

# Northern Renaissance

Week Two

Yan Yang

# Goals

- Identify characteristics of 15<sup>th</sup> century Northern Renaissance art (focusing specifically on Flemish art).
- Understand certain iconography hidden in religious art.
- Interpret meanings about artist, patrons based on elements you see in the works of art.
- Learn the characteristics of Italian Renaissance of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

# “Northern Renaissance”

## The House of Valois-Burgundy 1465-1477 (during the reign of Charles “the Bold”)



Flanders

# Early Netherlandish Painting

- Used oil painting rather than tempera.
- Oil painting allowed smooth modelling of volume because oil dried slower than tempera.



Mérode Altarpiece. Workshop of the Master of Flémalle. Circa 1425-1430s. Oil on wood panel, center: 25 ¼" x 24 7/8" (64.1 x 63.2 cm)



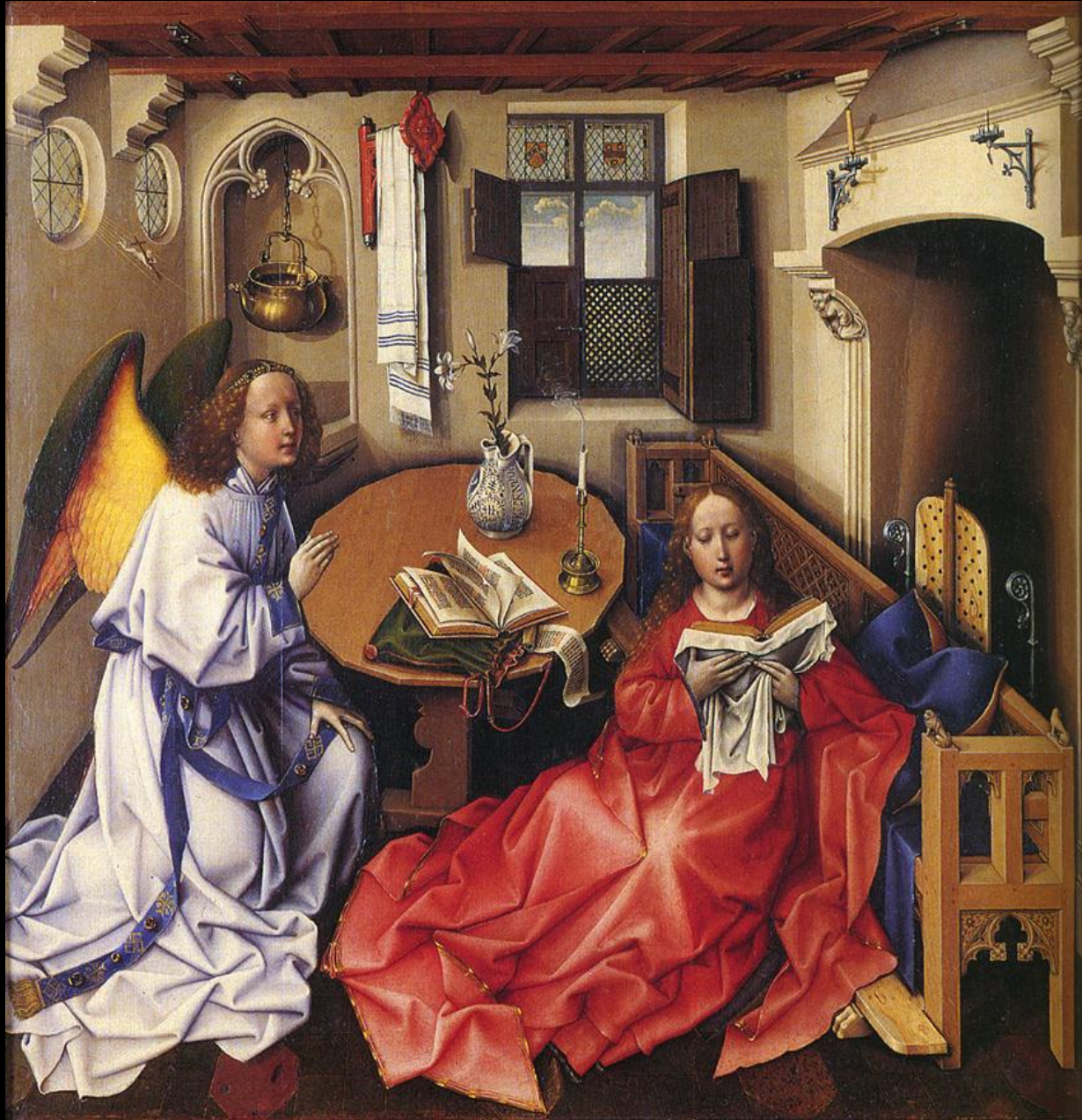


What scene is shown?



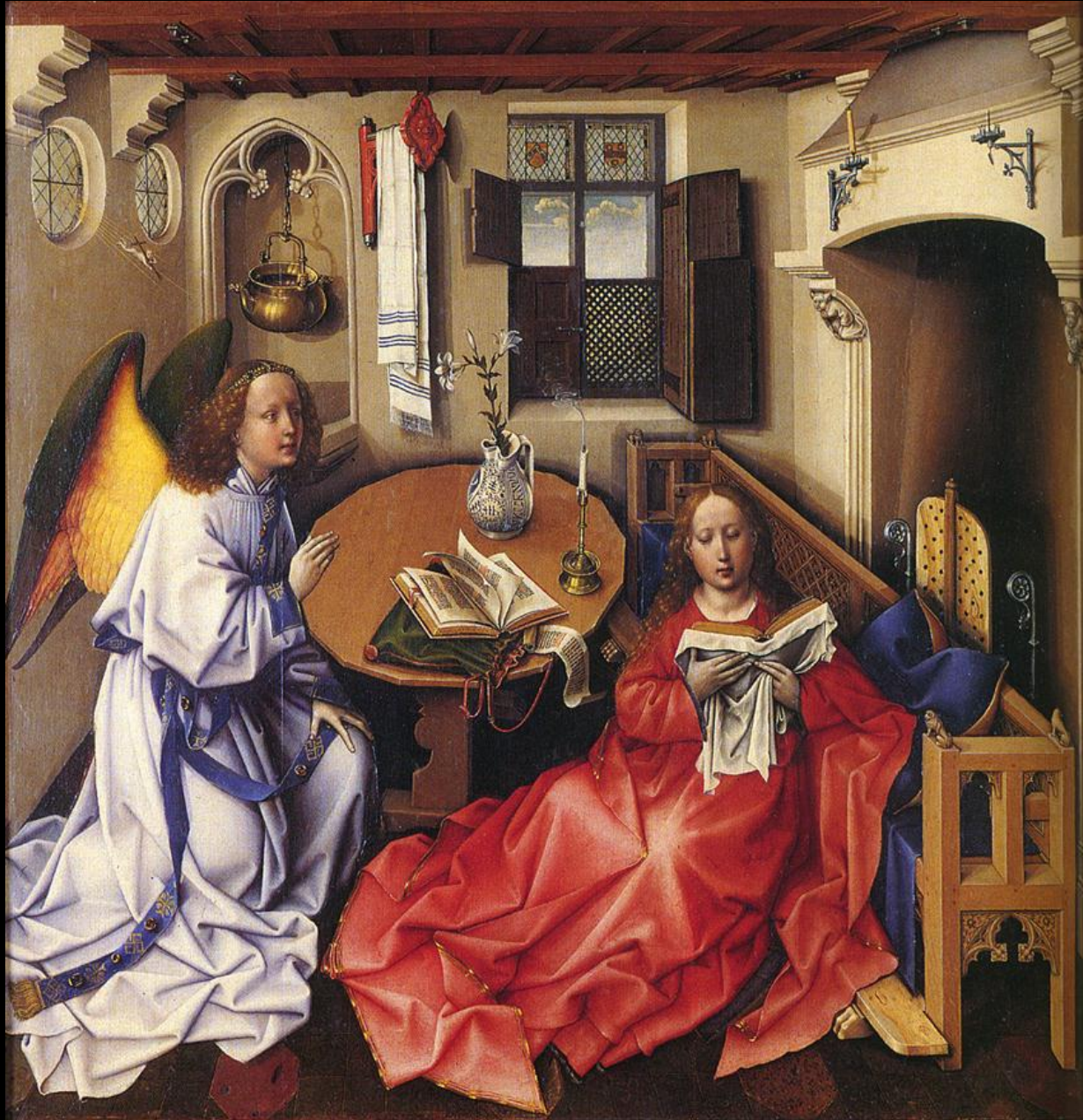


What is in it, and what is happening?





Angel Gabriel

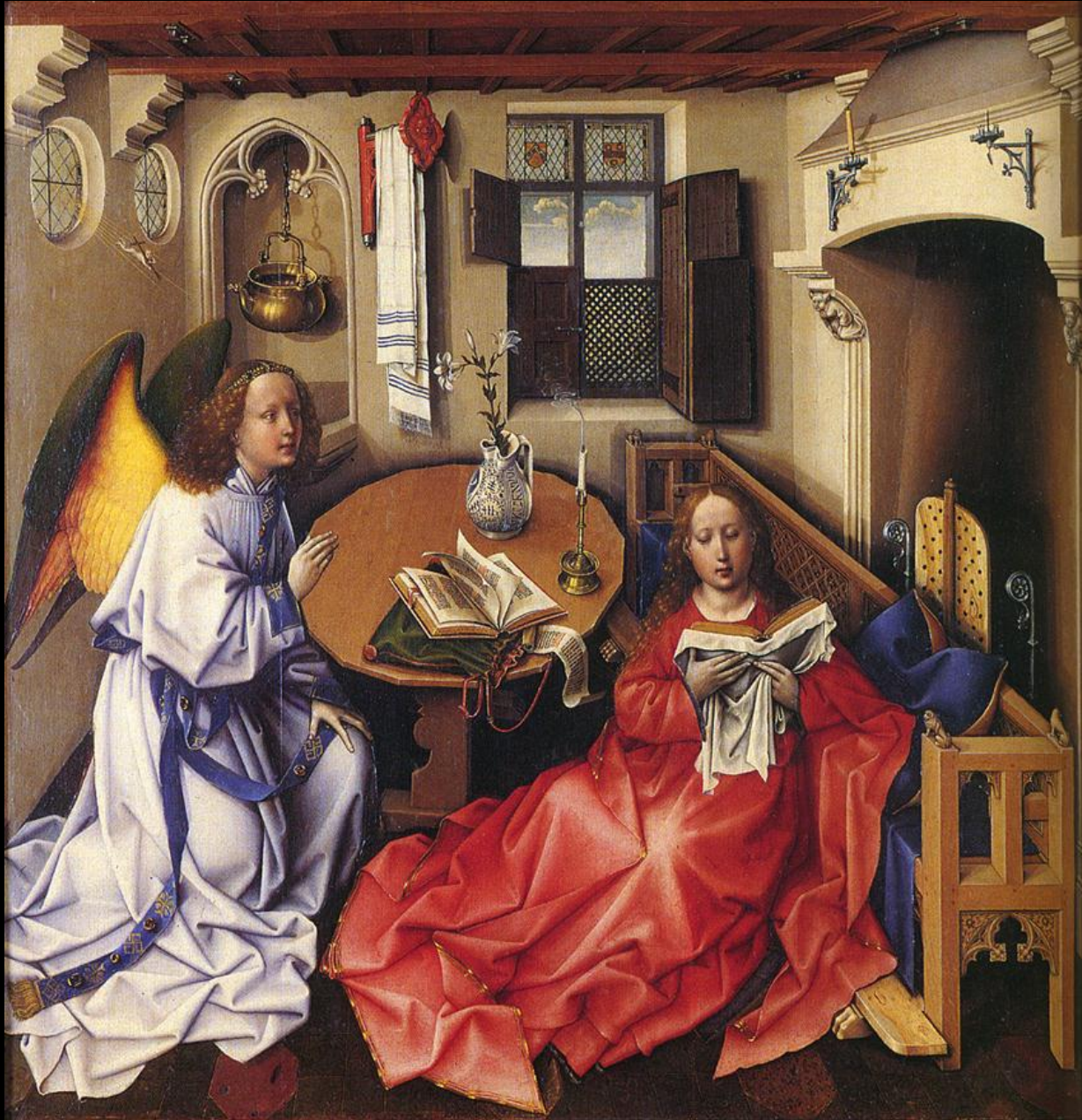


Virgin Mary



# How do we know it is the Virgin Mary?

Angel Gabriel



Virgin Mary



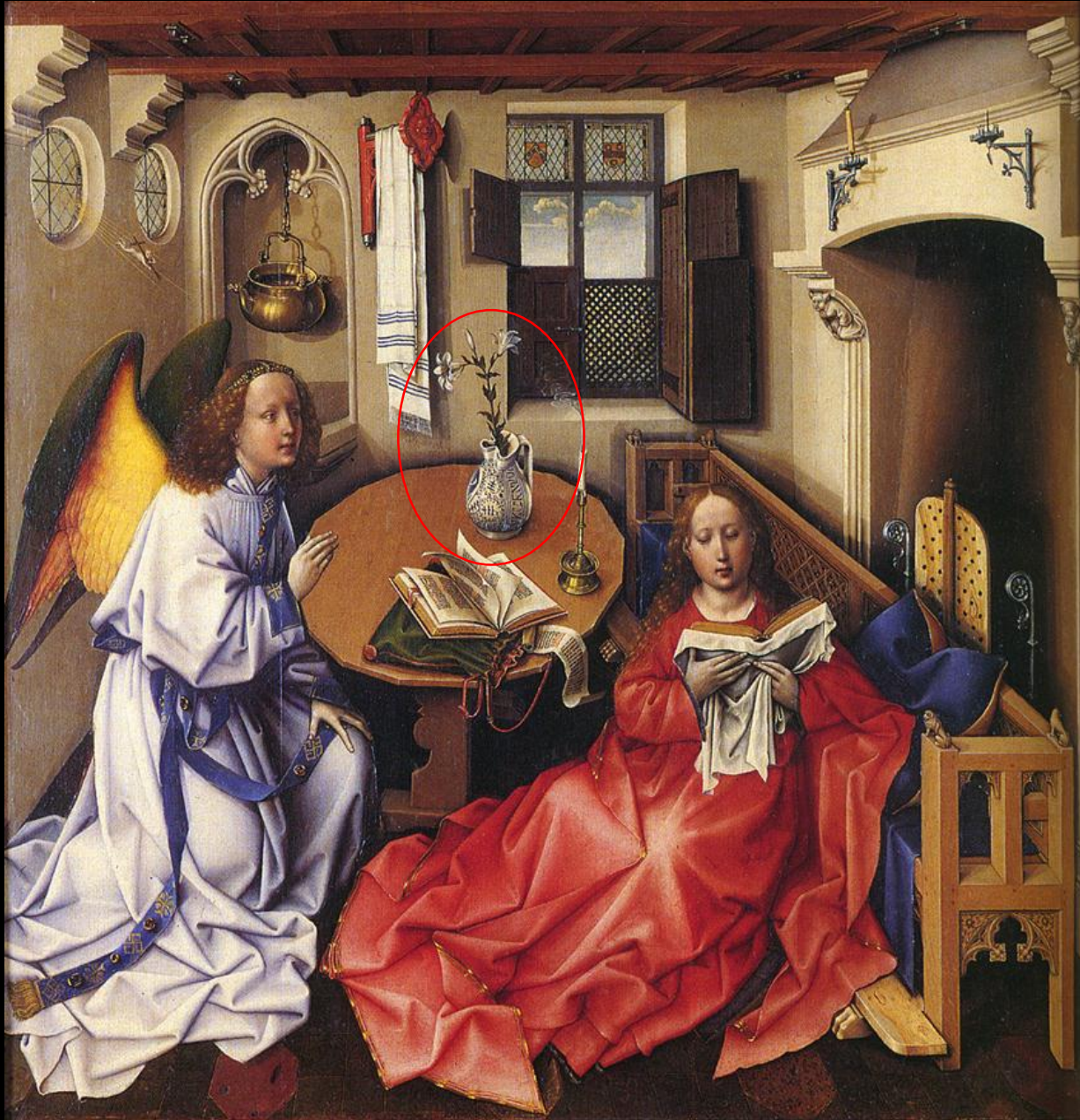
# Iconography: Visual images and symbols used in a work of art and their interpretations





# How do we know it is the Virgin Mary?

White lilies:  
Mary's virginity

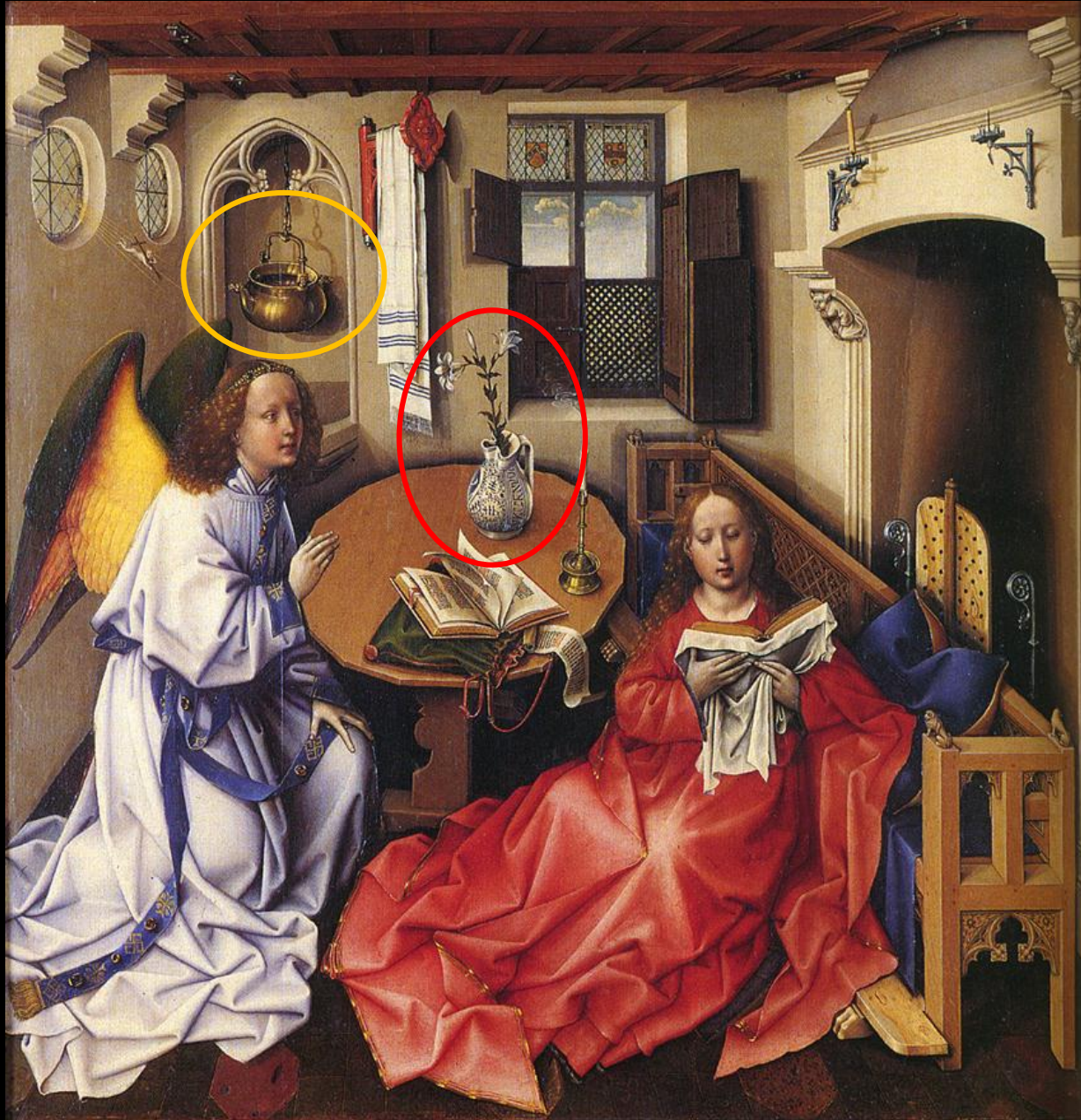




# How do we know it is the Virgin Mary?

Hanging water  
pot:  
Mary's purity  
Vessel for the  
Incarnation

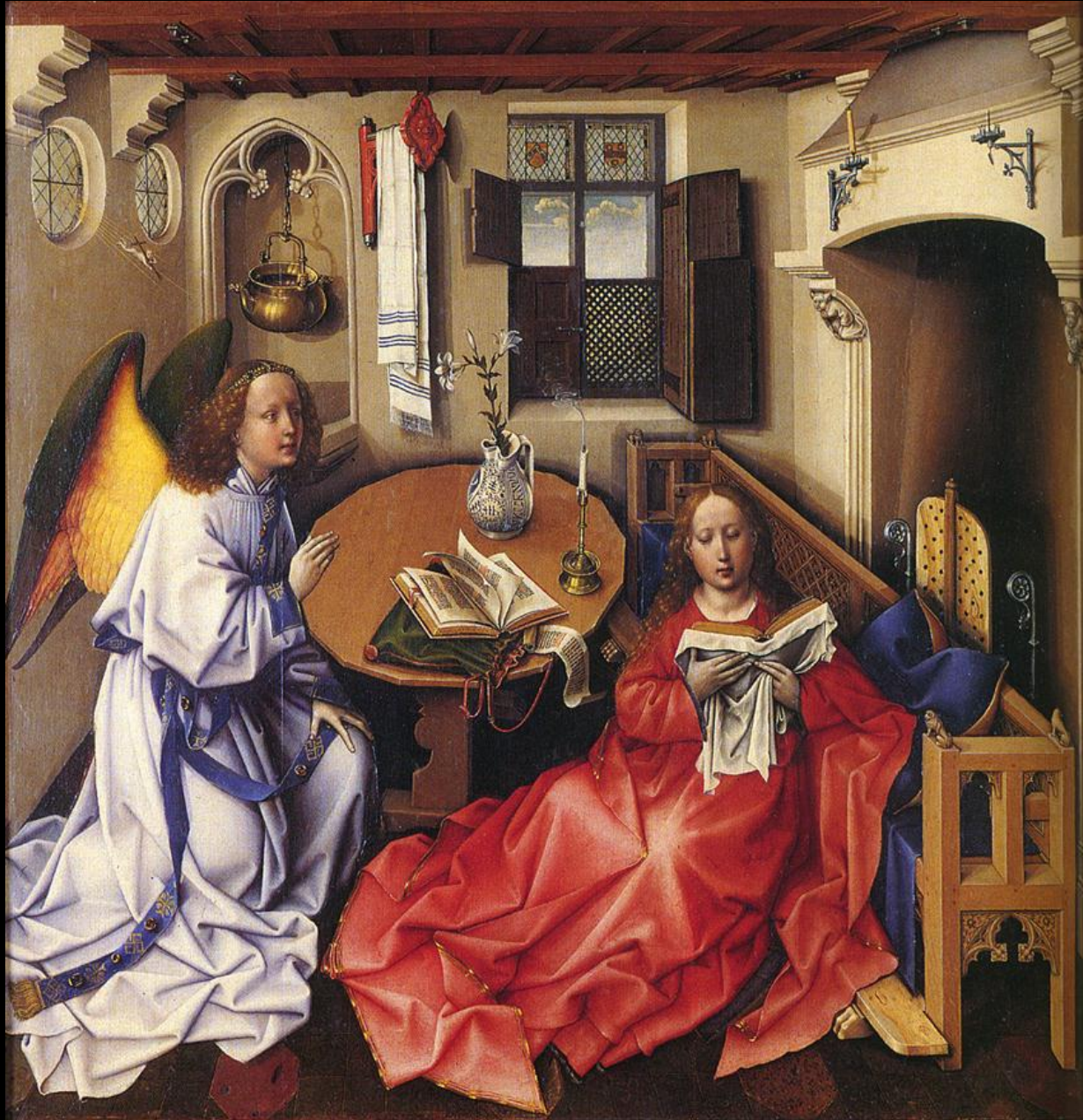
White lilies:  
Mary's virginity



Hidden  
Symbolism



How do we know it is the Annunciation?

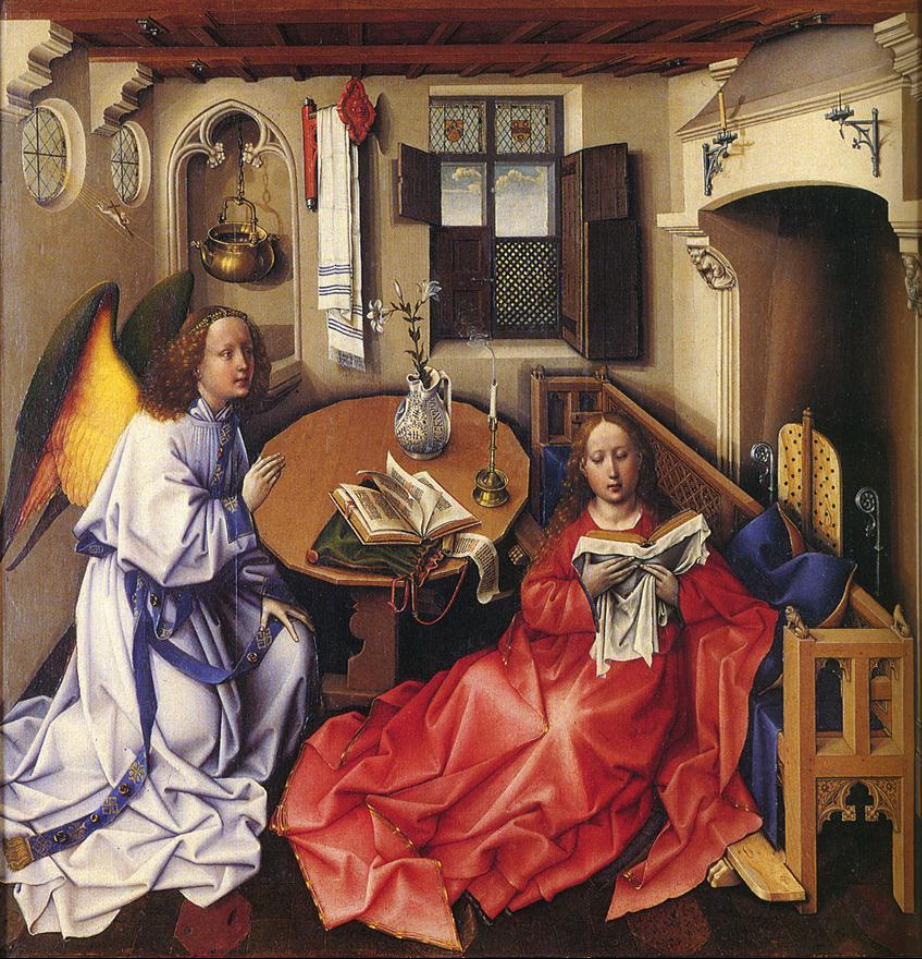




Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi. Annunciation. Siena Cathedral. 1333 Tempera and gold on wood. 10' x 8'9" (3 x 2.67 cm)

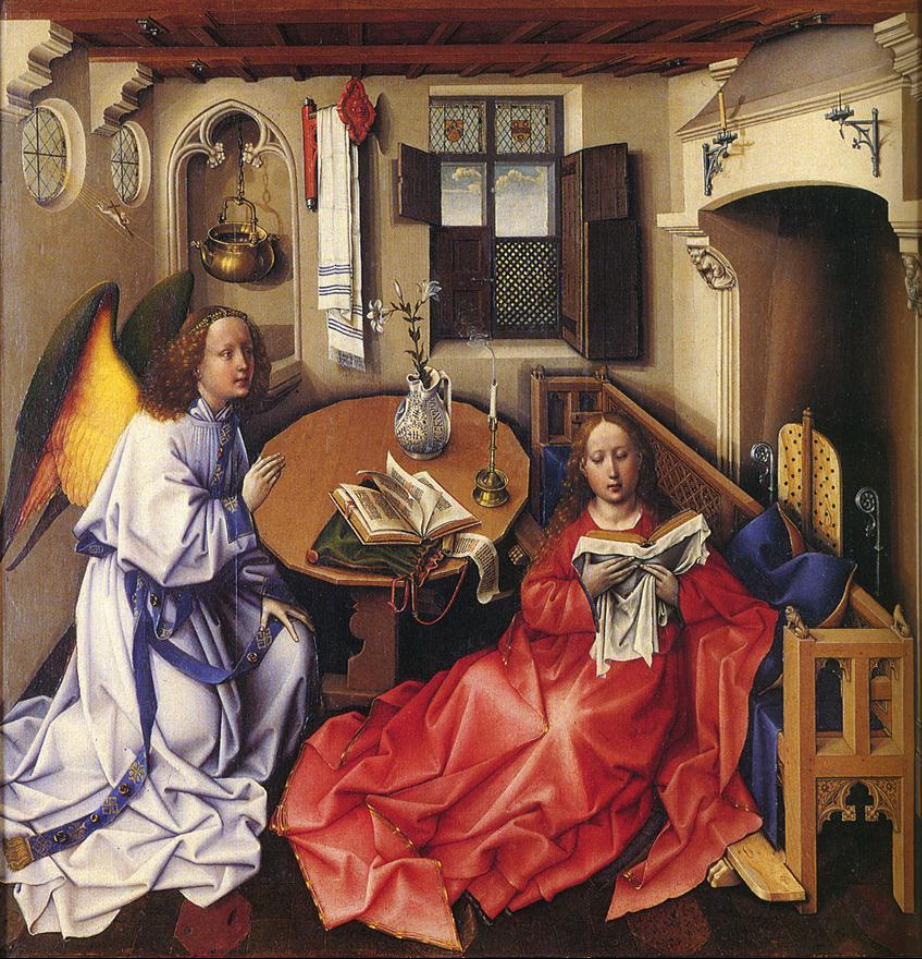






In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." – From the New International Version of the Bible





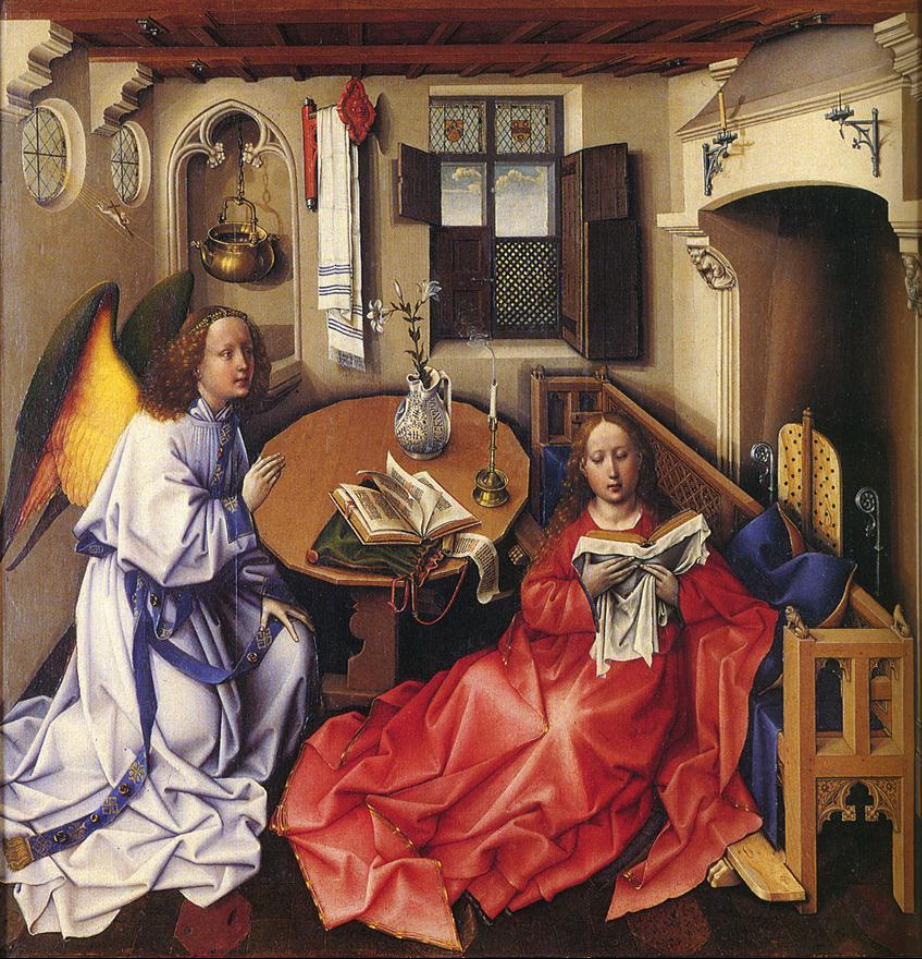
How has Annunciation scenes changed over 100 years in European art?





## Egg Tempera Painting in Italy

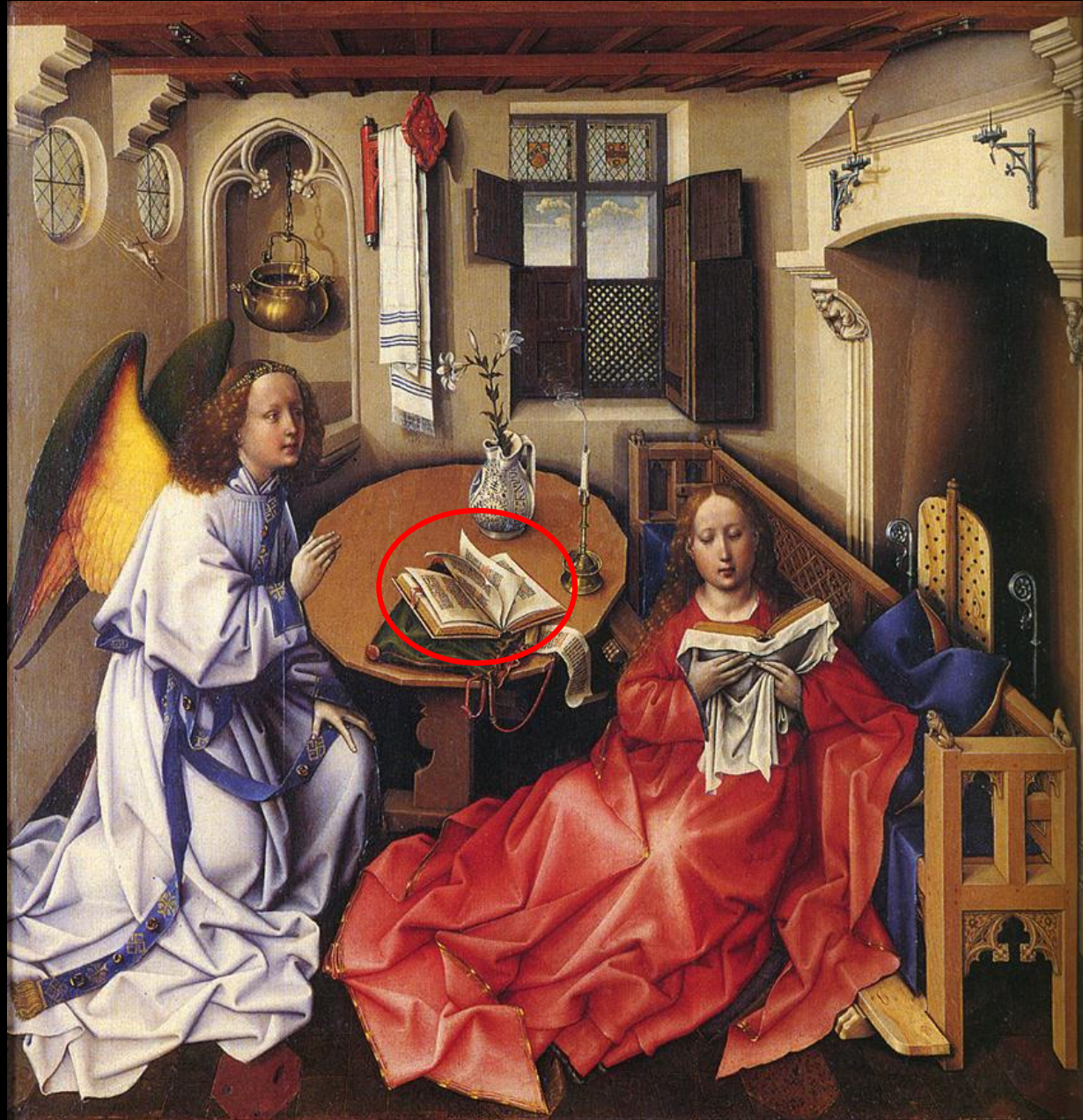




Note how the Annunciation is rendered differently in the Flanders in the 15<sup>th</sup> century



# Some iconography of the Annunciation



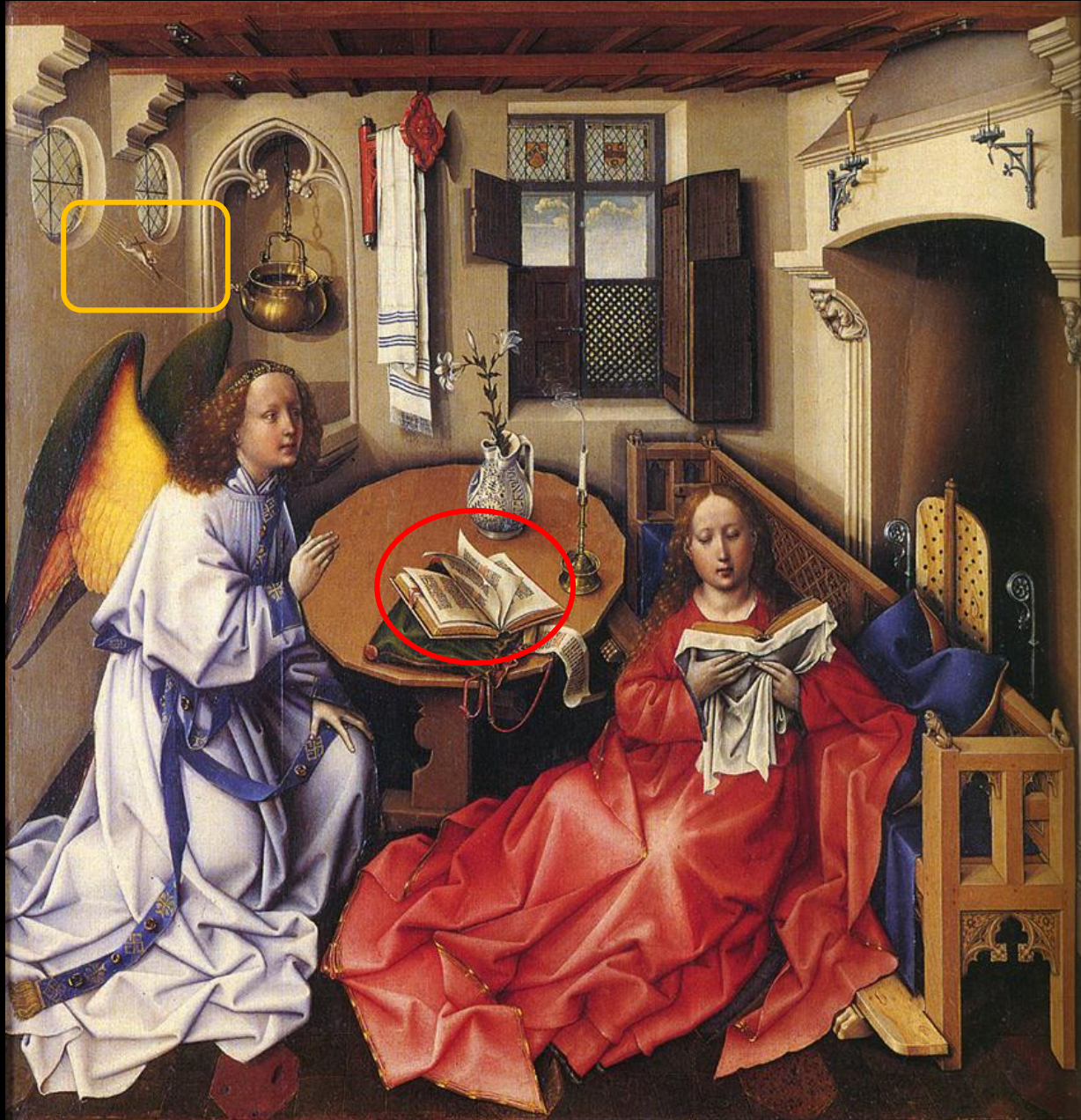
Rapid entry of  
Angel Gabriel



# Some iconography of the Annunciation

Child  
descending  
through  
beams of  
light

Rapid entry of  
Angel Gabriel





# Some iconography of the Annunciation

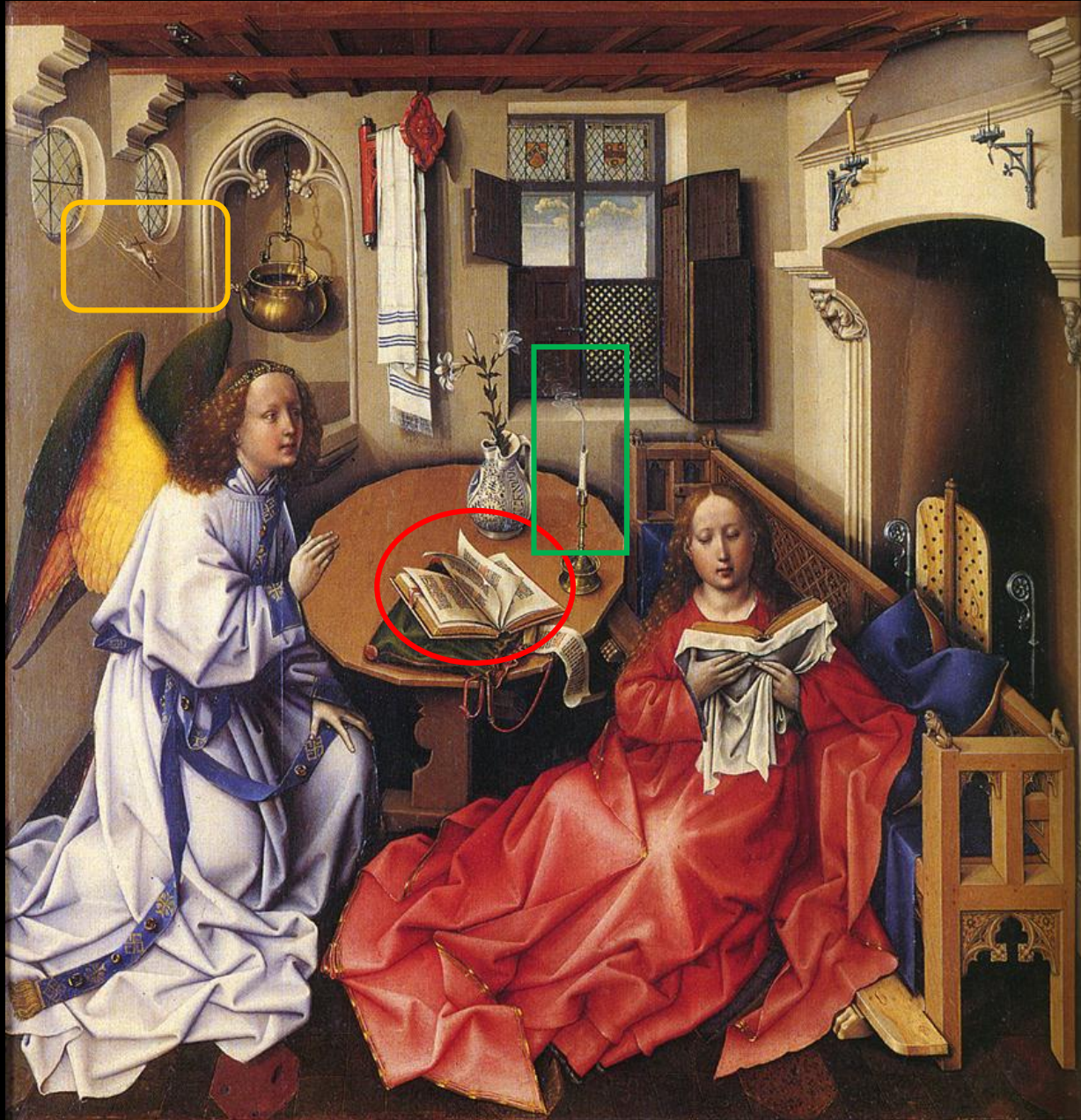




# Some iconography of the Annunciation

Child  
descending  
through  
beams of  
light

Rapid entry of  
Angel Gabriel



Extinguished  
candle





Right wing of Triptych





What is Joseph doing?





# Iconography about Christ

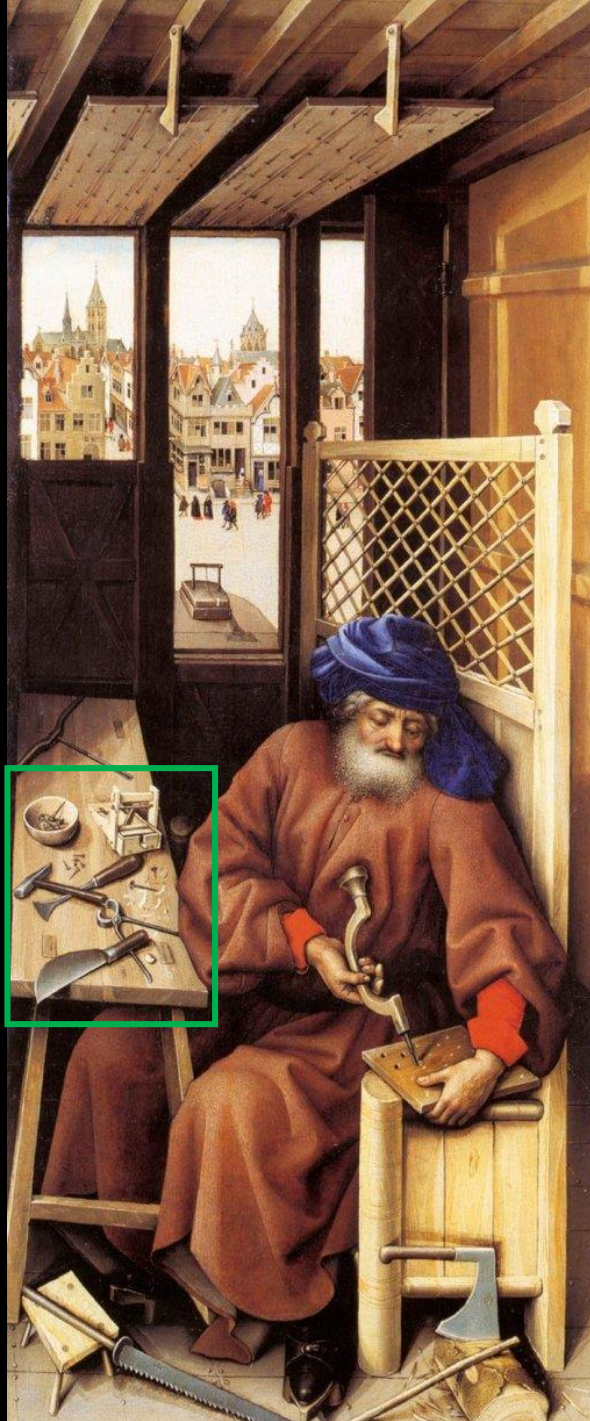


# Iconography about Christ





# Realism







Left wing of Triptych





How is the location of the donors a religious reference?





# Reference to Mary

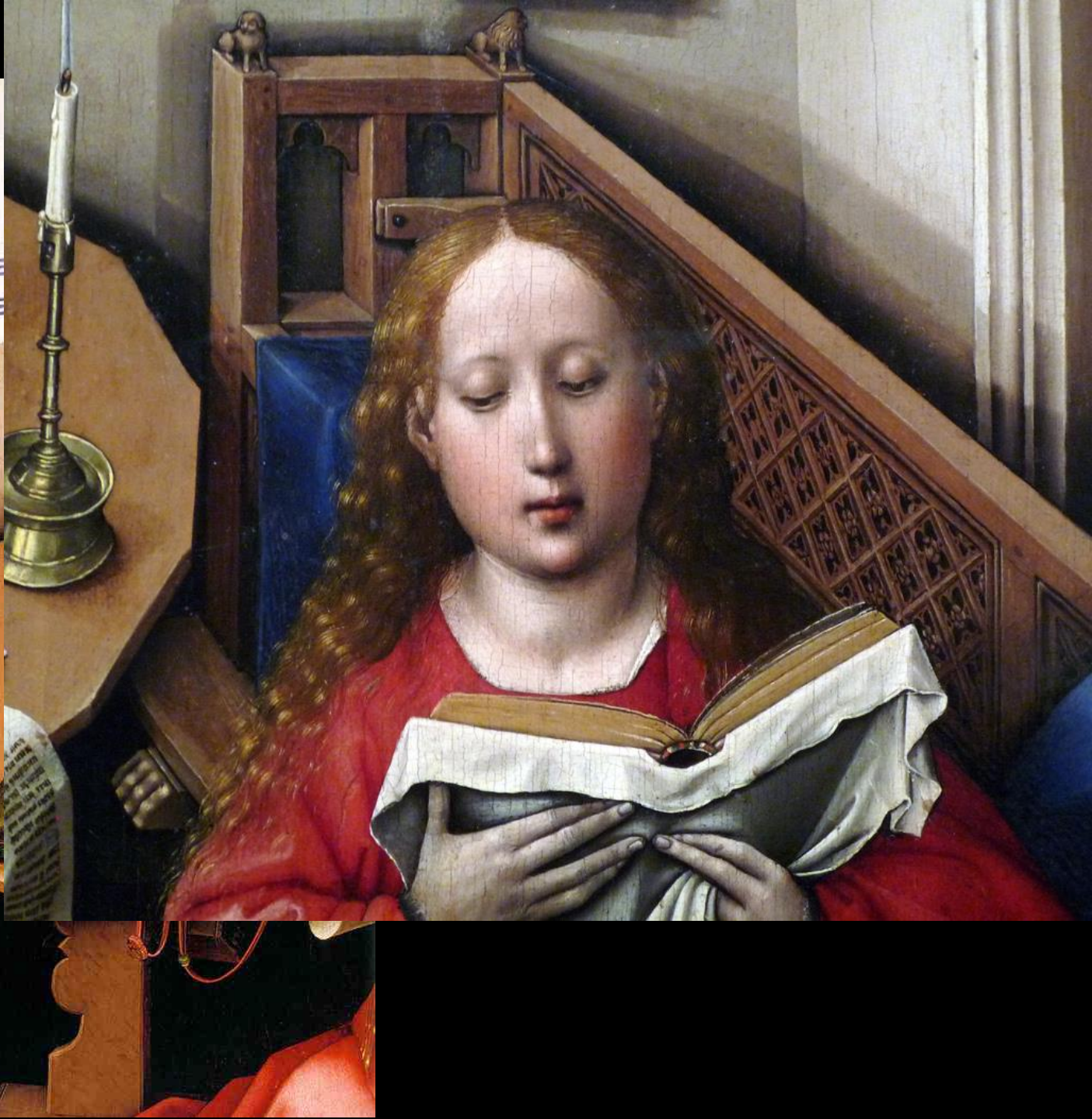




What time period is depicted in this work?









# Contemporary Hairstyle



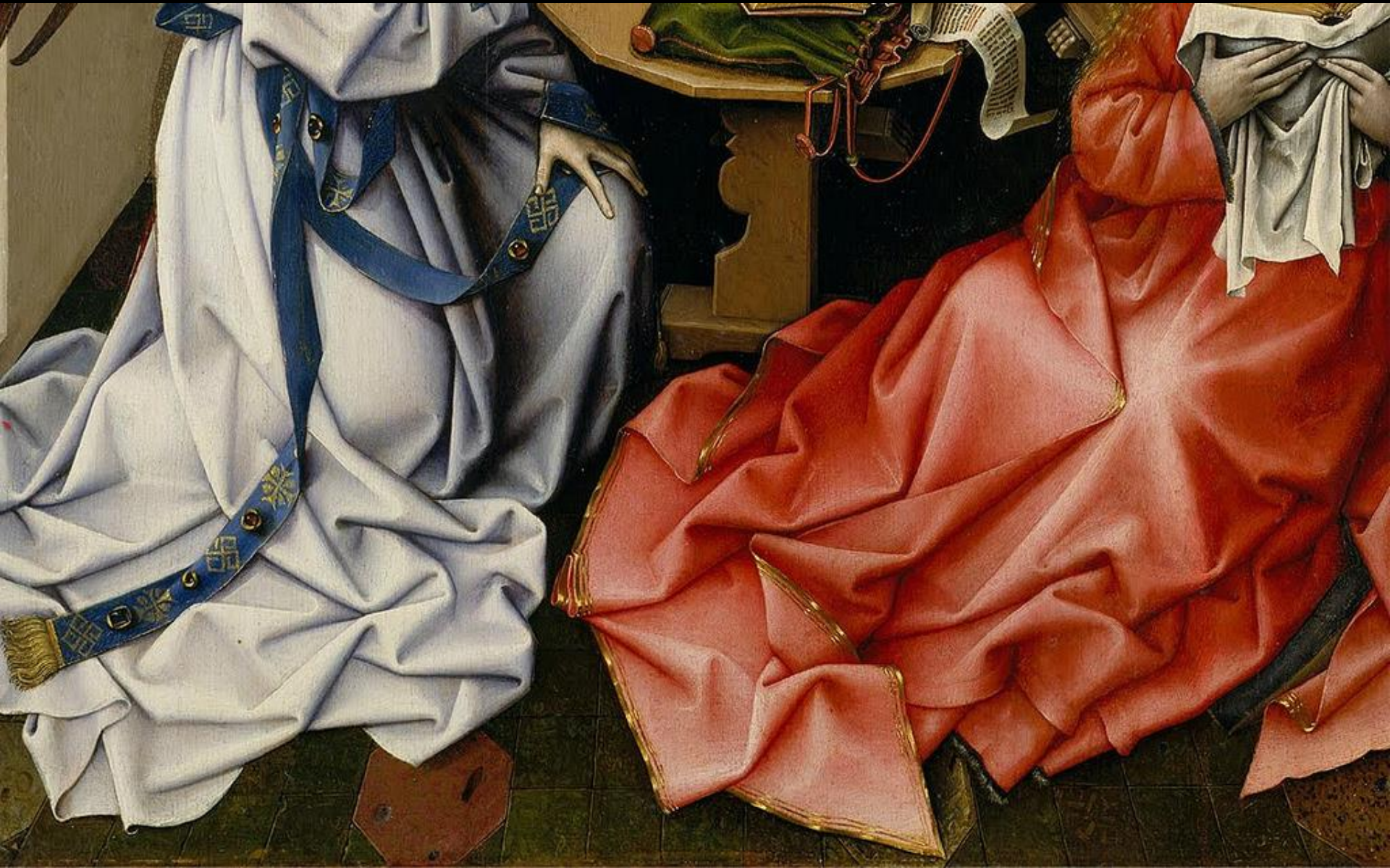




Perspective



# Richness of fabrics





# Uniform light from a single source





How was it used?





# Final Thoughts





Double Portrait of  
Giovanni Arnolfini  
and His Wife.

Jan van Eyck.

Oil on wood panel.  
1434.

33" x 22.5" (83.8 x  
57.2 cm)





Describe this work in as much detail as you can see.





Describe this work in as much detail as you can see.

Where do you begin your description?





What does it mean?





What does it mean?

When you want to make your argument, your description becomes your evidence...





Giovanni  
Arnolfini

wealthy cloth  
merchant

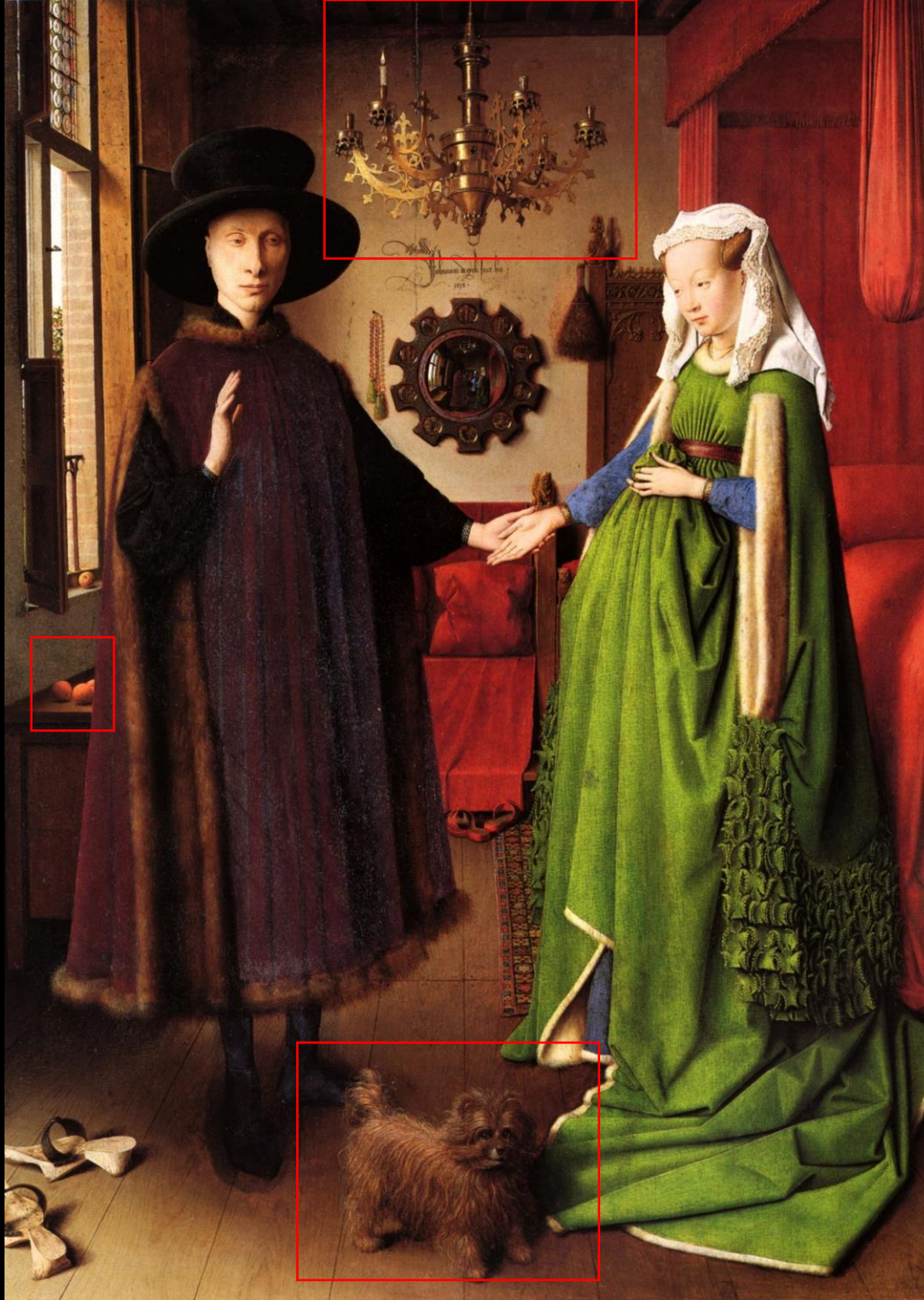




Wealth

Oranges

Affenpincher



Interior decorations

Clothing

Artist



*Handwritten text in Gothic script:*  
Johannes de eyck fuit hic  
1439

“Jan van Eyck was Here”





# Piety





*Handwritten Latin text in Gothic script: Johannes de eyck fuit hic 1438.*

Prayer beads



The Passions of Christ



# Realism





*Handwritten Latin text in Gothic script: Johannes de eyck fuit hic 1438.*

Prayer beads



The Passions of Christ







Purpose?





Wedding?  
Betrothal?  
Memorial?





*Handwritten text in Gothic script:*  
Johannes de eyck fuit hic  
1439

“Jan van Eyck was Here”





Rogier van der Weyden. Deposition. From an altarpiece commissioned by the crossbowmen's guild, Louvain, Belgium. Before 1443, possibly c. 1435-1438. Oil on wood panel. 7'2 5/8" x 8'7 1/8" (2.2 x 2.62 m)





What is shown?





# Guild System

- Began in the medieval period
- Security for specialists of particular skill
- Training
- Wages advocate (protection against skilled outsiders)
- Leaders of the city were often guild members





Why is it  
compelling?





Why is it  
compelling?

Spatial  
treatment





Why is it  
compelling?

Echoes of  
movements







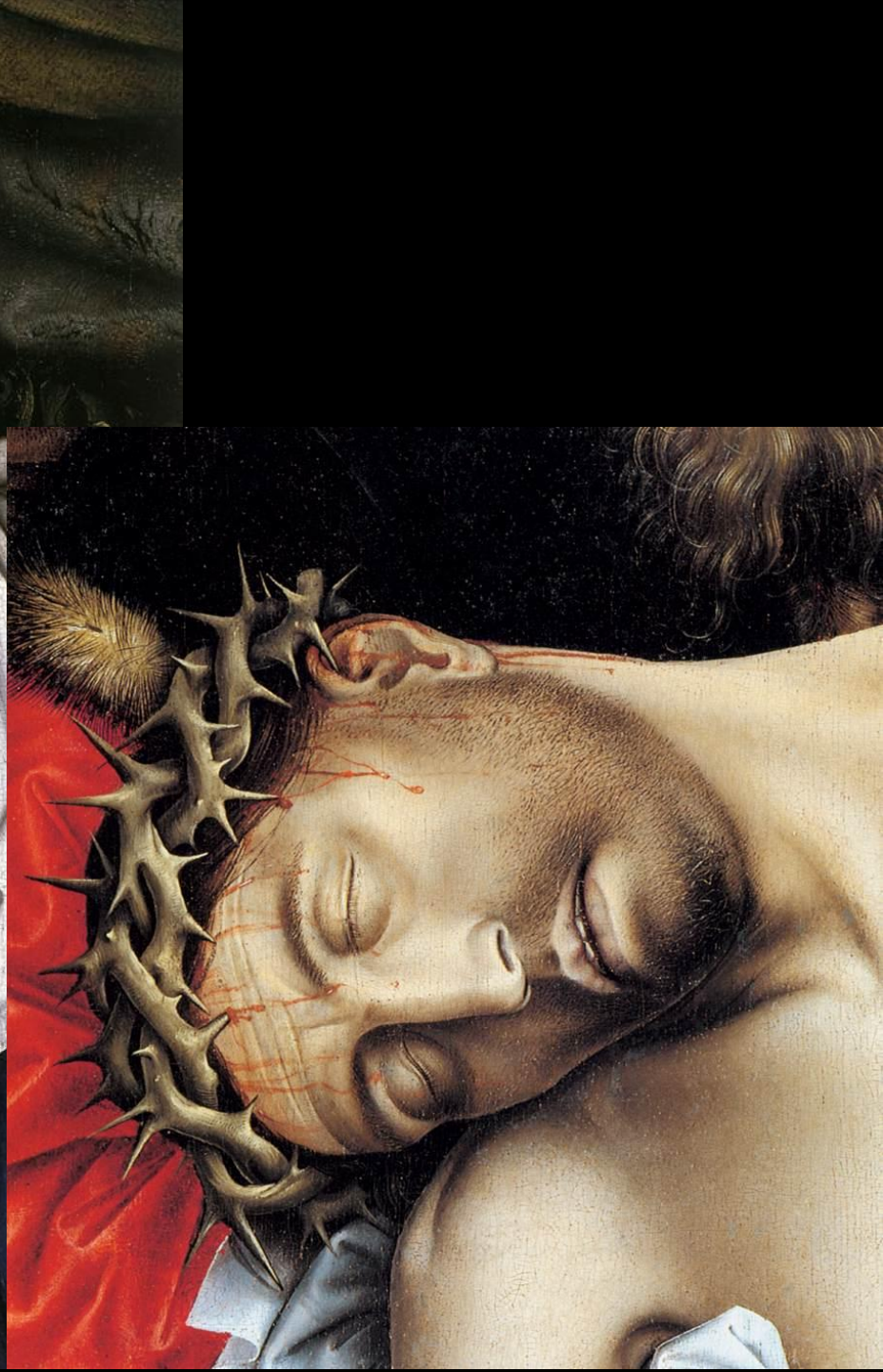


Why is it  
compelling?

Abject grief



























Oil vs. Fresco





# Renaissance Italy



Meanwhile in Italy...

Map is about 1300 A.D to 1360 A.D.





Sacrifice of Isaac. Filippo Brunelleschi.  
1401-2. Bronze with gilding. 21" x 17 ½" (53  
x 44 cm)



Sacrifice of Isaac. Lorenzo Ghiberti. 1401-  
2. Bronze with gilding. 21" x 17 ½" (53 x  
44 cm)





Which one did the committee prefer?





Which one do you prefer?



Filippo Brunelleschi. Santa Maria del Fiore (Dome of Florence Cathedral). 1420-1435; lantern completed 1471.



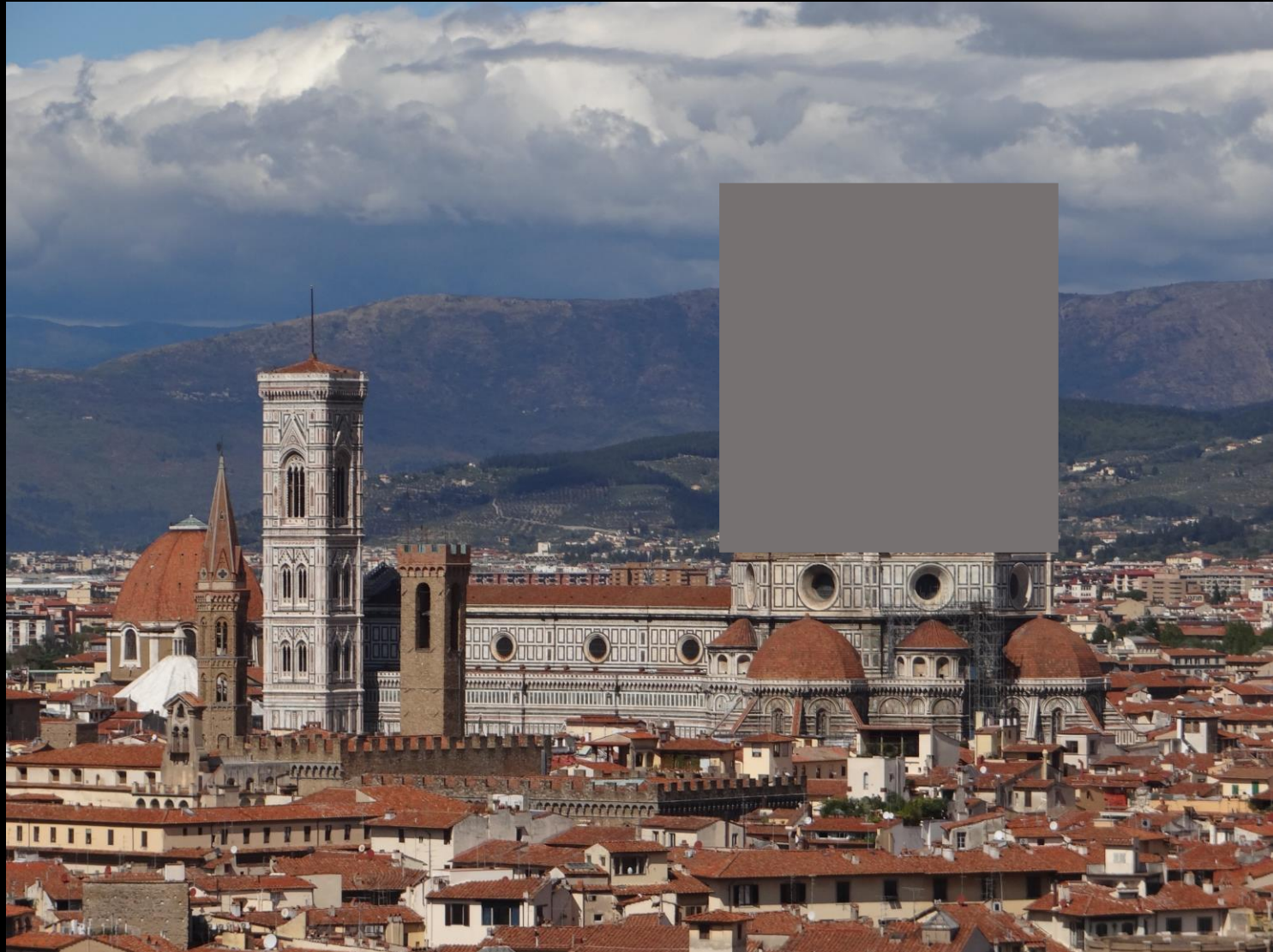


What have you learned about this work?





For over a century, this was the cathedral of Florence

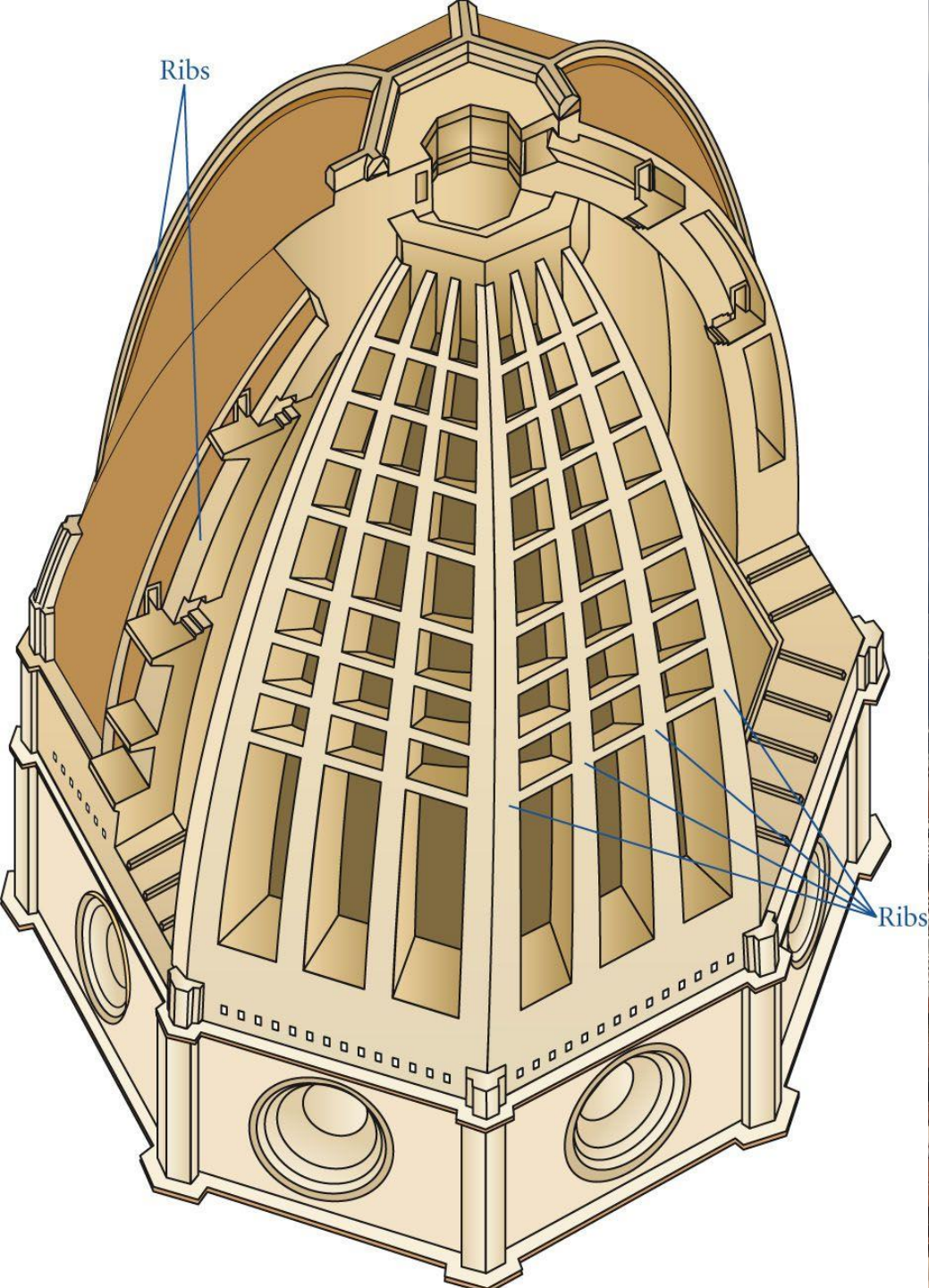




How did Brunelleschi construct the dome?





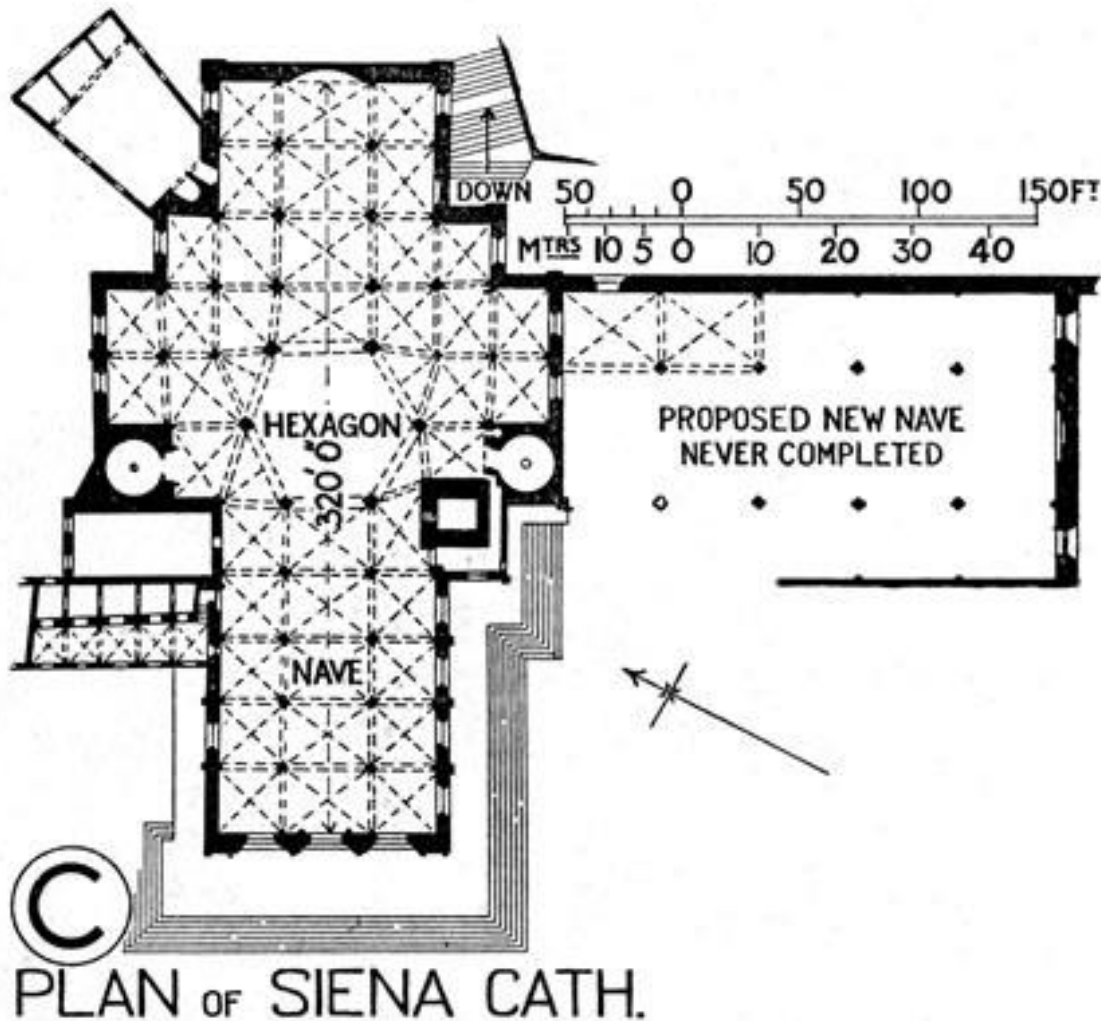






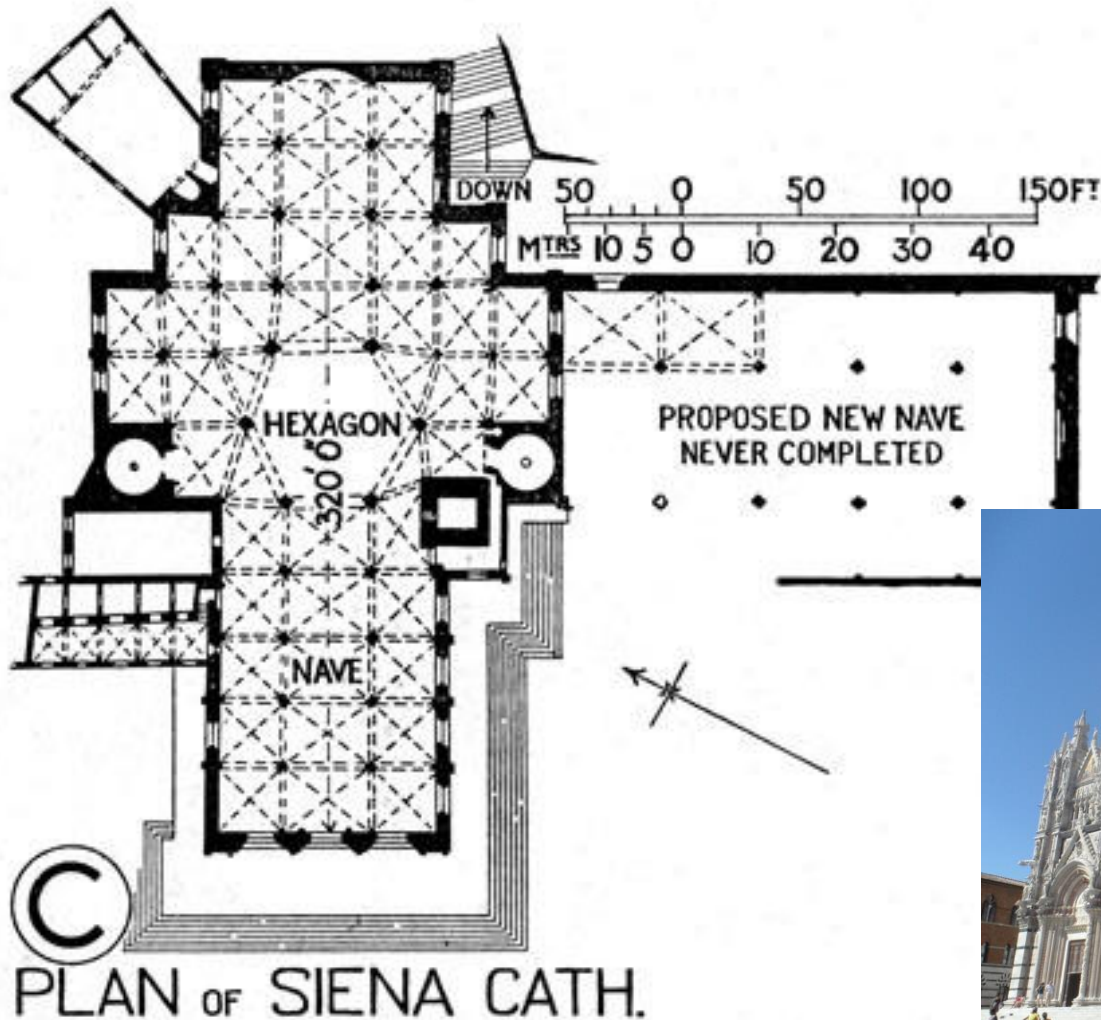


# Florence vs. Siena: My cathedral is bigger than your cathedral





# Florence vs. Siena: My cathedral is bigger than your cathedral





# Florence as the Center of the Renaissance

- The Medici Family
  - Bankers turned politicians
  - Patronized arts and literature
- De facto rulers of Florence for much of 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- How did the Medici contribute to the Renaissance?





Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, Florence. Attributed to Michelozzo di Bartolomeo. Begun 1446.





# Expression of Authority



Palazzo della Signoria





# Classicism and Humanism





Earlier  
Painting in  
Florence:  
Giotto





Masaccio. Tribute Money. Brancacci Chapel, Church of Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence. Circa 1427.  
Fresco, 8'1" x 19'7" (2.46 x 6 m)





What is in this fresco?





# continuous narrative





Florence implemented a graduated tax in 1427





# linear perspective





# atmospheric perspective





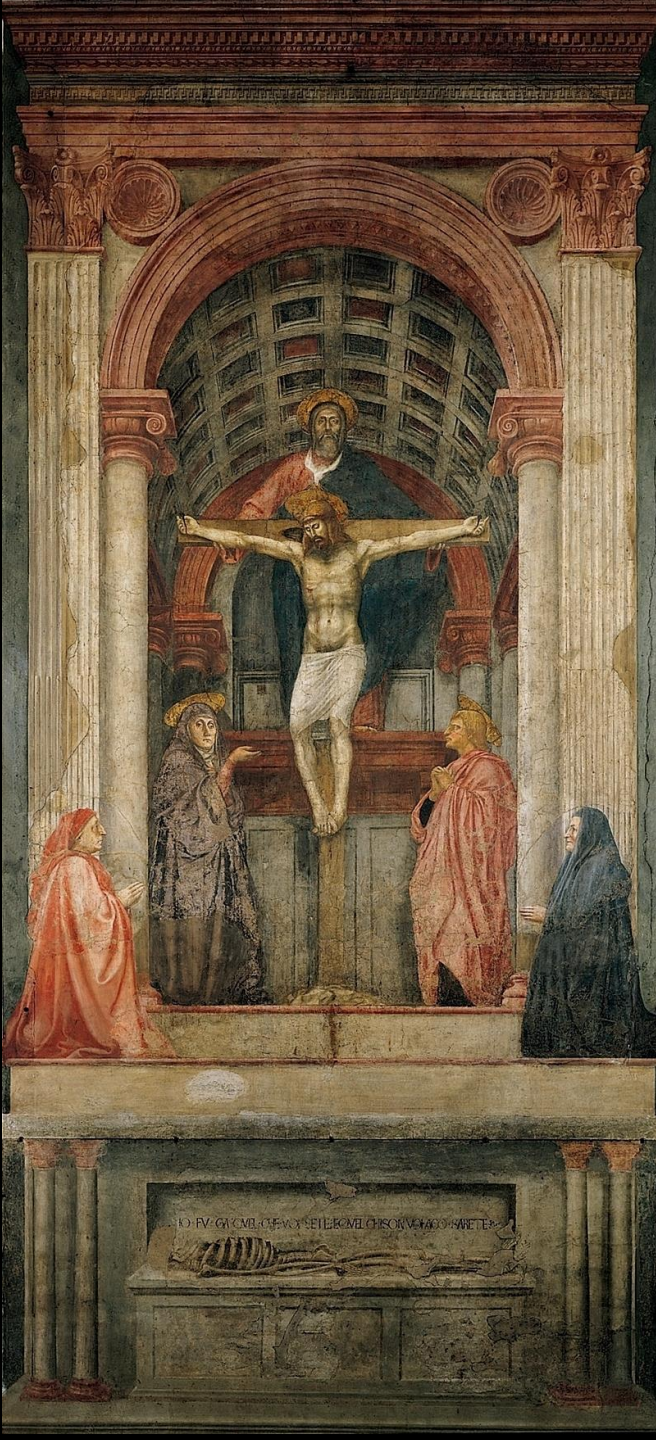
Trinity with the Virgin, St. John the Evangelist and Donors.

Masaccio

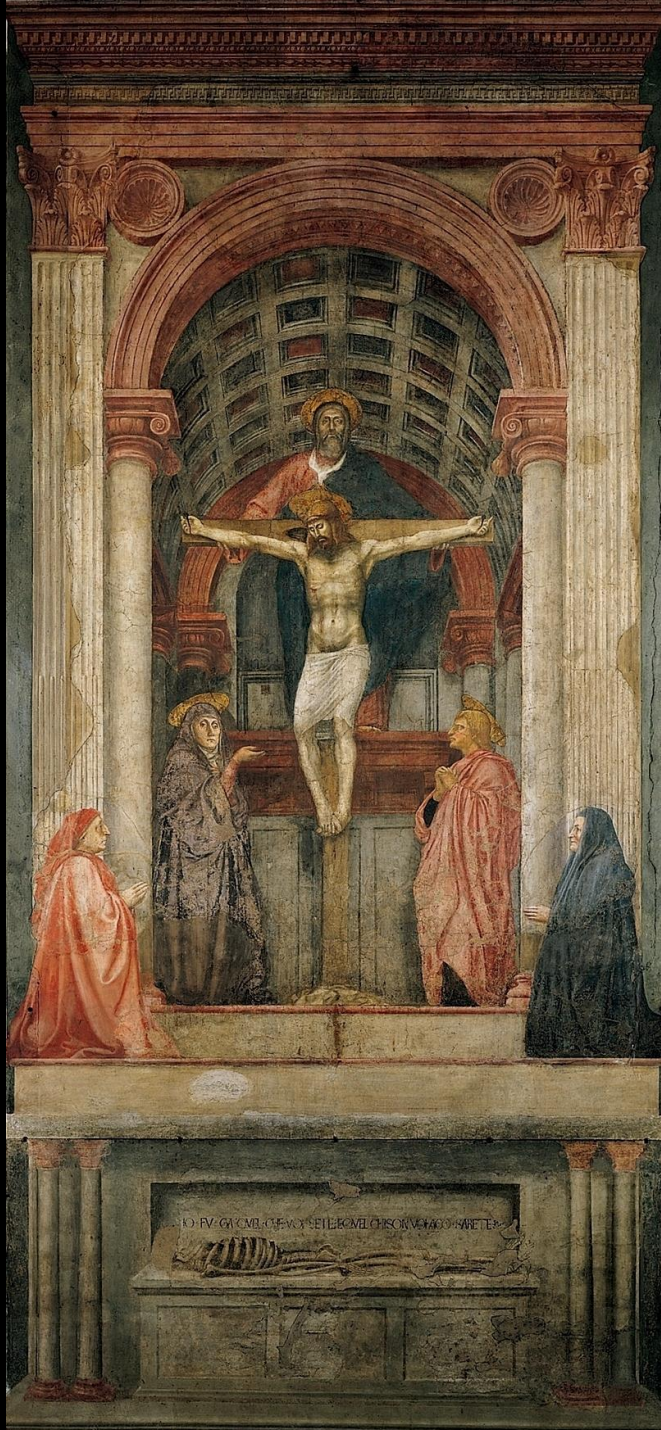
1427

Church of Santa Maria Novella,  
Florence, c. 1425-1427/1428.  
Fresco.

21' x 10'5" (6.4 x 3.2 m)









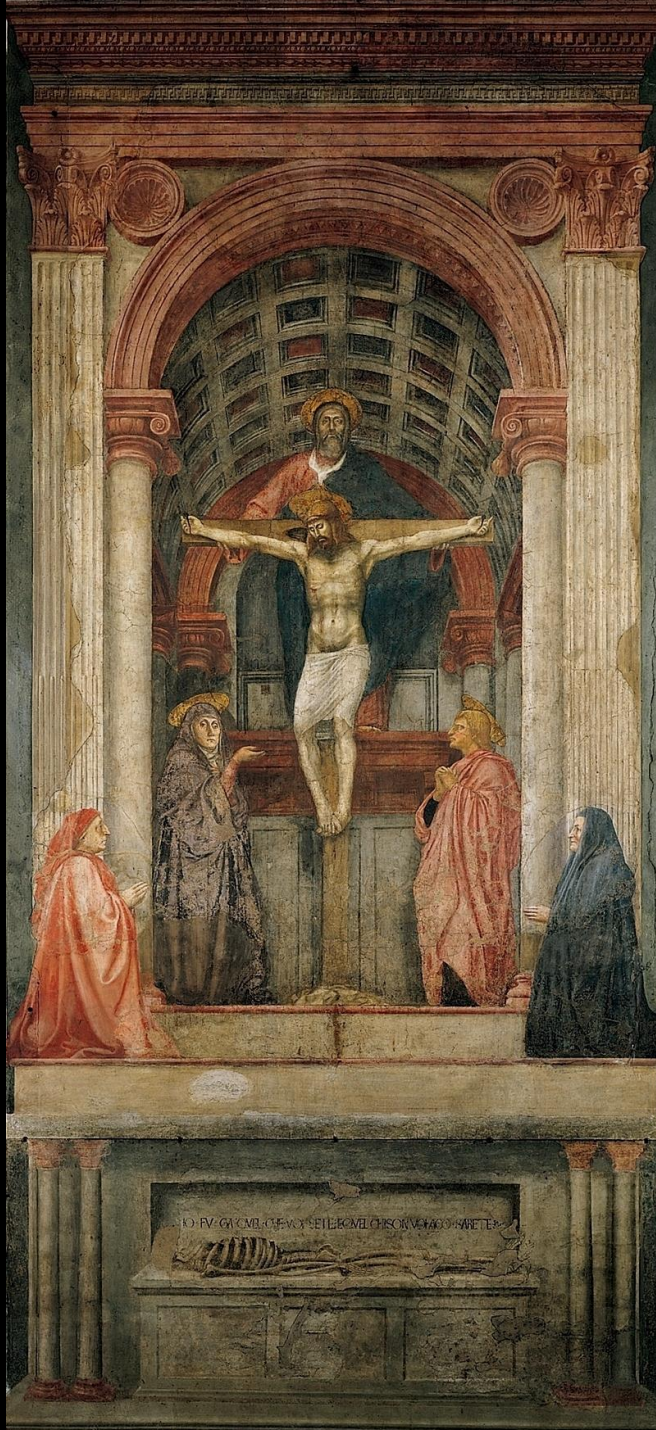






Vanishing  
Point





“I was once that which  
you are,  
and what I am you also  
will be”



# Review

- What are some of the characteristics of paintings in Northern Renaissance?
- What are some of the characteristics of paintings in early Italian Renaissance?
- Which region practiced oil painting first?