

# EUROPEAN ART THROUGH THE AGES (II)

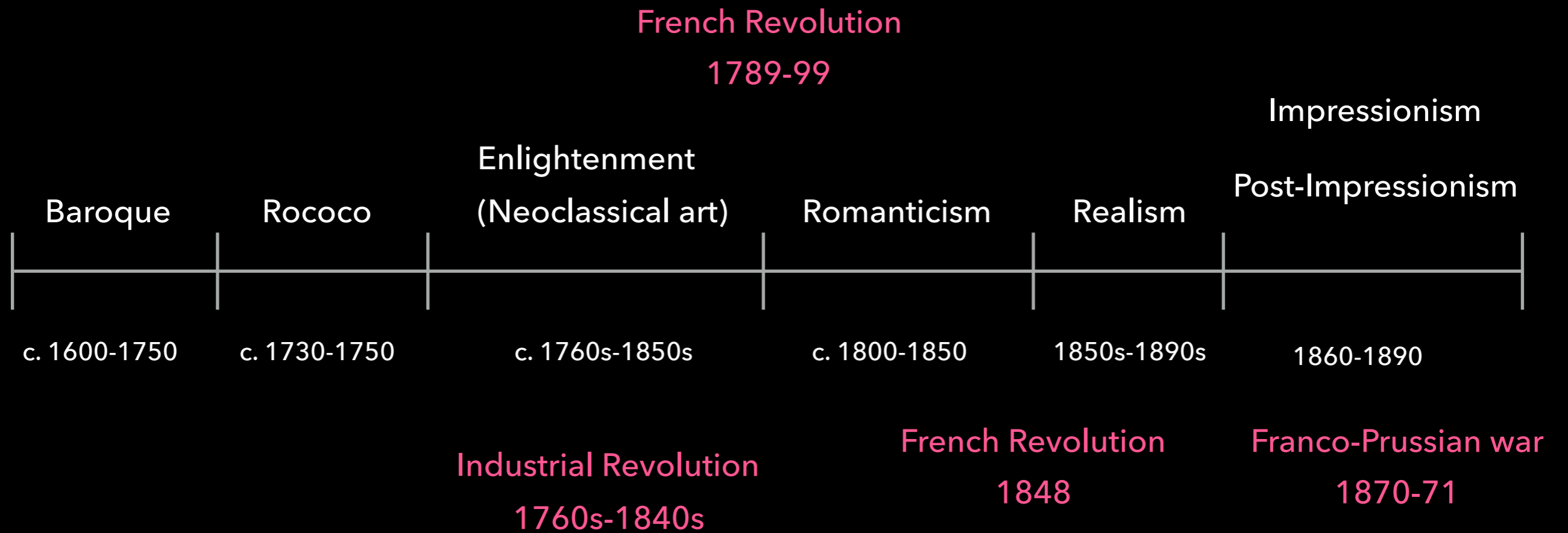
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**BAROQUE TO POST-IMPRESSIONISM**

## Key Concepts

- ▶ Influence of urban growth and industrialisation on art
- ▶ Art as a reflection of contemporary society
- ▶ Changes in the visual language of art through the ages

# TIMELINE





## BAROQUE (C. 1600–1750)

- ▶ Artistic style that started around 1600 in Italy and spread to other parts of Europe
- ▶ Linked to the **Catholic Church**: religious themes and direct emotional involvement



Peter Paul Rubens

*The Meeting of Marie de Médicis  
and Henri IV at Lyon*

c. 1623.

Exaggerated motion

Drama + grandeur

bright colors

extreme light  
and shadow

busy narrative  
compositions



Peter Paul Rubens  
*The Meeting of  
Marie de Médicis  
and Henri IV at  
Lyon*  
c. 1623.



## ROCOCO (C. 1730–1770)

- ▶ Prominent in 18th century Europe, evolves as a **reaction to the rigidity** of the Baroque style
- ▶ Art that is **frivolous**, light hearted and playful
- ▶ Used for interior decoration and decorative arts
- ▶ Paintings include themes of **romance, beauty, mythology**



Jean-Honoré Fragonard

*The Secret Meeting*

From the series *The Progress of Love*, 1771-3





Curved, sinuous lines

fantastical settings

subjects of romance, playfulness, beauty

soft, pastel colours

excessive ornamentation/decoration

Jean-Honoré Fragonard

*The Secret Meeting*

From the series *The Progress of Love*, 1771-3



# THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT (C. 1760S-1850S)

\*peaked 1780s-1790s but last till 1850s

- ▶ A philosophical movement in 17th and 18th century Europe; emphasized **rationalism, reason and progress**
- ▶ **Scientific thought** replaced religious authority
- ▶ Art during this time favoured logic, clarity and order
- ▶ New ideas and freedom of expression = allowed criticism of the corruption of the government of Louis XVI leading to the French Revolution of 1789.

**Industrial Revolution:** a change in the economy from an agrarian/handmade one to dominated by industry and machines



Joseph Wright of Derby

*A Philosopher Giving A Lecture at the Orrery*

c. 1765

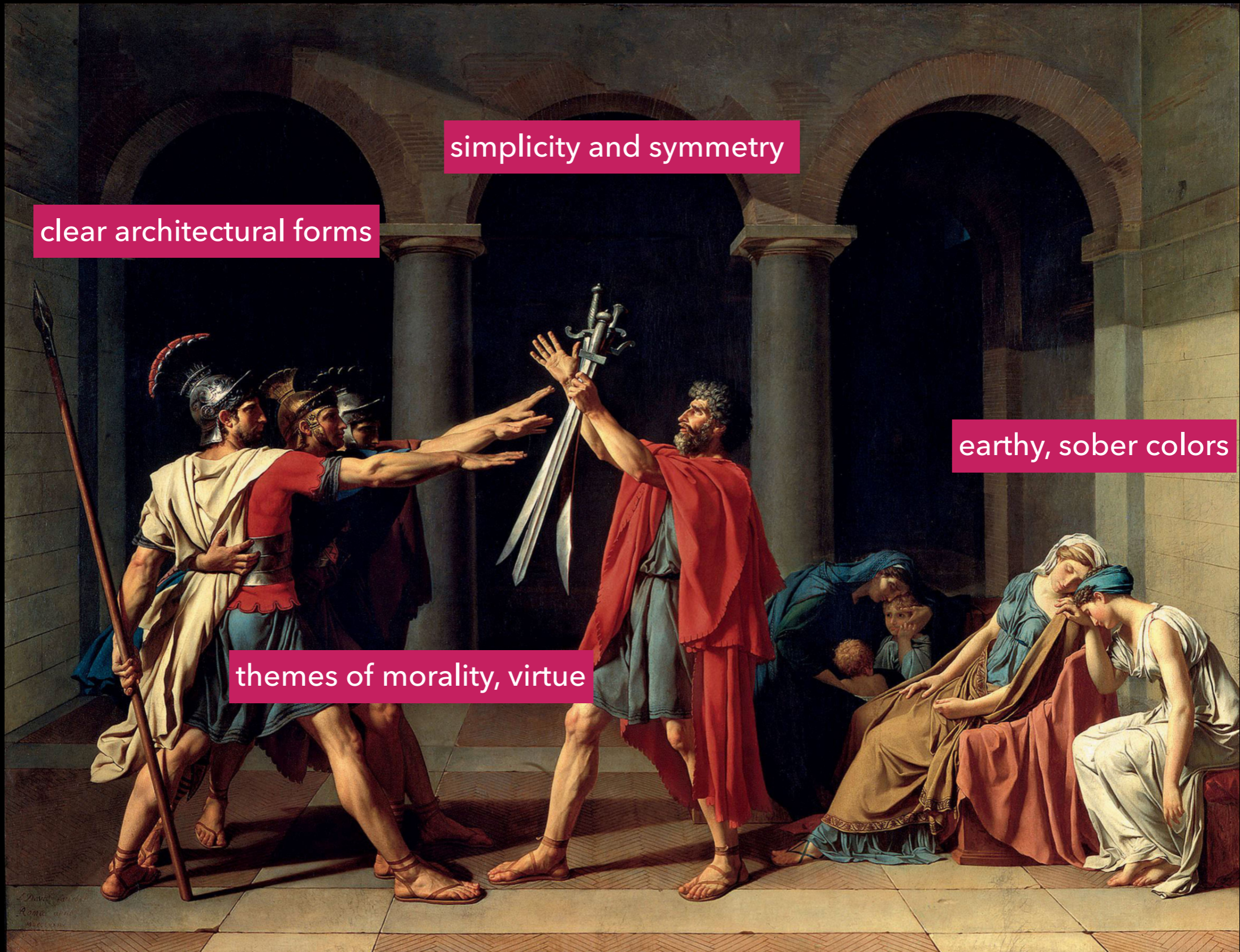
oil on canvas (Derby Museum)

**Neoclassicism:** movement that drew inspiration from the “classical” art and culture of Ancient Greece or Ancient Rome. Believed art should be cerebral, not sensual or emotional.



Jacques-Louis David, *Oath of Horatii*, 1784

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simplicity and symmetry

clear architectural forms

earthy, sober colors

themes of morality, virtue

Jacques-Louis David, *Oath of Horatii*, 1784



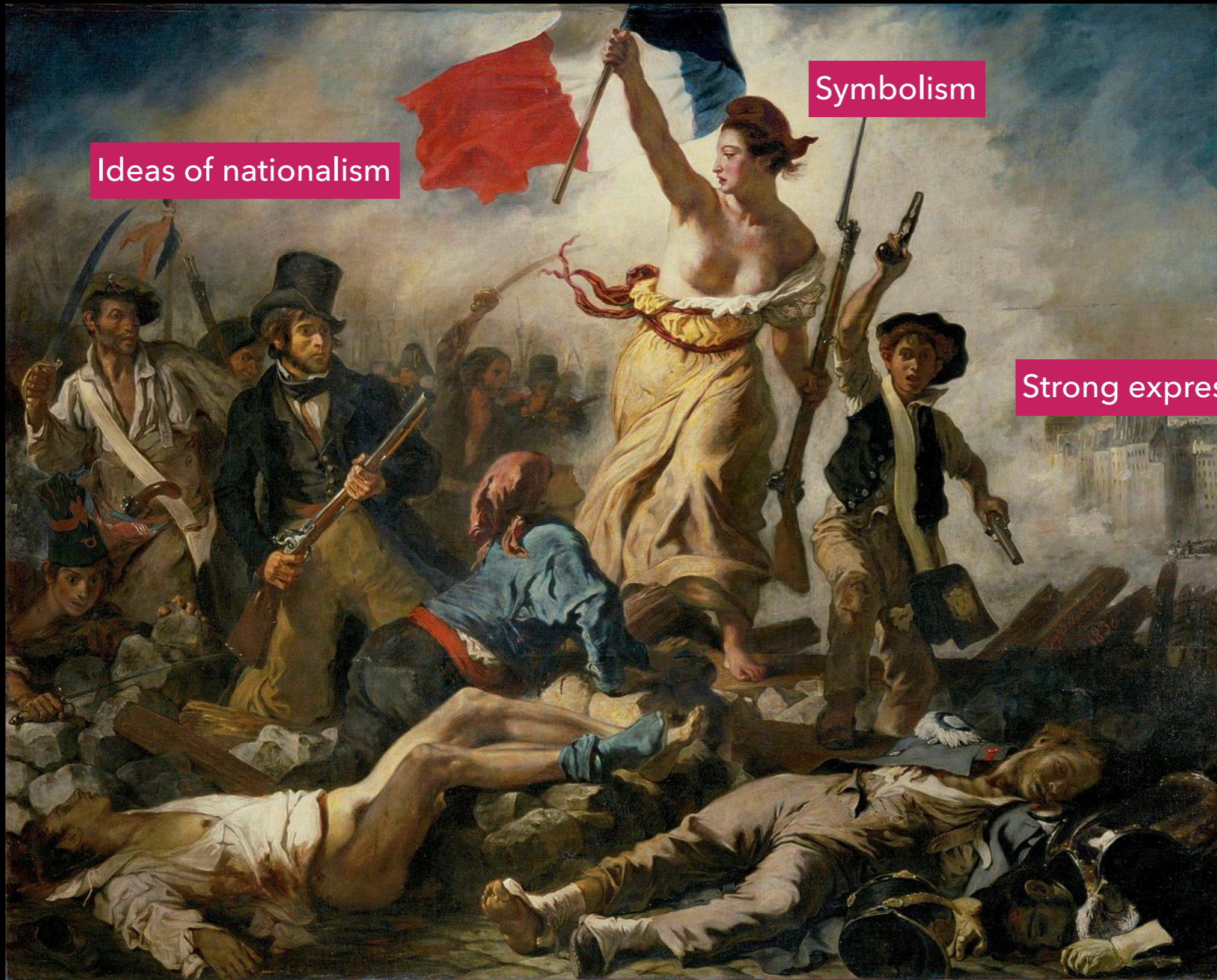
## ROMANTICISM (1800-1850)

- ▶ Reaction to the scientific rationalism and classicism of the Age of Enlightenment
- ▶ Emphasised **emotion, freedom and individual imagination**
- ▶ Influenced by **Industrial Revolution**: wanted to escape the modern realities of population growth, industrialism, urbanism etc.
- ▶ The Enlightenment had encouraged criticism of the corruption of Louis XVI and the aristocracy in France, leading to the beginning of the **French Revolution** (1789-99)
- ▶ Subjects included the natural world, **narratives from history**, the exotic world of the "Orient" (we'll discuss this further next week) and contemporary politics.



Eugène Delacroix, *Liberty Leading the People*, 1830

**Allegory:** when the subject of the artwork, or the various elements that form the composition, is used to symbolize a deeper moral or spiritual meaning such as life, death, love, virtue, justice etc.



Eugène Delacroix, *Liberty Leading the People*, 1830



**History painting:** A genre in painting defined by its subject matter rather than artistic style. These paintings usually depict a moment in a narrative story, rather than a specific and static subject.



Jean Louis Theodore Gericault, *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1818-21



## REALISM (1850S-1890S)

- ▶ Artistic movement that began in France in the 1850s, rejected Romanticism
- ▶ Inspired by 1848 French Revolution
- ▶ Sought to portray **contemporary subjects** and situations with truth and accuracy
- ▶ Rejected the extreme emotionalism and exoticism of Romanticism (no allegories) to depict contemporary issues
- ▶ Wanted to depicted **real people**, including unpleasant aspects of life



Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier  
*Memory of Civil War or Barricade in the Rue  
de la Mortellaire, June 1848*  
1848



Gritty style: textured, rough brushwork

Simple compositions

Subtle, muted colors

Unpleasant, difficult but "real" subject matter



Jean-Francois Millet, *Gleaners*, 1857



## IMPRESSIONISM (C. 1860S-1890)

- ▶ 19th century movement started in Paris- turn towards modernism
- ▶ Painted scenes from **modern life** and society- subjects like urban scenes, theaters, cafes
- ▶ Partly a reaction to the invention of photography (no longer need to create realistic images)- instead use painting as a **form of expression**
- ▶ Wanted to capture the "impression" of a subject- a quick **snapshot** of a moment

# The Haussmannization of Paris

- ▶ Franco-Prussian war (1870-71) caused destruction in Paris- required reconstruction of several parts
- ▶ New urbanisation and industrialisation gave rise to a new urban life and society
- ▶ French official, Baron Haussman given responsibility of renovating the city. Tore down old buildings to create more open spaces, broad avenues
- ▶ New railway lines that allowed Parisians to go to the countryside every weekend (leisure becomes important)



Louis Daguerre, *Boulevard du Temple*, Paris, 1838



Camille Pissarro, *The Boulevard Montmartre on a Winter Morning*, 1897, Oil on canvas. (Met Museum)

# Salons and Art Academies





# How did the Impressionists get their name?

"There's impression, or I don't know what it means. Only be so good as to tell me what those innumerable black tongue-lickings in the lower part of the picture represent?" –Joseph Vincent



**En plein air:** The act of painting outdoors, as opposed to within a studio; typical feature of Impressionist landscapes

Claude Monet  
*Impression Sunrise*  
1872

# Class, Labor and Leisure



Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Moulin de la Galette*, 1876

# Class, Labor and Leisure

Busy composition with lot of motion: snapshot/ impression of a moment

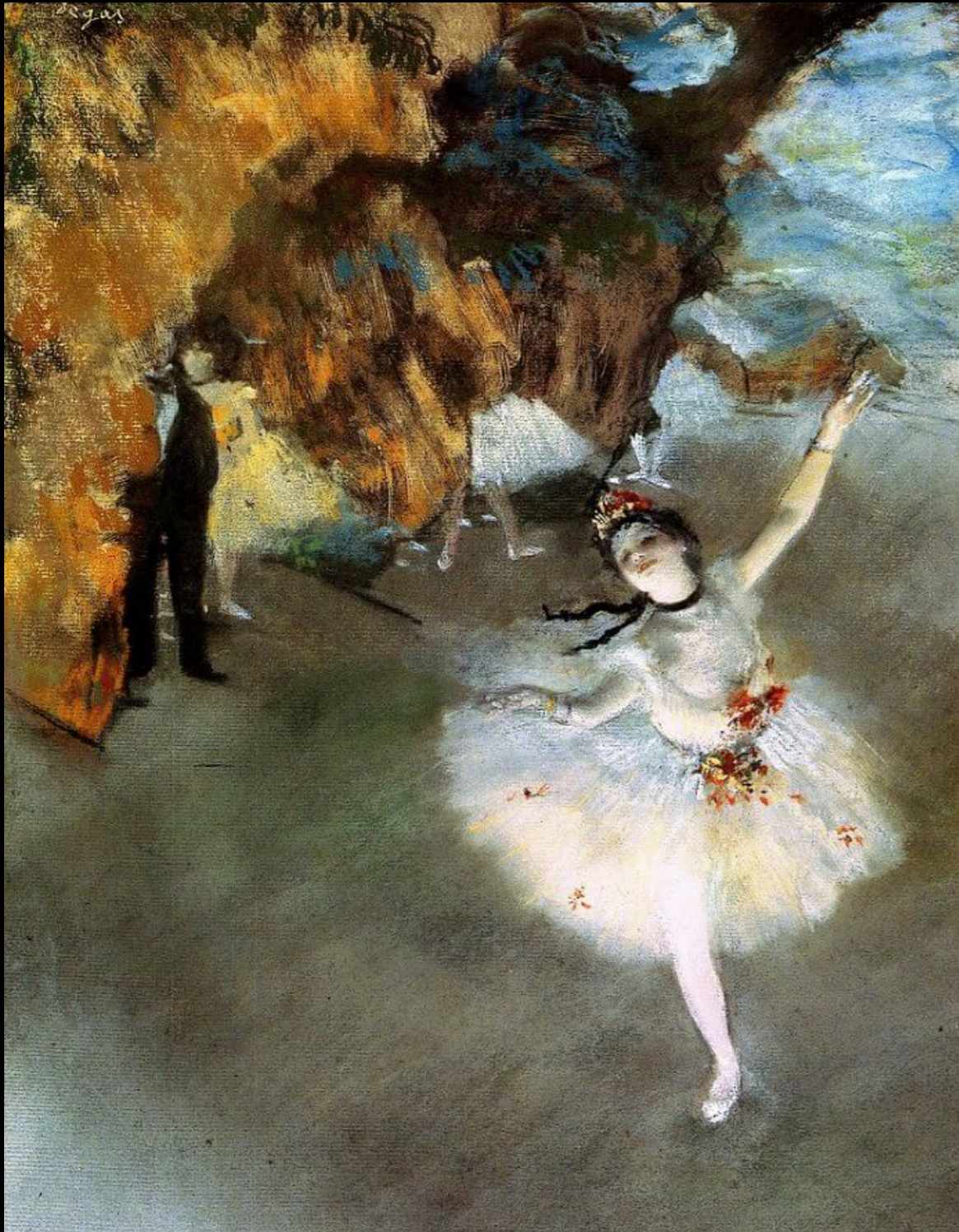
very little mixing of colors

Strong emphasis on light and shadow plays

quick rough brushstrokes to give effect of effortless

# The Gendered Gaze

**Flâneur:** French term meaning 'stroller' or 'loafer'. Carries a number of associations as a man of leisure, urban explorer, observer of the streets



Edgar Degas, *L'Étoile*, 1878



Edgar Degas, *Dancers, Pink and Green*, c. 1890



August Renoir, La Loge, 1874



Mary Cassatt, Woman at the Loge (At the Opera), 1879



# POST-IMPRESSIONISM

- ▶ Rather than the **impression** of the spectacle of the external world, a focus of the Impressionists, the Post-Impressionist artists turned toward the **expression** of the internal psychology of the individual
- ▶ Wanted to push Impressionism's experiments further
- ▶ Wanted to move beyond the passive rendering of visual experience to express their **ideas and emotions**
- ▶ Did not view themselves as a separate collective (don't have much in common other than that they came after the Impressionists)



Georges Seurat, *Sunday on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884-86



Stillness/coldness: perhaps reflection of societal context

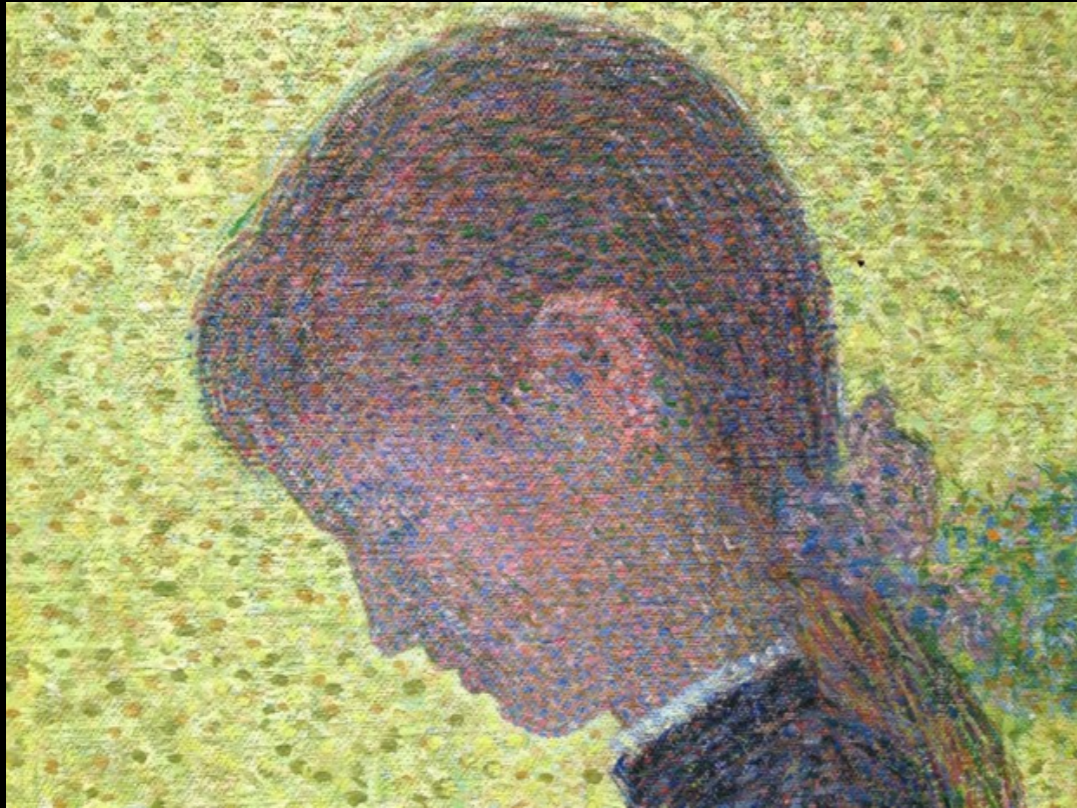
bold expressive color

abstract but distinctive forms

Experiments with colour theory

Georges Seurat, *Sunday on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884-86





**Pointillism:** Painting technique in which paint is applied in small, distinct dots of different colours in a pattern to form an image

"Instead of trying to reproduce exactly what I have before my eyes, I use color more arbitrarily in order to express myself forcibly." -Vincent Van Gogh

**Impasto:** A technique of laying paint in thick layers such that the stroke of the brush or painting knife is visible. When dry, impasto provides texture and the paint appears to be coming out of the canvas.



Vincent Van Gogh  
*Starry Night*  
1889



Édouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1881-1882

## Discussion

- ▶ How did the subject matter change from the Baroque period through the Post-Impressionists?
- ▶ What contributed to those changes?
- ▶ How did the formal approaches differ?

# GLOSSARY

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- ▶ **Industrial Revolution:**
- ▶ **Hausmanization:**
- ▶ **En plein air:** The act of painting outdoors, as opposed to within a studio; typical feature of Impressionist landscapes
- ▶ **Flâneur:** French term meaning 'stroller' or 'loafer'. Carries a number of associations as a man of leisure, urban explorer, observer of the streets
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