Interlude - Artistic Revolution #1

Greek Art

Greek Art ISP213H

From childhood, you're familiar with the Egyptian "style"

It's:

- non-naturalistic
- based on religion
- analytic, representing from memory, as it were unfeeling in large part
- dominated by parts, not perhaps the whole the head, the feet, etc.
- static and conflicting
 (always left) foot forward, no hint of movement



Mycerinus and his Queen, Egyptian, ~1345 B.C.



The judgement at death:

Horus, sky god, always a head of falcon

Anubis, god of funerals, always head of jackal

Here, the heart is being weighed

Formulaic

The most influence, is that of Egypt

- a civilization of ~2000 years
- remarkable that the "style", which is distinctive, was so consistent for so long

Art had a function and was tied to even the hieroglyphic writing

- The function was religious in nature related to preserving what's recognizable for the deceased
- Often followed strict formulae

The representation of people incorporated the features which are most apparent

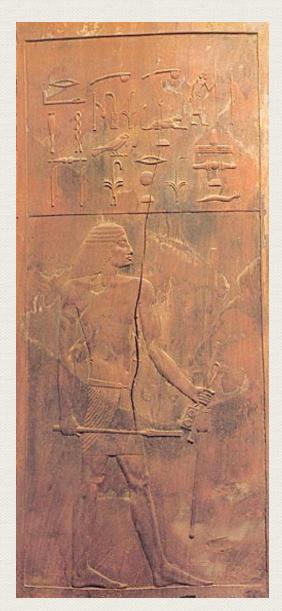
It is not a rendering, but the result of analysis

Prized was an aritist's ability to imitate past formulae
innovation was not prized

 Certainly what you think of brings an image of stiffness and even rigidity

Notice what's going on here with this door.

• Everything that is important about a figure is included a facial profile, but eyes from the front the instep of a foot (both are left here) square shoulders



Portrait of Hesire, Egyptian, ~2770 B.C. a wooden door

Greek Art

But, not always...

Some Egyptian sculpture can be quite delicate and beautiful

- flattering and only the bare essentials
- Certainly paintings from nature are clearly recognizable and correct



Tree of Life, Egyptian, ~2500 B.C.



Geese, Egyptian, ~2500 B.C. Greek Art



Portrait of Head, Egyptian, ~2500 B.C. limestone

There was a respect for nature and these depictions are to remind the deceased of pleasurable times

- Look here: almost a paradoxical relationship
 - •the humans are symbolic...the king larger than the others according to rank, the odd posture
 - •while the birds and the hunting cat are naturalistic
- The formulae persist

Mg., man's coloration is always darker than woman's



Fowling Scene, Egyptian, ~1450 B.C. limestone

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Akhenaton

There was an attempt at change by Akhenaton and his wife,

Nefertiti - Eighteenth Dynasty

- The old gods were eliminated
- A naturalness was introduced a scene of domesticity nearly one of relaxation



Nefertiti, Egyptian, ~1345 B.C.



Akhenaton and Nefertiti and children, Egyptian, ~1345 B.C.

The boy king, Tutankhamun returned to the old ways, old gods, old art

- erased any evidence of Akhenaton
- ~1000B.C., Egypt was overrun by Persians and dominated eventually by a rigid priest caste

Greek Art

Our heritage

Certainly, Greek...but they inherited from

· Egypt, Minoans in Crete, and Mycenaens on their own peninsula

The Minoans' had a sophisticated civilization and some art survives - possibly speaking a form of Greek Especially intriguing is the Palace at Knossos and the fact that they disappeared!

An infatuation with the Bull, indeed a images of bull-fighting, or rather bull-dancing survives in many forms

Movement seems to be a common feature of Minoan Art Un-stiff

 A relatively delicate approach to representing humans...unlike that of the Egyptians

The gesture is almost modern.



Blue Ladies, Minoan, ~1600B.C.?



Bull leaping, Minoan, ~1500B.C.?

The influence of Egypt on Greece is indirect

Egypt and Crete clearly traded

Crete and near east - Assyria and Crete and Mycenae, the direct forefathers

This was a somewhat feisty culture

Colorful, builders of impressive multi-story houses

Warlike, marauders

On one pillaging trip, they lay siege to the city of Troy, said to be over the stolen princess, Helen

~1200 BC, raiders from the north invaded

These were the wars of Homer

complete defeat...and a dark ages that lasted for ~450 years on the Greek mainland



plaster head, Mycenaean, ~1345 B.C. Greek Art



Orpheus fresco, Mycenaean, ~1300-125 B.C.



Mask of Agamemnon, Mycenaean, ~1500 B.C.