

## HOW IMPORTANT WERE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ANTONIO CANALETTO TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT?

Antonio Canaletto is one of the most important artists from the art area of Europe's Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement that was developed before 18th century.

The Enlightenment started to amplify in London and Paris, where writers and philosophers believed that they were more intelligent than the others, they thought they could see or imagine something that anyone else could see. They thought that the human way to think would be used to erase superstition, ignorance, and it would build a better world. The first an important target was the religion, in the Catholic Church in France, and followed by the domination of society.

Other movements, which were developed were: Music, Philosophy, Literature and Art (Painting).

During the Enlightenment many ideas began to move around all Europe, applying all aspects of life, including art. During this movement different styles were changed: from baroque art to classical art, which changed to rococo and finally to gothic art.

**Baroque:** Baroque art was recognized as a rich style art in the seventeenth century. The most important artists were Peter Paul Rubens and Gian Bernini.

**Classic:** This is a classical art painting by Nicolas Poussin, the most important artist in this section.

*“My nature forces me towards the orderly”*

This is one of his most famous phrase, in which people remember him. This painting contains uniform style and line.

**Rococo:** This style of art is delicate, and it was really popular and appreciated during the eighteenth century. The most important artist is Antoine Watteau.

**Gothic:** This art has a geometrical form. The most famous artist was Sir Christopher Wren.

Canaletto changed people's minds in how scenes should be painted when he tries to paint using an objective aspect as opposed to the traditional subjective view, which painters commonly used. He adapted these theories of art during the XVIII century.

After Canaletto's first painting, *Piazza San Marco* (or San Marco Square), in Venice, the use of the effect of light on the painting's landscapes were explored. He is the most famous “view landscapes” painter, because in his operas you can see that he loved his native city by looking at the colorful and realistic view of the painting. He worked for Joseph Smith, a famous person in England, who didn't stop Canaletto to success with his paintings, until his admirers didn't like his English paintings anymore, as the “*Seen*

*through an Arch of Westminster Bridge*”, so he decided to go back to Venice definitively.

***Piazza San Marco – Venice – c.1725***

***Seen Through an Arch of Westminster Bridge – London - c. 1746-7***

To see the difference that a Canaletto’s painting is, I’ll explain with two examples of highlights that he used and how they attract the viewer’s attention.

The first is “*The French Ambassador Being Received at the Doge’s Palace*” painted in 1728-30 c.

This is the painting that everyone can see, the aspect, the first time we see it, is normal, and it looks like other paintings, but if we stay just a little longer to look at it, all its particular details, we can see that the artist is trying to make realistic the building on the right:

This is the shape of the building. If we compare the two illustrations and concentrate on the building, we can see that it is the object that Canaletto would make authentic, in fact it has different colors used with a special highlight art style.

This is the front of the building. Here it’s more clearly understandable the effects and the style he used.

Canaletto was an Italian painter, and I think he was benefitted by the Italy's landscape and beautiful places in Venice, where he could find an inspiration for his arts. I've never been to Venice, but I can imagine it looking at his operas, wich give me a way to thing about his native city. He painted with love thinking his native land, while he was in England, and he didn't write for work, but just for his passion of art, but when he tried to changed his mind to a different city the people didn't appreciate him anyone, until he changed back to Venice.

After I explaing the "secret" about his paintings, how you can understand his arts, captng the right view of objects in a objective aspect, you can understand why peofesional painters stay hours to admire his arts.