



Speaker: In the 1700s, religion took a back seat to politics in the arts. That's not to say that there wasn't religious music and there wasn't religious art being created. It's just that religion was no longer on the cutting edge for artistic subject matter. Part of this had to do with the patronage. The Catholic church was no longer pouring fabulous sums of money into new depictions of Bible stories, I mean, who could blame them? They already had a treasure trove of great art depicting Bible stories from the Renaissance and Baroque eras, so they were already set.

The Protestant churches in keeping with their roots focused on the essentials of religious practice and therefore they were not huge patrons of the arts which were considered frills. If the arts were employed, they tended to be more old-fashioned and practical in their taste, like comfortable old shoes. Secular concerns were at the forefront of the Enlightenment and with the philosophy of the Enlightenment and the emphasis on the matters of the mind, the matters of the spirit got neglected. This is not to say that religion was unimportant during this era, it's just to say that it was the arena when there was much moving and shaking going on in the arts.

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