

Renaissance

What does “Renaissance” mean?

Renaissance is a French word meaning “rebirth.” It refers to a period in European civilization that was marked by a revival of Classical learning and wisdom. The Renaissance saw many contributions to different fields, including new scientific laws, new forms of art and architecture, and new religious and political ideas.

When did the Renaissance happen?

There is some debate over the actual start of the Renaissance. However, it is generally believed to have begun in Italy during the 14th century, after the end of the Middle Ages, and reached its height in the 15th century. The Renaissance spread to the rest of Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Who are some important people of the Renaissance?

Prominent figures of the Renaissance included philosopher and statesman Niccolò Machiavelli, known for the political treatise *The Prince*; Francis Bacon, a statesman and philosopher considered the master of the English tongue; the astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus, who developed the theory that the solar system was centred on the Sun; the poets Petrarch and Giovanni Boccaccio, who laid the foundations for the humanism of the Renaissance; William Shakespeare, considered the greatest dramatist of all time; astronomer and mathematician Galileo, who helped disprove much of the medieval thinking in science; and the explorers Christopher Columbus, Ferdinand Magellan, and Hernán Cortés.

What is Renaissance art?

One of the fields that embodied the Renaissance was fine art, especially painting and sculpture. Works from this period were inspired by Classical Greek and Roman art and were known for their grace, harmony, and beauty. Artists worked from the living model and perfected techniques such as the use of perspective. In addition, the Renaissance saw the refinement of mediums, notably oils. Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael are widely considered the leading artists of the period.

What does “Renaissance man” mean?

The idea of a Renaissance man developed in Italy and derived from Leon Battista Alberti’s notion that “a man can do all things if he will.” The ideal embodied the basic tenets of Renaissance humanism, which considered man the centre of the universe and led to the belief that people should try to embrace all knowledge and develop their own abilities as fully as possible. Leonardo da Vinci is a leading example of a Renaissance man, noted for his achievements in art, science, music, invention, and writing.