

Neoclassicism

What Is Neoclassicism?

Neoclassicism is a term related to artistic and creative movements that reflect qualities of ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, culture, and art. Although the classical Greeks and Romans lived thousands of years ago, they championed ideas like order, balance, and restraint that had lasting influence. You can find examples of neoclassicism in disciplines like literature and theater, art and architecture, and music.

Introduction of Neo-Classicism:

Neo-classicism is a term that refers to a broad tendency in literature and art that was inspired by classical antiquity, especially ancient Greek and Roman culture. It emerged in the late 17th century and lasted until around 1750, but it was also revived during the revolutionary periods in France and the United States in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It was influenced by the discoveries of ancient Roman cities and the writings of a German art historian who praised Greek sculptors. It involved a return to the classical models, styles, and values, as well as a search for a timeless and



Figure 1, Nicolas Poussin, *Et in Arcadia Ego*, 1637–38, oil on canvas, 87 x 120 cm (Musée du Louvre, Paris, photo: Alonso de Mendoza)

severe mode of expression that contrasted with the preceding Rococo style. It also reflected the philosophical and historical developments of the Enlightenment and the quest for modernity.

Summary of Neoclassicism

New classics of the highest rank! This was the rallying cry of populations immersed in the 18th century Age of Enlightenment who wanted their artwork and architecture to mirror, and carry the same set of standards, as the idealized works of the [Greeks and Romans](#). In conjunction with the exciting archaeological rediscoveries of Pompeii and Herculaneum in Rome, Neoclassicism arose as artists and architects infused their work with past Greco-Roman ideals. A return to the study of science, history, mathematics, and anatomical correctness abounded, replacing the [Rococo](#) vanity culture and court-painting climate that preceded.