





13 Painters

Children Should Know

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PRESTEL

Munich · London · New York

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In

this book you'll get to know thirteen painters from many different time periods. These artists' painting styles are as varied as the times in which they lived. They had (and have) very special skills and have never been afraid to try out new ideas. And since so many people liked what they painted, and the way they painted, the artists became so famous that we still know about them today.

Each painter's page has a timeline that shows what was happening when that painter lived. Words that you may not know yet are marked with an asterisk (*) and are explained in a glossary at the back of the book. There are also several quiz questions about the painters—you can find the answers on the last page.

And, by the way, almost all these painters began painting as children ...

So have fun and explore!

Difficult words are explained here.

45 • Glossary



42 • Basquiat



38 • Gerhard Richter



34 • Salvador Dalí



24 • Gustav Klimt



28 • August Macke



32 • Georgia O'Keeffe

1445 Johannes Gutenberg invents moveable type for printing books

1453 Constantinople falls to the Ottomans, ending the Greek Byzantine Empire

1430

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**Born:**

ca. 1450 as Jeronimus van Aken in 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands

Died:

August 1516 (buried on August 9) in the town of his birth

Lived in:

Bosch lived his entire life in his native town.

Period:

Renaissance*

Hieronymus Bosch

Hieronymus Bosch is surely one of the most imaginative painters of all time. There are more strange figures in his pictures than in the work of any other artist.

No one knows where Hieronymus got his outlandish ideas. Unfortunately, we know very little in general about this painter, for almost no records about him have survived. His grandfather and his father, Jan and Antonius van Aken, were also painters. We don't even know why Hieronymus named himself after his hometown of 's-Hertogenbosch. But we do know that he was a successful painter and a respected citizen of his town, and that he taught many painting students in his workshop.

Hieronymus's paintings often took human frailties as their theme. In his picture *The Conjuror*, he shows a magician performing amazing tricks for the public. The magician has an owl in his basket, and it looks like he is about to conjure a toad from the mouth of a curious spectator. A crowd is watching, fascinated by what is going on between the conjuror and his victim, but no one notices that the man to the left is about to steal the spectator's purse.

Bosch's masterpiece was a great altarpiece known as *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. It is filled with a vast jumble of people and fantastical figures: birds with the heads of frogs, giant strawberries, a kind of tree-person with a body that looks like an egg, birds that are larger than people, two-legged dogs with enormous ears, glass pipes, and strange buildings that look like houses from another galaxy.





The Conjurer, ca. 1480
Musée Municipal, Saint-Germain-en-Laye

If you rotate the picture counterclockwise, you can see a face on the table: the two little cups form the eyes, the large cup is the nose, and a stick forms the mouth.

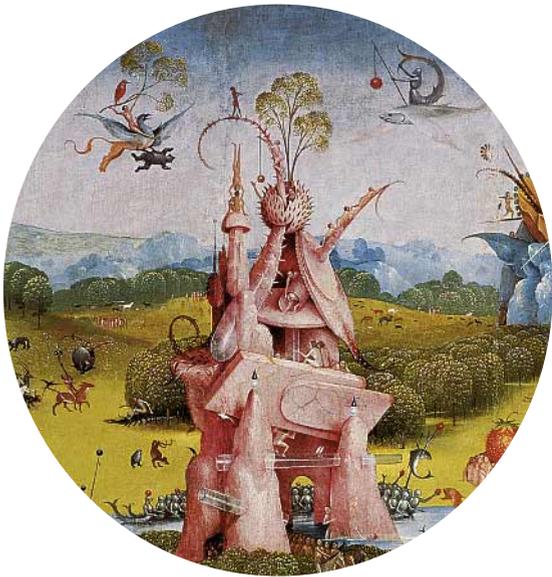
Today it's no longer easy to say what all these images were supposed to mean. But even during the period in which Bosch painted the altarpiece, most people did not know what to make of it. No one had ever seen such pictures before. Yet for this very reason, many people wanted to have a picture painted by Bosch. Rulers sent their messengers to buy his pictures. The Spanish king was Bosch's biggest patron. He bought a total of thirty-three works by the artist!

Try painting or drawing like Hieronymus Bosch. Conjure up some animals that you know never really existed ... maybe a rabbit with an elephant's trunk or a dog with the ears of a donkey.

The Garden of Earthly Delights, ca. 1510
Prado, Madrid

On the wing of the altar-piece to the left you can see Paradise with Adam and Eve, the original people in the Bible. On the wing to the right is hell, where houses are burning, volcanoes are erupting, and people are crying out in fear of everything that's going to happen to them. The large central panel is filled with people doing all sorts of strange things in a beautiful landscape. They're riding pigs, carrying giant fruits around, hiding in large eggshells and flower blossoms, and playing with enormous fish and birds.





1509 Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus determines that the Earth revolves around the sun
1508–12 Michelangelo paints the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel

1517 Martin Luther publishes his *Ninety-Five Theses*
1519–22 Portuguese

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**Born:**

ca. 1490 (possibly earlier) as Tiziano Vecellio in Pieve di Cadore, Italy

Died:

August 27, 1576
in Venice, Italy

Background:

Trained with Gentile and Giovanni Bellini

Period:

High Renaissance*

Titian

We don't know exactly how old Titian lived to be, because the year of his birth is not known for certain. Some say he was eighty-eight when he died in 1576, and others claim he was a hundred years old. In any case, he lived so long that it's impossible to describe everything he painted here!

Titian spent his entire life in the Italian city of Venice, and he became one of the best and most sought-after painters of his time. He became famous for his beautiful altarpieces, which he painted in bright, glowing colors.

Titian also became one of the most important portrait painters of his age. Many important people had their portraits created by him. Beautiful women, clever men, popes, dukes, and emperors were among his clients. They were all delighted by Titian's portraits, for he was especially skilled at painting his sitters just as they were. But at the same time, he was able to make them look more interesting and dignified than they were in real life. Titian had a special way of working with his sitters.

Rather than having them pose stiffly, Titian always had the clients make a specific gesture or adopt an unusual pose. This made his portraits seem livelier than those painted by his colleagues.

During his long life, Titian created hundreds of masterpieces: paintings, drawings, and prints. He liked to paint biblical scenes just as much as stories from Greek and Roman mythology. In his later years, he stopped painting with strong and bright colors. His pictures became darker, but they were also more expressive than his earlier work. And while his earlier pictures



Pieter Brueghel the Elder ca. 1525 – 1569

Five Thesis, helping begin the Christian Protestant Reformation
explorer Ferdinand Magellan becomes the first person to travel around the globe

1559 – 1581 The Uffizi palace, now a famous art museum, is built in Florence

1530 1535 1540 1545 1550 1555 1560 1565 1570 1575 1580 1585



**Emperor Charles V
on Horseback, 1548**

Museo Nacional del Prado,
Madrid

In 1533 Emperor Charles V, who ruled much of Europe at that time, made Titian a count and a knight. Charles also had him brought to the imperial court at Augsburg, Germany in 1547 to paint his portrait. When Titian dropped his paintbrush while he was working, the emperor bent down and picked it up. This was a great honor for the painter, for normally an emperor would not do something like this. Titian painted Charles' portrait not only with a brush but also with a pallet knife, with which he applied the paint very thickly. He even painted directly with his fingers on the canvas, so as to intensify the effect of the picture.

Christ Crowned with Thorns,
ca. 1570
Alte Pinakothek, Munich



were painted with great precision and order, these later works seem more like large sketches. This can be seen especially well in his painting *Christ Crowned with Thorns*.

Titian's art had a great influence on the painters who came after him. His method of painting prepared the way for the dramatic style of baroque* art.



Pope Paul III and His Nephews, ca. 1568
Museo di Capodimonte,
Naples

In 1568 Titian painted Pope Paul III with his "nephews." The word was meant to conceal the fact that they were actually his grandsons. Titian never completed the painting: notice how the pope's right hand is missing!



1603 English Queen Elizabeth I dies (b. 1533);
end of the Tudor Dynasty

1616 William Shakespeare dies (b. 1564)

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**Born:**

July 15, 1606 in
Leiden as Rembrandt
Hermanszoon van Rijn

Died:

October 4, 1669
in Amsterdam

Family:

Had a total of five
children, none of
whom survived their
father

Rembrandt

Today Rembrandt is one of the most famous painters in history, and his paintings are among the costliest in the world. He was also very successful during his lifetime.

Holland's seventeenth century is known as the Golden Age. Dutch merchants traded goods around the globe, especially in places like India, and the country and its inhabitants became very wealthy. This period was also great for Dutch artists, since people had a lot of money to buy pictures and to have their portraits painted by famous masters like Rembrandt. Rembrandt's trademark became his dramatic chiaroscuro* painting style. He could also paint a wide variety of pictures: history paintings*, landscapes, still lives, and even portraits.

Not only did individuals come to be painted, but also groups of men. During this time, most group portraits looked the same, with the men standing next to each other or seated around a large table. But Rembrandt had a different idea: In one of his paintings, for example, he had the men act as if they were about to set out for a battle or other important event. The real name of this famous painting is *The Company of Frans Banning Cocq*. But in the centuries after Rembrandt painted it, the paints and varnish* that he used darkened, making the scene look like it was taking place at night. So the work has come to be known as *The Night Watch*.

Despite his great success, Rembrandt had a very dramatic life. Four of his five children died very young. Then in 1642 his wife Saskia, whom he had often portrayed, also died. The artist grew very sad and no longer wanted to paint very much. He received fewer and fewer commissions; by the end of his life his money had run out and he died in poverty.

Quiz

How many self-portraits would you guess Rembrandt painted over the course of his whole life?

Rembrandt painted self-portraits throughout his life. Try it yourself! Sit down in front of a mirror and paint or draw your face as closely as possible.

Johannes Vermeer 1632 – 1675

1648 End of the Thirty Years' War (from 1618) between Catholic and Protestant Christians in Europe

1656 – 1667 Construction of Saint Peter's Square in Rome by Italian architect and sculptor Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini

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The Company of Frans Banning Cocq (The Night Watch), 1642 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

In the foreground you can see the captain and his lieutenant. The riflemen stand around them with their weapons. Notice the panel in the background bearing the names of the company's members.

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**Born:**

May 14, 1727 in
Sudbury, Suffolk,
England

Died:

August 2, 1788
in London

Family:

He was married
and had two
daughters.

Thomas Gainsborough

“I make portraits to earn a living, landscapes because I love them, and music because I can’t avoid it.”

This quote is from English painter Thomas Gainsborough, who liked to play cello in his free time. Because he lived in an age when it wasn’t common for artists to go outdoors and paint the landscape outside, he often thought up his motifs himself. But it wasn’t possible to make a good living painting landscapes, so he decided to paint portraits of wealthy people. And since these clients generally owned beautiful estates, he came up with the idea of combining landscapes and portraits, showing the people sitting or standing in nature. But the sitters never really posed for him outdoors, for Gainsborough produced all of his works in his studio. The landscapes in his pictures were painted from small models, which the artist constructed out of moss, stones, and leaves. In order to get the figures’ positions right, he often used dolls, so that his sitters didn’t have to model for him for so long. The picture shown here is Gainsborough’s best known portrait in a landscape. Mr. and Mrs. Andrews can be seen on their country estate in front of an oak tree. A vast scene opens up to their right. Mr. Andrews stands beside his wife and has a shotgun and a hunting dog with him. Mrs. Andrews sits on a bench. She is actually supposed to be holding something in her lap, but the painter never finished this portion of the picture. Perhaps Mrs. Andrews couldn’t decide what she wanted to be holding: maybe a bird that Mr. Andrews had shot, or a bouquet? No one knows.

For a long time, Thomas Gainsborough lived in the country. But because he had so much success with his portraits, he eventually moved to London. There he became one of England’s most popular portrait painters and received many commissions. In 1768, along with other artists,



William Blake 1757 – 1827

1775 – 1783 American Revolution

1789 – 1799 French Revolution

1813 Jane Austen publishes *Pride and Prejudice*

1768 James Cook begins his first South Seas expedition

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Gainsborough founded the Royal Academy of Arts in London, which remains one of the most important art schools in Great Britain. Gainsborough became so well known for his portraits that he caught the attention of King George III. He even became the king's favorite painter.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews,
ca. 1750
National Gallery, London

Mr. Andrews leans non-chalantly against the bench. His dog has to be careful that his master doesn't step on his paw ...

1755 Great earthquake in Lisbon

1776 Declaration of Independence of the
United States of America

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**El Pelele (The Puppet),
1791**

Prado, Madrid

In the painting *The Puppet*, women bounce a straw puppet of a man through the air, a popular game at the time.



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Francisco de Goya

Goya was a simple man from the country. But his talent as an artist enabled him to become painter to the Spanish king.

When he began working at the Spanish court of Madrid in 1775, Francisco de Goya was hired to paint cheerful scenes of country life. These images were used as patterns for weaving tapestries to decorate the walls of royal palaces. Goya's pictures stood out because they were especially creative, unusual, and well made. In 1786 he was appointed court painter; and soon afterwards he became first painter to King Charles IV, the highest position an artist could reach. Francisco had to paint portraits of the royal couple and the young princes and princesses. He also got to know many important people, whom he also portrayed. It became all the rage to have a portrait painted by Goya.

Goya wasn't only busy with these commissions, but he also painted very different subjects that interested him more. At the time Goya lived, superstitions and the belief in magic and witches were widespread in Spain. His images often dealt with these themes.

Spain at the time was a difficult and dangerous country. French general Napoleon Bonaparte marched his troops into Spain and took over the country. The Spaniards then had to fight a long struggle against the occupying French forces. It was a brutal war and the Spanish people suffered terribly.

In 1792 Goya became very ill, and he began to lose his hearing completely. Perhaps this is one reason he became such a


Born:

March 30, 1746 in
Fuentetodos , Spain

Died:

April 16, 1828 in
Bordeaux, France

Family:

Goya had one son
and one grandson.

Lived in:

He lived mostly in
Madrid, but he was
forced to immigrate
to France for political
reasons in 1824.





**The Second of May, 1808 or
The Charge of the Mamelukes,
1814**

Prado, Madrid

On May 2, 1808, Madrid's Spanish citizens revolted against the occupying French forces. The Spaniards defended themselves valiantly, but in the end they were defeated by the heavily armed French troops. Only six years later did Goya paint the battle.

good observer of what was taking place around him. He drew and painted everything he saw during this time, and he showed the horrific side of war unsparingly. After the fighting ended, Spain suffered through bad governments, making the problems of the country worse. Artists like Goya often were not given the freedom to paint what they wanted. So at nearly eighty years old, Goya decided to leave Spain and go into exile in France, where he died in 1824.

Witches' Flight, 1797
Prado, Madrid

The painting *Witches' Flight* shows three witches rising into the air with a man and tearing him to pieces with their teeth. He screams so loudly that the man on the ground has to cover his ears. Another man hides beneath a blanket so the witches don't discover him.



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**Born:**

September 5, 1774
in Greifswald

Died:

May 7, 1840 in
Dresden

Background:

Studied painting
at the art academy
in Copenhagen

Lived in:

Dresden from 1798
until his death

Caspar David Friedrich

The age when Friedrich lived and painted is called the Romantic period. Artists of the time were passionate about nature, and they often portrayed it in their works. Their favorite themes were fog-shrouded landscapes, clear moonlit nights, forests, and ruins.

Painters like Caspar David Friedrich wanted their landscape images to express their feelings. Some of their pictures were completely gloomy and foggy, while in others the sun shone and everything was in bloom. Caspar's pictures often contain one or two people seen from behind. In German, this kind of figure is called a *Rückenfigur* ("back figure"), and it allowed the viewer to see and experience the landscape from the back figure's perspective, through his or her eyes.

At the beginning of his career, Friedrich's northern German landscapes were very successful. But later on it became more fashionable to paint like the Italians and portray the sunny countryside of Italy. Friedrich's pictures were no longer in demand, and he sold fewer and fewer of them. Some people, like the great German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, made life difficult for Caspar. Goethe became infuriated over Friedrich's works. He once said that Friedrich's pictures were so bad, they deserved to be smashed to pieces against the edge of a table!



At the end of his life, Friedrich was almost completely unknown. When he died in 1840 after a long illness, very few people remembered him at all. But Caspar was not entirely forgotten. Today his pictures are popular once again, and Friedrich is considered one of the most important landscape painters of his time.

From 1812 The Grimm brothers' *Fairy Tales* appear

1818 English author Mary Shelley publishes *Frankenstein*

1827 French scientist Nicéphore Niepce helps invent photography

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**Wanderer above
the Sea of Fog,
ca. 1817**

Kunsthalle Hamburg

Friedrich generally painted landscapes as he found them. But sometimes he “invented” his own landscapes. To do this, he simply made sketches of different places and then assembled them into a new landscape later in his studio. During Friedrich’s time, painters did not yet make pictures directly in the places the pictures show; tubes of paint, which painters could simply bring with them outdoors, did not yet exist. Artists would make sketches and drawings outside and then return to their studios to produce the paintings with oil paints.