

## NORTHERN RENAISSANCE ART

If you can answer these questions, you will have mastered the basics of the course material.

### **Objects**

What types of objects (and in what media) were produced by artists during this period? What were they used for?

### **Materials and techniques**

What materials did artists use? What technologies were available to them, and what advantages and limitations did these technologies have? What processes did they use to make their drawings, paintings, prints, sculptures and tapestries?

### **Training, professional life**

How did artists get their training? What was the social status of artists? Did this vary among different regions of northern Europe?

### **The market**

How did artists exhibit their work? Did they always work on commission? What kinds of people bought their work? How were prices determined? How did artists get to see other artists' work when they lived in different cities? How did the print industry work? How did the market for prints differ from the market for paintings and tapestries?

### **Religious, political and social values**

How did religious changes affect the production and reception of artists' works? How were social values - and issues of class, power and money - expressed in visual art? What were Reformation ideas regarding visual art? During and after the Reformation, what options were available to visual artists?

### **Subject matter**

What is the difference between a narrative image and a devotional image? What is the difference between a "biblical" subject and a "religious" subject? Why is this distinction important?

- Emotions: How and in what context did artists represent emotions?
- Text: Did artists read the texts they were illustrating? How else would they get ideas for illustrating a story or theme?
- Portraits: How did accessories, clothes and background function in portraits, and why were they desirable? Why were emotions suppressed in portraits? Did portrait types change over between 1400 and 1600? If so, how?
- Landscape and Still Life: Why did these develop as independent subjects for art? What were the basic formats used by 2-D artists? How did they approach the problem of depicting the natural world within the confines of their studios?
- Titles: Where do the titles of artworks come from? How is this different from the actual subject?

### Style and convention

Why did artists cultivate particular styles? How do we recognize a style? What elements in the work can we look at to help us determine authorship? Why is authorship important?

Why are so many figures and subjects, and clothing, attributes, settings depicted the same way?

What were the characteristics of the “Flemish style” that disseminated throughout Europe after 1450?

What elements of Italian art and design were adopted by Flemish artists in the early-mid 16<sup>th</sup> century?

### Ideas about art

- What was considered good and important art in northern Europe between 1400 and 1600? How did these standards vary from region to region, and over time?
- What was considered “originality” and “invention” as opposed to copying and adaptation?

### What do these terms mean?

<b>Materials and techniques</b>	<b>Objects and concepts</b>
tempera	altarpiece
oil	diptych, triptych, polyptych
leaf (usually gold or silver)	attribution
gesso	donor
panel	contrapposto
canvas	genre scene
vellum	devotional object
illuminated manuscript	Wanderjahr
panel	
glaze	
grisaille	
one-point/linear perspective	
atmospheric perspective	
tracery	
limewood	
relief sculpture (high relief/low relief)	
sculpture in the round	
woodcut	
engraving	
hatching and cross-hatching	
warp and weft	