



Speaker: The interest in art in France had a profound effect on all of the arts. With Spain on the decline and France on the rise, the French monarchy along with other important political figures, such as Cardinal Richelieu, established institutions in the arts which promoted a study and codification of the arts. King Louis XIV along with his Chief adviser, Colbert, established control over art and architecture in France.

This was done through the institution of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, which was established in 1648, and became known as the French Academy. The main duty of the academy was to establish standards by which to judge art. It also established classes and training in the arts, promoting the idea that the techniques of art could be learned, and that they weren't just a God-given gift.

The opinion of the academy evolves so that line was superior to color. The Academy's official stance was that line appealed to the mind, whereas color appealed only to the senses. This brings up the debate as to who is the better judge of art, the educated person or the lay person, and who ultimately is the audience for the artist.

The academy favored, above all other paintings, Nicholas Pussant. However, this insistence created a reactionary group who favored color and favored the style of Flemish artist, Peter Paul Rubens, with his sensuous lush colors.

Other academies and architecture music and dance were also established in France, and this led to the creation of studies such as music theory, and the creation of a common vocabulary for ballet, which is still used today.

Because the court of King Louis XIV was so obsessed with appearances, the ruling classes of France supported the arts lavishly in its attempt to keep up with the Joneses. It was a good day to be an artist.

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