

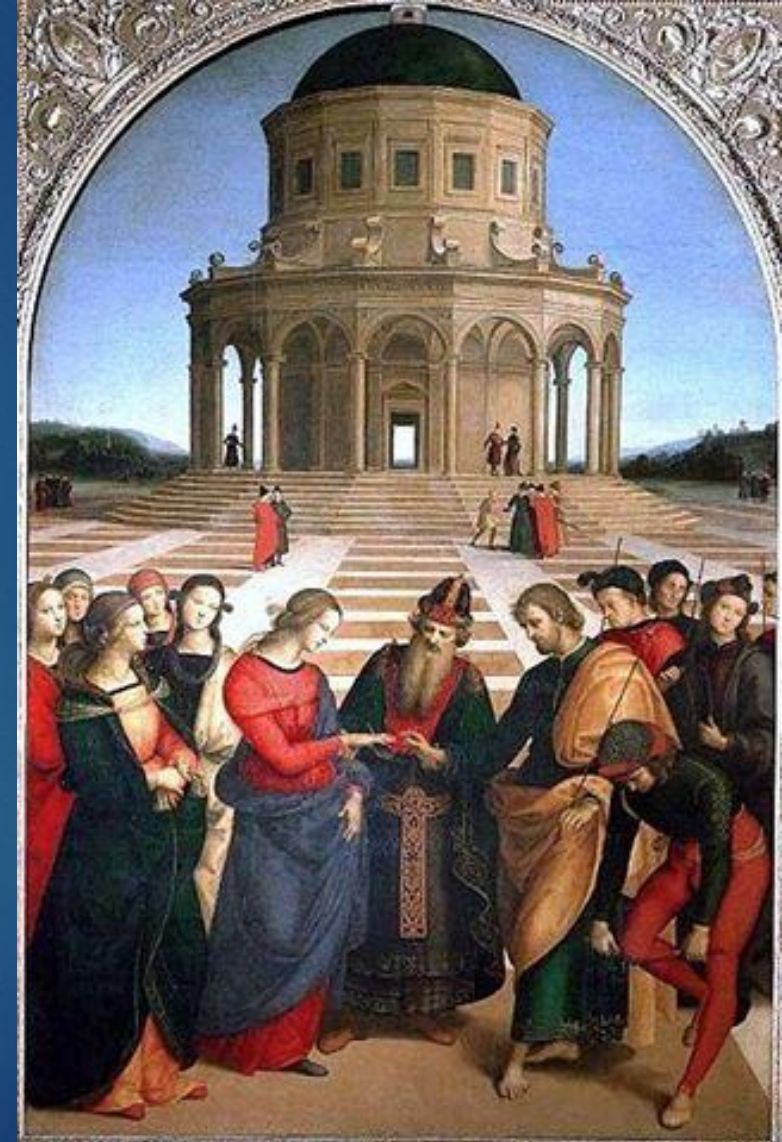


Understanding Perspective in Art

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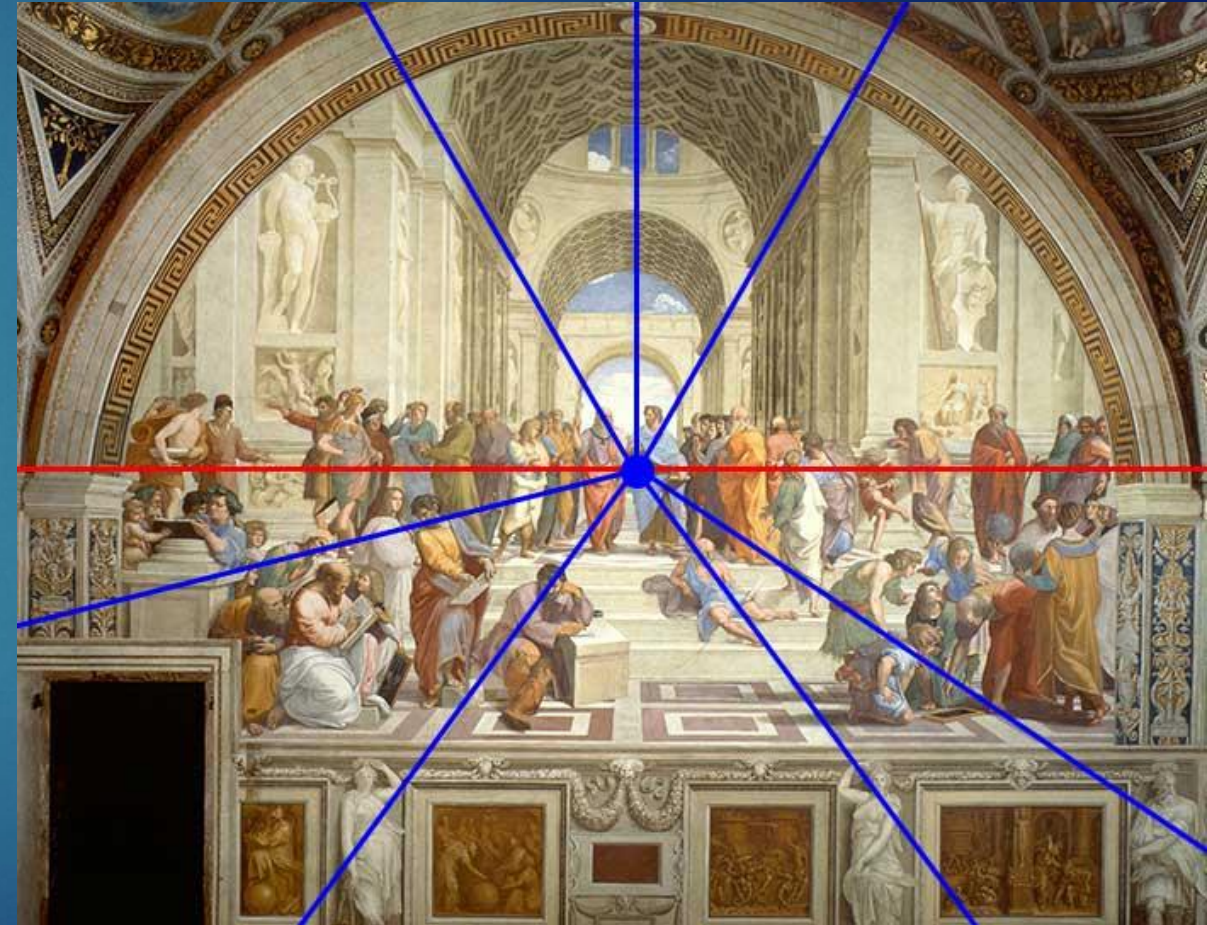
Perspective in Art

- ▶ Artists use perspective to represent three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface (a piece of paper or canvas) in a way that looks natural and realistic. Perspective can create an illusion of space and depth on a flat surface.
- ▶ Perspective most commonly refers to linear perspective, the optical illusion using converging lines and vanishing points that makes objects appear smaller the farther away from the viewer they go. Aerial or atmospheric perspective gives things in the distance a lighter value and cooler hue than things in the foreground. Foreshortening, yet another type of perspective, makes something recede into the distance by compressing or shortening the length of the object.



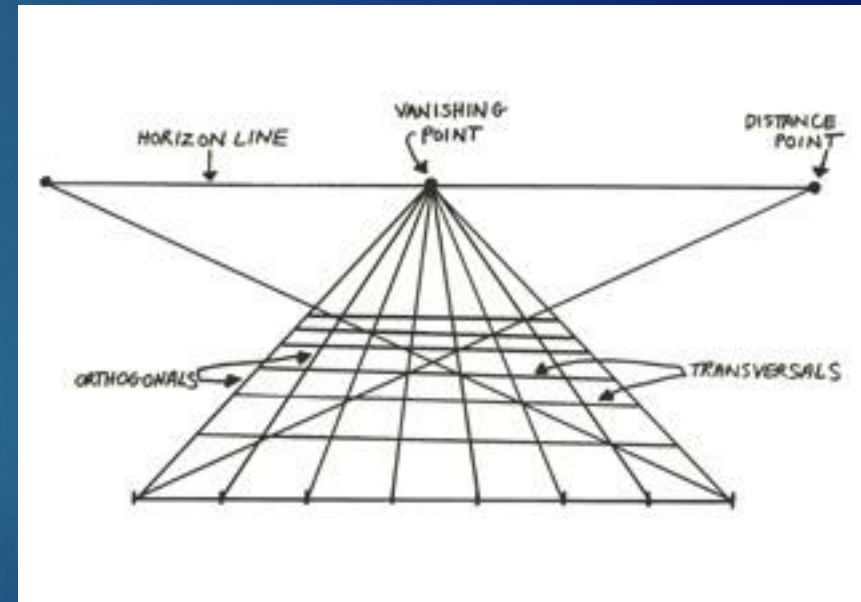
History

- ▶ The rules of perspective applied in Western art developed during the Renaissance in Florence, Italy, in the early 1400s. Prior to this time paintings were stylized and symbolic rather than realistic representations of life. For example, the size of a person in a painting might indicate their importance and status relative to other figures, rather than their proximity to the viewer, and individual colors carried significance and meaning beyond their actual hue..



Linear Perspective

- ▶ Linear perspective uses a geometric system consisting of a horizon line at eye level, vanishing points, and lines that converge toward the vanishing points called orthogonal lines to recreate the illusion of space and distance on a two-dimensional surface. Renaissance artist Filippo Brunelleschi is widely credited with the discovery of linear perspective.
- ▶ Three basic types of perspective -- one-point, two-point, and three-point -- refer to the number of vanishing points used to create the perspective illusion. Two-point perspective is the most commonly used.



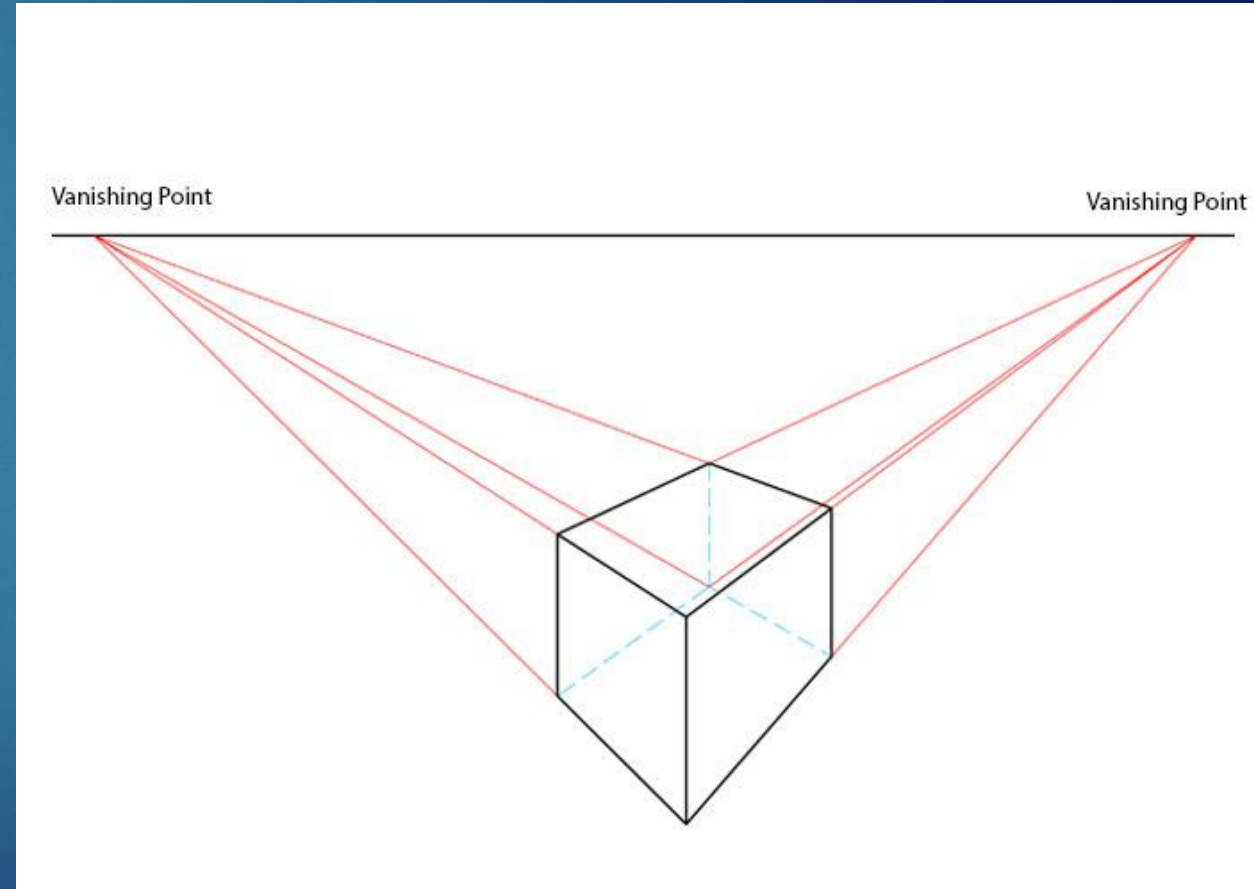
One-point perspective

- ▶ Drawings have a one-point perspective when a single vanishing point (VP) seats on the horizon line. The position of the vanishing point can vary in its horizontal location, but it always stays on the horizon line. Therefore, draw the horizon line first, then determine the VP position on it.



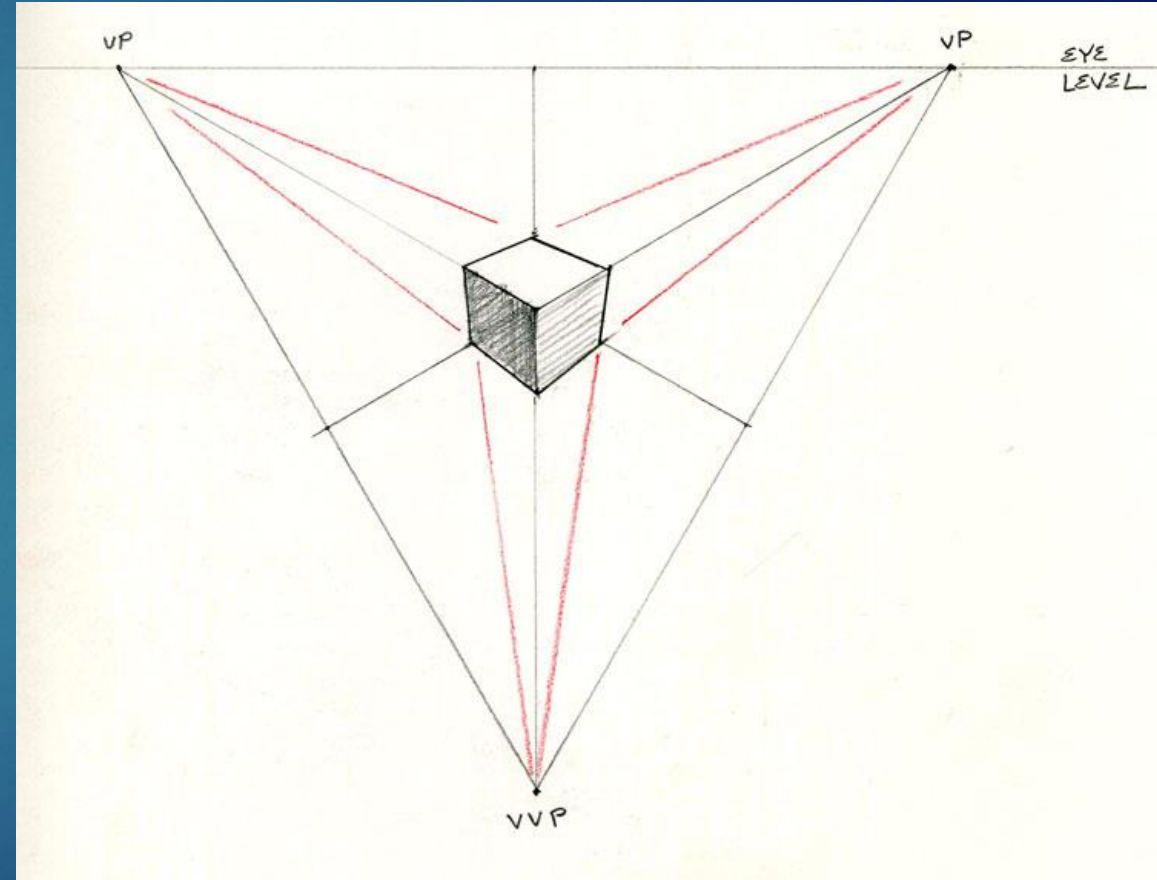
Two-point perspective

- ▶ A drawing has two-point perspective when it contains two vanishing points on the horizon line. In an illustration, these vanishing points can be placed arbitrarily along the horizon. Two-point perspective can be used to draw the same objects as one-point perspective, rotated: looking at the corner of a house, or at two forked roads shrinking into the distance



Three-point perspective

- ▶ Three-point perspective is often used for buildings seen from above (or below). In addition to the two vanishing points from before, one for each wall, there is now one for how the vertical lines of the walls recede. For an object seen from above, this third vanishing point is below the ground. For an object seen from below, as when the viewer looks up at a tall building, the third vanishing point is high in space.



Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective

- ▶ Aerial or atmospheric perspective can be demonstrated by a mountain range in which the mountains in the distance appear lighter in value and a bit cooler, or bluer, in hue. Because of the increased layers of atmosphere between the viewer and objects in the distance, objects that are farther away also appear to have softer edges and fewer details. Artists replicate this optical phenomenon on paper or canvas to create the sense of distance in a painting.



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