's output, a source of inspiration for him
- Marital harmony, Saskia as a muse inspiring him
- Wife and mother of four
- Rembrandt is drawing, or perhaps making an etching

- Rembrandt painted 50 self-portraits; 32 self-portrait etchings; 7 self-portrait drawings
- Not for general sale, but for private purposes
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Graphic Arts**
 - Dürer, *Adam and Eve* (Figure 14.3)
 - Cranach, *Allegory of Law and Grace* (Figure 21.7)
 - Kollwitz, *Memorial Sheet for Karl Liebknecht* (Figure 22.4)

Johannes Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance*, c. 1664, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington (Figure 17.10)

- Small number of Vermeer works in existence
- Except for two landscapes, Vermeer's works portray intimate scenes in the interior of Dutch homes
- Viewer looks into a private world in which seemingly small gestures take on a significance greater than what first appears
- Figures seem unaware of our presence
- Light enters from the left and warmly highlights textures and surfaces: the woman's garments, wood table, marble checkerboard floor, jewelry, painting, etc.
- A moment in time: stillness and timelessness
- A moment of weighing and judging
- Behind a painting of the Last Judgment: a time of weighing souls
- Balance has nothing in it; pearls and coins on the table waiting to be measured
- Balancing reference perhaps to the unborn child
- Allegory
- Vanitas: gold should not be a false allure
- Geometric lines focus on a central point at the pivot of the balance
- Dressed in fine clothing: fur-trimmed
- Perhaps a Vermeer family member posed for the painting; theories that it may have been his wife, Caterina
- **Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Genre Scenes**
 - *Stele of Hegeso* (Figure 4.7)
 - Cassatt, *The Coiffure* (Figure 21.7)
 - *Bayeux Tapestry, First Meal* (Figure 11.7b)



Figure 17.10: Johannes Vermeer, *Woman Holding a Balance*, c. 1664, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington

Rachel Ruysch, *Fruits and Insects*, 1711, oil on wood, Uffizi, Florence (Figure 17.11)

- Not a depiction of actual flowers, but a construct of perfect specimens all in bloom at the same time
- Asymmetrical arrangement; artful arrangement
- Probably used illustrations in botany textbooks as a basis for painting
- Her father was a professor of anatomy and botany as well as an amateur painter
- In a phase in which the artist produced still lifes in a woodland setting



Figure 17.11: Rachel Ruysch, *Fruits and Insects*, 1711, oil on wood, Uffizi, Florence

VOCABULARY

Di sotto in sù: (“from the bottom up”), a type of ceiling painting in which the figures seem to be hovering above the viewers, often looking down at us (Figure 17.6).

Genre painting: painting in which scenes of everyday life are depicted

Impasto: a thick and very visible application of paint on a painting surface

Tenebroso/Tenebrism: a dramatic dark and light contrast in a painting (Figure 17.5)

Vanitas: a theme in still life painting that stresses the brevity of life and the folly of human vanity (Figure 17.11)

SUMMARY

The Baroque has always symbolized the grand, the majestic, the colorful, and the sumptuous in European art. While the work of Rubens and Bernini and the architecture of Versailles certainly qualify as this view of the Baroque, the period is equally famous for small Dutch paintings of penetrating psychological intensity and masterful interplays of light and shadow.

Illusion is a key element of the Baroque aesthetic. Whether it be the floating of Saint Teresa on a cloud or the tromp l’oeil ceilings of Roman palaces, the Baroque teases our imagination by stretching the limits of the space deep into the picture plane. The same complexity of thought is applied to intriguing and symbolic still lifes, known as vanitas paintings, or intricate groupings of figures such as *Las Meninas* (Figure 17.7).

The Baroque is characterized by a sense of ceaseless movement. Building façades undulate, sculptures are seen in the round, and portraits show sitters ready to speak or interact with the viewer. Naturalist painters, like Caravaggio, use dramatic contrasts of light and dark to highlight the movement of the figures.

The Baroque achieves a splendor through an energetic interaction reminiscent of Hellenistic Greek art, which serves as its original role model.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Multiple-Choice

1. The theatrical illusionism of Baroque works is similar to those seen in which of the following periods?
 - (A) Roman Republic
 - (B) Chinese Ming
 - (C) Cambodian Khmer
 - (D) Greek Hellenistic
2. Vanitas paintings are usually seen as symbolic elements in
 - (A) still lifes, where they demonstrate the passing nature of human life
 - (B) genre paintings, where they show the foibles of human interactions
 - (C) landscapes, where they stress the changing nature of the seasons
 - (D) historical paintings, where they indicate the folly of greatness and triumph

3. An innovation seen in the architecture of Francesco Borromini is his
- (A) use of non-Western elements in his Catholic churches
 - (B) massing of forms on a grand scale to achieve a powerful effect
 - (C) use of gardens to enhance the setting of his buildings
 - (D) creation of stone buildings that are not linear but curvilinear and undulating in form
4. Which of the following is the prime reason why Caravaggio's public and patrons found his art objectionable?
- (A) He copied directly from great masters of the Renaissance and was considered derivative rather than inventive.
 - (B) He worked for discredited bishops, popes, and kings and was tainted by association.
 - (C) He made saintly figures have earthly characteristics, which shocked church officials.
 - (D) He showed the harsh glare of direct sunlight on his figures, which illuminated them in an uncompromising light.
5. The union of mythological gods and allegorical figures with real people as seen in the Peter Paul Rubens painting *Henry IV Receives the Portrait of Marie de' Medici* from the *Marie de' Medici Cycle* can also be seen in
- (A) *Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and Three Daughters*
 - (B) Code of Hammurabi
 - (C) *Night Attack on the Sanjô Palace*
 - (D) Rodin's *The Burghers of Calais*

Short Essay

This work is *Woman Holding a Balance* by Johannes Vermeer from 1664.



What culture is this work from?

Using specific details in the painting, explain how this work is representative of the culture it is from.

Using specific details, explain how this work is different from many other works in the Baroque period.

ANSWER KEY

1. **D** 2. **A** 3. **D** 4. **C** 5. **B**

ANSWERS EXPLAINED

Multiple-Choice

1. **(D)** Works like the *Winged Victory of Samothrace* show a theatrical illusionism, similar to that of Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*.
2. **(A)** Vanitas paintings are still lifes, generally still lifes that stand alone, although they can be part of larger compositions. They usually have symbols of the passing of time, like clocks, skulls, or hourglasses, which symbolize—among other things—the folly of human endeavor.
3. **(D)** Borromini's buildings, like San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, show his interest in cutting stone into undulating and curvilinear forms.
4. **(C)** Caravaggio was famous for using models who were not glorious or saintly looking for images of angels, the Virgin Mary, and various saints.
5. **(B)** In the *Code of Hammurabi*, the god Shamash has contact with Hammurabi by literally handing him the code.

Short-Essay Rubric

Question	Points	Key Points in a Good Response
What culture is this work from?	1	This work is Dutch.
Using specific details in the painting, explain how this work is representative of the culture it is from.	2	Some of the details that could be mentioned include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Genre scene; interior domestic scene ■ Small scale work ■ Delicate handling of light ■ Drapery ■ Captures a moment in time ■ Short mercantile activity in a symbolic sense
Using specific details, explain how this work is different from many other works in the Baroque period.	2	Some of the details that could be mentioned include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ It is not grand, large, or overwhelming, but small and concentrated ■ It does not have religious or historical associations ■ It is seemingly simple, but asks us to contemplate its meaning ■ It is not theatrical, but poignant ■ The drapery is still rather than active ■ The meaning is captured in a simple gesture and a moment suspended in time