CHAPTER 6
ETRUSCAN
Etruscans

• The Etruscans were the people that lived in Italy before the Romans

• Etruscans were in contact with the Greek colonies in southern Italy and their sculptures and temples were heavily influenced by Archaic Greek art

• Etruscan excelled in bronze and terra-cotta sculptures

• The sophisticated tombs in huge necropoli (“city of the dead”, large burial area) still survive in large numbers to give us some idea of Etruscan life and art.
The Etruscans mined iron, tin, copper, and silver, creating great wealth in the process and transforming Etruscan society. The most spectacular luxurious objects were found in tombs, this is a gold fibula.

**Fibula:** clasp or safety pin

**Granulation:** A decorative technique in which tiny metal balls - granules are fused to a metal surface.
Greek stone gable-roofed temples but had wood columns, tile-covered wood roof, and walls of sun-dried mud brick. Entrance was a narrow staircase at the center of the front of the temple, which sat on a high podium, the only part made of stone. Proportions are difference – Greek was twice as long, typical ratio was 6:5. Columns were in front of the building, creating a deep porch, columns resembled Greek Doric but they were made of wood, unfluted and had bases, it had 3 cells (one for each chief god) statuary was in terracotta instead of stone – on the roofs of their temples.
Etruscan Temple

• Not much architecture survives – we know about it from Vitruvius, a Roman architect in the 1st Century
• Made of mud-brick and wood, wood Tuscan column
• Steps in front direct your attention to the deep porch
• Raised on a podium
• 3 doors represent 3 gods
6-4: Apulu (Apollo), from the Portonaccio Temple, Veii, Italy, ca. 510-500 B.C.E., painted terracotta 5'11' high

• One of the 4 figures that once stood on the Temple of Veii
• Figure has spirit, moves quickly as it strides forward
• Stood on a roof of the temple: an Etruscan innovation; meant to be seen from below
• Archaic smile
• Finest surviving Etruscan temple statue – life-size image of Apulu (Apollo),
• Painted terracotta figure
The Etruscan women attended banquets and recline with their husbands on a common couch, they attended sporting events also (Etruscan paintings and reliefs document this) – THIS IS UNIQUELY ETRUSCAN! – A MAN AND WOMAN SHARING A COUCH - this was VERY different that Greco-Roman tradition, They position shocked and frightened the Greeks (only men, boys, slave girls, and prostitutes attended Greek symposiums- wives stayed home) Etruscan inscriptions reflect their high statues, they also retained their own name and could legally own property independent of their husbands,

Cue Card

6-5: Sarcophagus with reclining couple, from Cerveteri, Italy, ca. 520 B.C.E., painted terracotta 3’9” X 6’7”
This was once brightly painted, contains 4 different cast and fired section of terracotta, man and woman are life-size, it only contains the ashes of the couple (cremation was the most common way of disposing of the dead), EMPHASIS ON PROPORTION AND BALANCE, the upper and lower parts of body different, torso at the waist is unnatural unrealistic L-turn), interest is FOCUSED on the UPPER HALF OF THE FIGURES, ESPECIALLY THE faces and arm
Both once held objects, perhaps an egg to symbolize life after death
Made in separate piece and joined together
Each Etruscan tumulus stood over one or more tombs, the largest mounds exceeded 130 feet in diameter and reaching nearly 50 feet in height.

Tumulus (Tumuli): an artificial mound of earth and stones placed over a grave or a mound.
It accommodated several generation of a single family, painted stucco reliefs, stools, mirrors, drinking cups, pitchers, and knives suggest domestic context, underscoring the connection between Etruscan houses of the dead and those of the living,

6-8: Interior of the tomb of the reliefs
Cerveteri, Italy
3rd century B.C.E.
6-8: Interior of the Tomb of the Reliefs, Cerveteri

Late 4th or early 3rd century
Painted stucco reliefs
It takes it name from the beast that guard the burial chamber from their perch within the pediment of the rear wall, reminiscent of the Medusa pediment at the temple of Artemis, banqueting couples, servants, and musicians, men have dark skin and women fair skin like ancient old-convention, entertainers all make exaggerated gestures with unnatural enlarged hands. Tone is joyful, rather than somber contemplation of death – celebration of a good life. Trees spring up between main figures, shrubbery grows beneath the reclining couches – suggesting a rural setting, ceiling has checkerboard pattern – circles may symbolize time, dancing figures play musical instruments in festive celebration of the dead.
This is one of the best known Etruscan statues, memorable portraits of an animal in the history of art, larger than life-size, hollow-cast bronze, “she-wolf” wolf (story: nursed Romulus and Remus after they were abandoned, when they grew Romulus killed his brother – April 27, 753 BCE, Romulus founded Rome and become the city’s king – the new Roman Republic), the suckling infants were added later in the Renaissance times.

Body is tense, with gaunt ribs, powerful legs, ferocious muzzle capture the psychic intensity of the fierce and protective beast as danger approaches, Alert, snarling, protective, aware, tense, watchful, fierce

Very thin body, face is not wolf-like,
Chimera of Arezzo, from the Arezzo, Italy, 1st half of 4th century B.C.E. Bronze, 31 1/2 in. high

• Composite monster (lion’s head and body and a serpent’s tail)
• Wounded beast poised to attack, angry, snarling, wounded, posed for attack, richly articulated anatomy
• Spike-like mane
Aule Metele is an Etruscan magistrate from Cortona, Italy. Raising his arm to address an assemble, a life-size statue reveals the talent of Etruscan bronze-casting. The orator wears the short toga and high boots of a Roman magistrate, and the portrait style is Roman as well. Etruscan art became Roman art.
Summary

• Etruscans erected large mound-shaped tombs that contained a single large room in which the deceased were interred.

• The wall murals and stucco designs on the interior of the tombs are thought to parallel the interior of their Etruscan homes.

• Large sarcophagi, made of terra-cotta were placed with the tomb of the deceased. Their style is influenced by the Archaic Greek works at the same time.

• The Etruscans were eventually overwhelmed by the Romans, who continued to employ Etruscan artists well into the Roman Republic.