



Jan van Eyck

Picture Study

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The Virgin and Child with Chancellor Rolin

Jan van Eyck, c. 1435



Saint Jerome in His Study

Jan van Eyck, 1442



The Arnolfini Portrait

Jan van Eyck, 1434



The Ghent Altarpiece: Angels Playing Music

Jan van Eyck, c. 1425-1432



The Ghent Altarpiece: Prophet Zacharias; Angel of the
Annunciation

Jan van Eyck, c. 1425-1432



The Ghent Altarpiece: Adoration of the Lamb

Jan van Eyck, c. 1425-1432



Jan Van Eyck

ARTIST BIO NOTES

These notes are provided to aid the teacher's own background research on the artist and his or her works. This is not meant to be presented to students as a list of facts and dates. When you first introduce the artist, tell students where the artist fits into the timeline of history, and where the artist lived and worked. Add a few more details with each new picture, but the information you share should be short and simple unless your students ask questions or wish to know more. Keep the main focus of your Picture Study time on observation and narration of the details of the picture.

Note: if a footnote appears with a fact that is not a direct quote, the fact comes from ONE source only.

LIFE AND CHARACTER

Italicized portions indicate historical events affecting the artist's life.

- ◆ Birth date and place unknown. Around 1390s in Limburg, a province of the Netherlands.
- ◆ 1425, death of count of Holland. Employed by Philip the Good.
- ◆ 1427, sent to secure marriage contract with Isabella of Spain – unsuccessful
- ◆ 1428-29, sent to secure marriage contract with Isabella of Portugal – successful
- ◆ *1430, marriage of Philip to Isabella of Portugal*
- ◆ Early 1430s, settled in Bruges; married Margaret: two children at least
- ◆ 1441, died and buried in Bruges.

TRAINING & CAREER

- ◆ No definite record of training
- ◆ 1422-24, painter for John of Bavaria, count of Holland

- ◆ 1425-41, painter for Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy
- ◆ Van Eyck not only painted for Philip but also went on secret diplomatic missions for him
- ◆ 1428-29, during trip to Portugal, reportedly painted the portrait of Isabella for Philip
- ◆ Took commissions apart from Philip, reportedly religious commissions and portraits for nobles
- ◆ 1432, creation of the Ghent Altarpiece for the Church of Saint Bavo in Ghent, Belgium.

ART STYLE & ACHIEVEMENTS

- ◆ Credited with perfecting the new technique of oil painting, layering with thin layers of paint
- ◆ Noted for the realism, built up with minute detail, in his works.
- ◆ Noted for his skill and inventiveness in depicting light
- ◆ First Flemish artist to sign paintings; often signed with “Als ik kan” – Greek transliteration for “As well as I can”
- ◆ *Ghent Altarpiece*: controversy over work because signed also by a Hubert van Eyck, probably Jan’s brother.
- ◆ *The Arnolfini Portrait*: Jan signed in Latin “Johannes de Eyck fuit hic 1434” translating “Jan van Eyck was here 1434”; two figures appear in the mirror, one conjectured to be Jan.

ARTIST BIO LINKS

<http://original.search.eb.com.ezproxy.phc.edu/eb/article-9033480> (log in required)

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/eyck/hd_eyck.htm

http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/bio/e/eyck_van/jan/biograph.html

<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/jan-van-eyck-master-realism.html>

http://www.globalgallery.com/knowledgecenter/artist_biography/jan+van+eyck

PICTURE SOURCES

http://www.wga.hu/art/e/eyck_van/jan/02page/16rolin.jpg

http://www.wga.hu/art/e/eyck_van/jan/02page/31jerom.jpg

http://www.wga.hu/art/e/eyck_van/jan/15arnolf/15arnol.jpg

http://www.wga.hu/art/e/eyck_van/jan/09ghent/1open2/u6play.jpg

http://www.wga.hu/art/e/eyck_van/jan/09ghent/2closed1/u1annun.jpg

http://www.wga.hu/art/e/eyck_van/jan/09ghent/1open3/l3adora.jpg