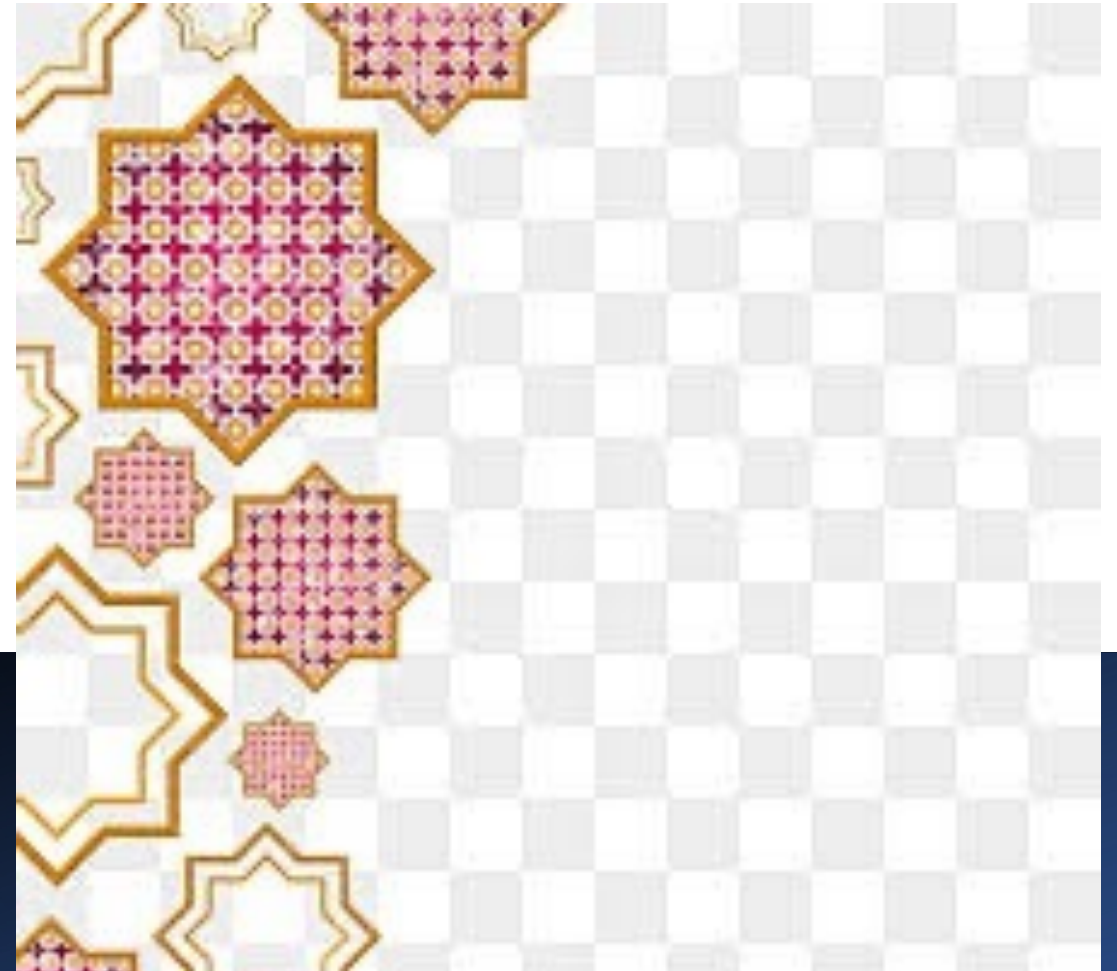


ALI 677: Comparing Islamic and Secular worldviews Part II

Session Two

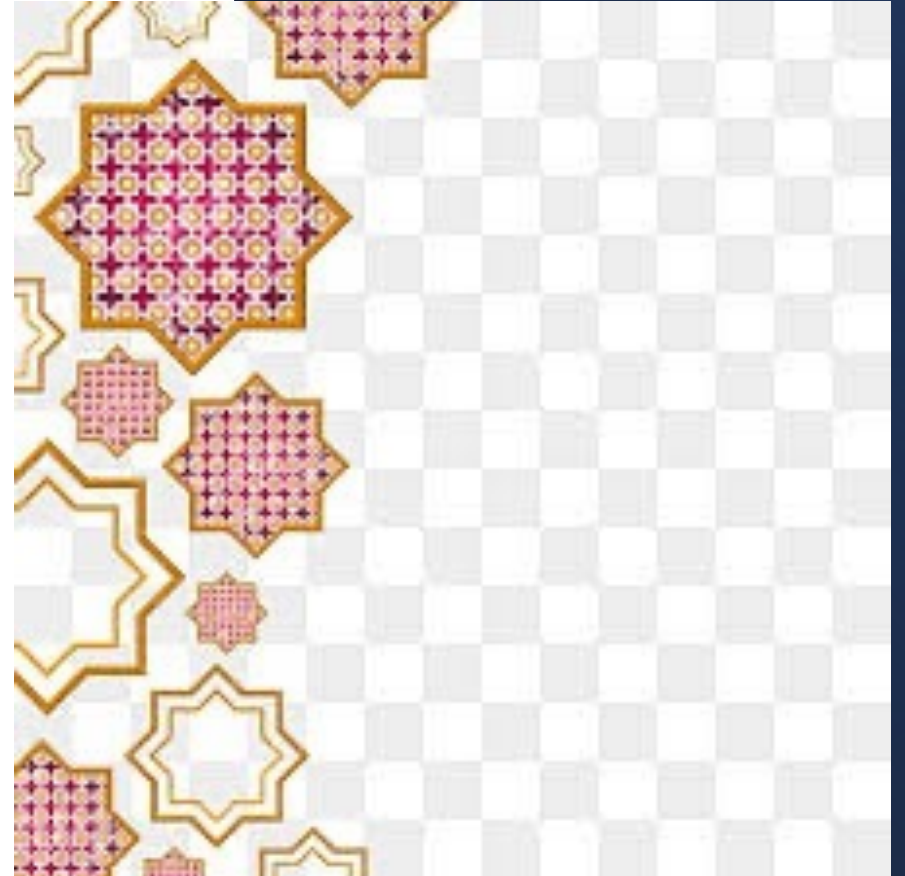
Visual Arts

Is viewing art
a spiritual experience?



The Effect of Art

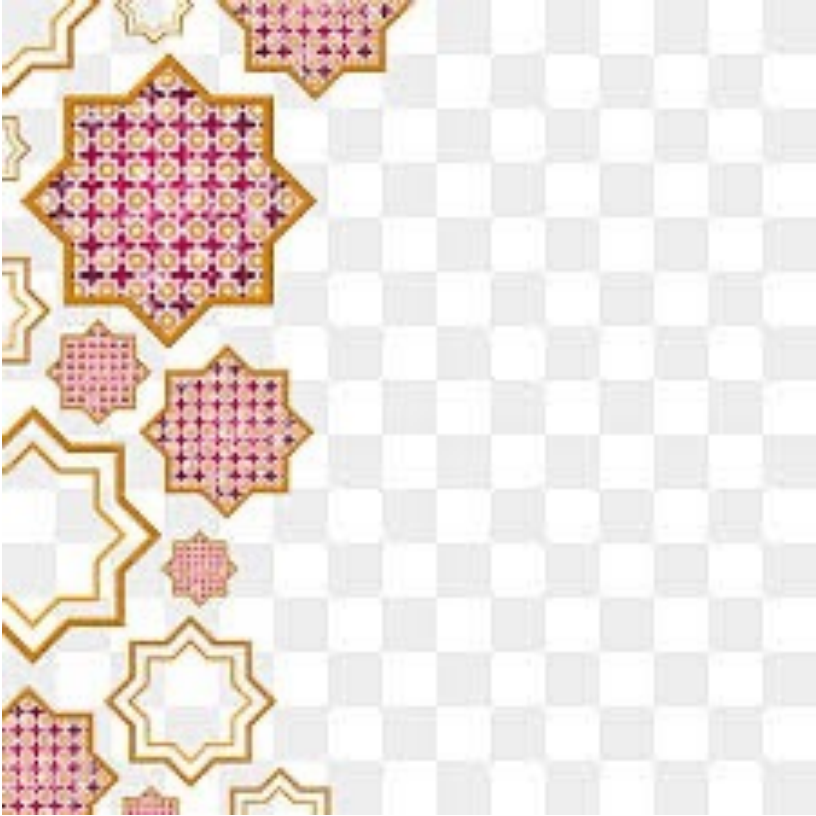
- Aesthetic, calming
- Communicates and evokes emotions
- Self-expressive and creative
- Reflects the values and beliefs of society
- Influences society

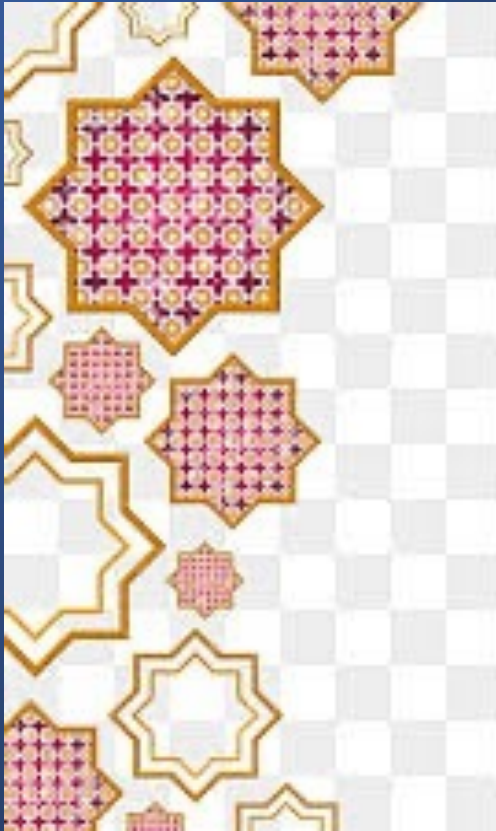


Defining secular art

Secular art can be defined as art that has no religious reference points and is, in fact, **oblivious to organized religion.**

Having an aesthetic appeal in a non-religious context, it neither denies or affirms the existence of God, but focuses on **human agency.**





The modern idea of art has its roots in **the Italian Renaissance**. Through the study of the art, poetry, philosophy, and science of ancient Greece and Rome, Renaissance humanists revived the notion that **man**, rather than God, is **the measure of all things**.

The dependence on the Church gave away to the confidence that humans can shape their own individual destinies and the future of the world.

Evolving of the Madonna image



Date: 1390



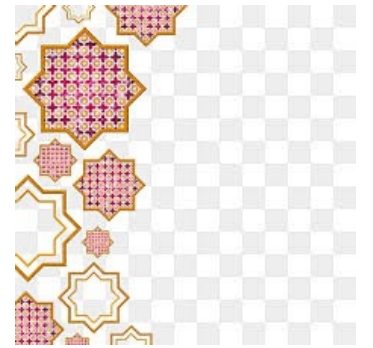
Date: 1480



Date: 1506

The art of traditional Christendom prior to the Renaissance had been liturgical, that is, it had served as a means toward the spiritual end of worship. A painting of the Virgin Mary . . . was designed to bring the believer, presumably standing before the work of art in a temple, into a fuller experience of communion with God . . .

With Raphael, the art of Christendom becomes disoriented. It begins to point only toward this world. In doing so, it ceases to be liturgical and becomes merely religious. And from there it would inevitably become secular . . . <https://johnstrickland.org/2016/07/12/the-secular-transformation-of-western-art/>



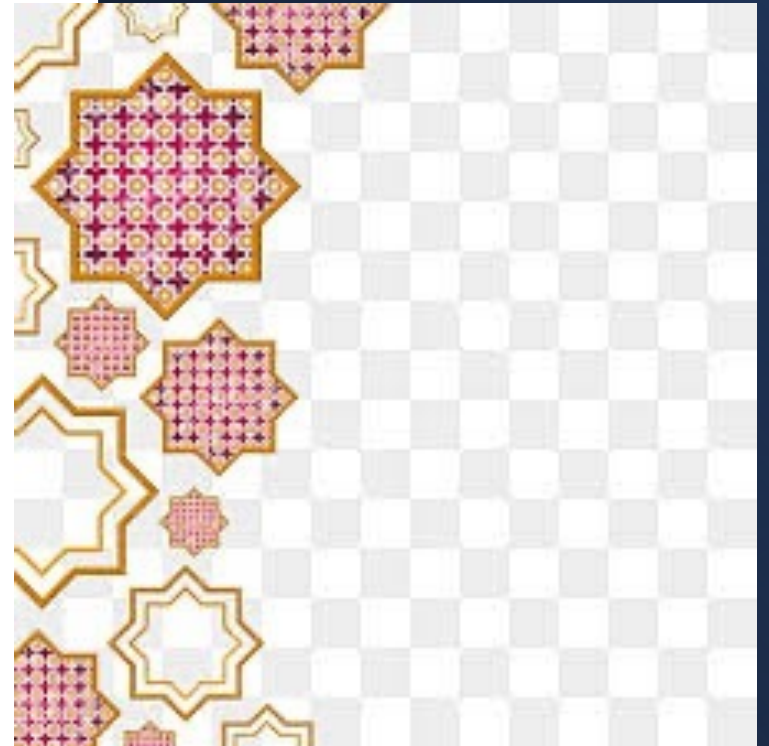
Gone is a liturgical encounter with the Mother of God, presenting her son to his worshipers. This is a painting of a lovely, charming young woman caught in a moment of domestic playfulness. Gone is her modest dress, her dark clothing and veil. Gone, or almost gone, is her halo.

But most striking here is the image of Christ. He is no longer the incarnate Son of God, the creator of this world and its almighty savior. He is now a cute, kissable, but apparently powerless complement to his adoring mother. And he is naked. Nothing reveals the coming secularization of modern Christendom so expressively as the naked “Baby Jesus” that emerges from the Madonnas of Raphael and other western painters at this time. Prayer before such an image has become virtually impossible, at least by the standards of traditional Christianity.

<https://johnstrickland.org/2016/07/12/the-secular-transformation-of-western-art/>

Movement away from the sacred

- Depicting ordinary mundane scenes and objects. Portraits and landscape paintings became popular.
- Art possessed **its own intrinsic value** and should not have to be made to satisfy any useful or moral function.

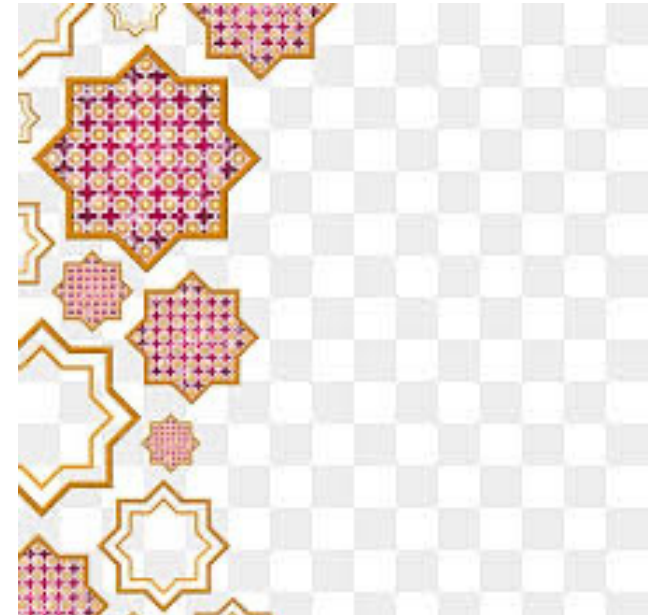


Today's perspective

Today, many people view art as either a form of entertainment to be consumed or an investment opportunity over which to capitalize.

It is both unfortunate and remarkable how something as creative and special as art can often be degraded into cold numbers.

<https://artbusinessnews.com/2023/02/>



Resources

<https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/secular-art>