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## W2: Renaissance and Baroque Lives - Vasari, van Mander, Bellori

### Giorgio Vasari

Vasari leaves readers to discover others ideas from their original sources. His work is very anecdotal.

Writers assert various art forms were derived from various people and cultures across history

- Design is at the forefront as the basis of these arts. Principle of creative processes.
- Likens this process to intelligent design in the creation of the universe.
- *'...from man, as from a perfect model, statues and pieces of sculpture...were first derived...'* The human form is described as being perfect (Romanisation? Greek influence on Australian indigenous depictions...?)

Architecture maintained higher standards than sculpture.

- Architects constructed from spoils and imitation of old edifices was possible.
- Painting and sculpture became the first arts to fall, existing chiefly for pleasure. Architecture held out, being necessary for physical existence, removed from its past quality.
- By the time of Constantine, sculpture had already fallen into decline. Their ruin completed on Constantine leaving Rome to establish the capital of the Empire at Byzantium. He had taken artists, including sculptors, along with statues and sculptures too.
- As an explanation for the then continued worsening standard of art Vasari states; *'...once human affairs start to deteriorate improvement is impossible until the nadir has been reached...'*

The new Christian religion inflicted greater damage on the arts in wiping out the old pagan faiths. In destroying 'sinful ways' various statues/sculpture were cast aside and destroyed which represented the 'false' pagan gods. Pagan temples were also destroyed to make way for Christian churches.

· Byzantine

Old vs ancient: Ancient works = produced in Corinth, Athens, Rome, and other well-known cities, before the time of Constantine, up to the time of Nero, Vespasian, Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus. Old works = produced from the time of St Silvester by a few surviving Greek artists.

The first period (oldest) was for the most part defined by its imperfection. It did though mark the beginning, and led the way for better work in subsequent periods.

Second period showed a definite improvement in invention and execution. There was no one artist in this time who met Vasari's standards of perfection in art.

- Had imperfect work but made contributions to architecture, painting, and sculpture. They added to the achievements of the 1<sup>st</sup> period in the quality of good rule, order, proportion, design, and style.