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**Preview:** This chapter surveys art and architecture in Italy in the 13th and 14th centuries, a period that witnessed great changes in modes of representation in sculpture and painting. Artists in the 13th century such as Cimabue work in the Italo-Byzantine style, characterized by a flattening of representational space and less naturalistic, more schematic renderings of figures. In the 14th century, Giotto is recognized for painting scenes and figures based on observations of the natural world. His naturalism is seen as a return to the classical manner, which had been nearly abandoned in the Middle Ages. Giotto is recognized as the first Renaissance artist, his work signaling the rebirth of Greco-Roman naturalism, the emphasis on empirical knowledge, and the development of humanism that are the hallmarks of the Italian art and culture in the 15th and 16th centuries.

**Context:**

**Politics:**  
City States Italy is a collection of powerful city states ruled by oligarchies or despots over a variety of political structures which were rife with internal conflicts and instability. Papacy and Church at pinnacle of power – Pope in Rome a military power in southern Italy in an attempt to unify city states. Papacy also a political force throughout Europe. Florence – becomes (along with Rome) the banking capital of Europe – textile and wool trade also extremely important to Florence. Constantinople is captured by Crusaders in 1204 which results in an influx of Byzantine artist into Italy – especially Siena – Maniera greca the term used for the “eastern” (Greek) style.

**Religion:**  
Cult of the Virgin expressed in many painting of the Madonna Enthroned (Queen of Heaven). St. Francis c. 1220 – “a contemporary Jesus” – establishes preaching order, made a saint (in 1228).

**History:**  
The Black Death begins in 1348 and decimates the populations of Europe. Siena is especially decimated and the Black Death leads to its downfall as a political power.
Two Schools of Late Medieval/Proto Renaissance Painting

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<th>Florentine (Florence)</th>
<th>Siennese (Siena)</th>
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<td><strong>Influence:</strong> Roman art (Classical Art)</td>
<td><strong>Influence:</strong> Byzantine Art</td>
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<td><strong>Characteristics:</strong> naturalism</td>
<td><strong>Characteristics:</strong> decorative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sculptural form</td>
<td>Linear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softer modeling in</td>
<td>Frontal presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modeling of form in light &amp; dark</td>
<td>Love of pattern</td>
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**Artists:**
- Cimabue
- Giotto
- Giotto’s **Madonna Enthroned**
  - Sculptural rendering of forms in space
  - Modeling of form in highlight and shadow
  - Increased sense of naturalism
  - Sculptural solidity and weight of figures

- Duccio
- Simone Martini
- Lorenzetti Brothers
- Duccio’s **Madonna Enthroned**
  - linear decorative quality
  - pattern and flat shapes
  - iconic, conceptual approach
  - linear, insubstantial figures

Ways of creating illusionary form:
1. Modeling
2. Foreshortening
3. Chiaroscuro
4. Definition

Ways of creating illusionary space:
1. Light-shadow
2. Diagonals
3. Overlapping
4. Intensity/value
5. Detail
6. Size
7. Position on the picture plane

Vocabulary: Diptych triptych Predella panel Humanism Cult of the Virgin polydiptych

**Giotto:** Why Giotto (1266-1337) is considered by many to be the “father” of European painting
1. The visible world is the source of knowledge of nature.
2. Stressed the preeminence of the faculty of sight in gaining knowledge of the world.
3. Outward vision replaces the inward vision that characterized earlier painting.

**Characteristics of Giotto’s Painting Style:**
- Constructs a limited but believable environment (space) for his figures
- Abandons frontal, centralized compositions for dramatic compositions
- Focuses on a single event of drama and emotion evoking a single, intense response
- Emphasis on the foreground space using figures with their backs turned to viewer
- Stresses the essentials of a dramatic scene, ignoring the extraneous and distracting

**International Gothic Style Painting**
Beginning with Simone Martini and continuing into the 15th century with Gentile de Fabriano
- Emphasis on surface details, patterns and textures, especially rich fabrics
- Brilliant color, richly contrasting hues in fabrics, foliage/fauna, landscape
- Elegance in figures with an emphasis on contour (rather than emphasis on body structure, weight and mass) elongation of body proportions due in part to chivalric etiquette
- Expressive gestures, (sometimes) facial expressions of figures emotion depicted humanization of religious subject
- Synoptic sequencing of events of a story (several different episodes or events told within the same painting)
- Use of gold leaf in background areas and in details within painting, along with lavishly carved and gilt wood frames using Gothic elements such as tracery, pointed arches, and quatrefoils