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The Art of Greece
The Roman World

We can't start to talk about the Art of the Western World without looking back at the Greek and Roman civilizations.

Today, more than we even realize it, Greek influences surround us—from the shadow of a column, to the little sparkle of a coin. We carry with us a little part of the glorious and ancient Greek world. The Greek world brought us closer to what we call today the Modern world.

The Greek artists left us a multitude of breathtaking pieces of sculpture and architecture. Some of my favorites are Kritios Boy (C. 480 B.C), Zeus or Poseidon (C. 470-450 B.C.), and Venus de Milo (second or first Century B.C.), because of their vivid expressions—which even today delight us and amaze our eyes.

The beauty of Greek statues reveals amazing details about Greek society and its characteristics and ideals of beauty. From the Greek art, we get to know a little about the Greek Gods—with their infinite powers—and peoples' beliefs about them.

We owe the Greek civilization the beauty of the Parthenon (C. A.D. 447-432) with its distinguished architecture and millenary presence. We owe the Greek civilization the

understanding of the human figure, never before unraveled so complete and visionary. Never before were the heroic nature of humans and their tragic destiny portrayed so greatly. Because of the Greek civilization with its sophistication in art, politics and war, the stepping stone for the Roman World was set, and the human civilization made a step closer to what we are today: the Modern world.

The Roman civilization “hatched” from the remains of the Greek world, adding on to the Greek elements and characteristics, inventing new things, continuing the course of human evolution. The Art of the Greek world survived in some of the detailed Roman copies—made after Greek statues. The Roman Empire will develop on the knowledge of the ancient Greek spirituality and will become the blueprint for the Modern world. We owe the Roman culture the Christianity, the art of organization and science, the order and law and so much more.

The architecture of the Roman buildings was improved by adding a new element: the arch. The arch added a new beauty, stability and character to the new Roman buildings.

The Colosseum (C. A.D. 70-82) represents one of the great Roman symbols, and it included the arch. Stone, concrete (a Roman invention) and bricks made possible the building of the Colosseum—an impressive demonstration of Roman architecture.

The Pantheon (A.D. 118-125) is another great Roman symbol. Constructed from concrete and bricks by the Emperor Hadrian, the Pantheon demonstrated his love for architecture and inspired the Western World with its beautiful exterior columns. The elegant interior with marble

surfaces and breathtaking statues represents, also, a Roman innovation. The dome connects the interior with the cosmos beyond the dome.

Let's not forget the Column of Trajan (C. A.D. 113), which commemorates the triumphal Roman campaign in Dacia—the column is part of my Romanian heritage. I first saw a copy of the original column in the National Museum in Bucharest. Let's, also, not forget the ruins of the Roman bridge—built over the Danube almost 2000 years ago by Apollodor of Damascus. Apollodor, chief architect for the Roman emperor Trajan, was a master engineer, a bridge builder and sculptor, as well as the author of technical treatises. Ruins of the bridge can still be found at Drobeta Turnu Severin in Romania.

Even though the Roman Empire collapsed, part of it survived in art and in the improvements of the political system. Today's society carries a multitude of Roman details and inventions—as well as Greek influences.