

## Cimabue

Noted as the last Italian painter of the Byzantine style, Cenni di Pepo, called Cimabue, is also credited with progressing art towards the naturalism seen in early Renaissance painting. The great biographer of Italian artists, Giorgio Vasari (1511 &ndash; 1574) endears Cimabue as the foundation of Italian painting and is literally chapter one of his work, *The Lives of Artists* (first published in 1550).

Cimabue's inkling towards naturalism started early on, as Vasari notes of his youth, "instead of paying attention to his literary studies, Cimabue, as if inspired by his nature, spent the whole day drawing men, horses, houses and various other fantasies in his books and papers. Still, Vasari took much creative license with Cimabue's life and much of it was proven untrue by modern critics, but the artist survives in bringing a more human side to the last days of Byzantine art.

Cimabue is famously mentioned in the poet Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, in *Purgatorio*, proclaiming, "Cimabue thought himself the master of painters; Giotto took from him the glory and relegated him to oblivion." The poet is referring to Cimabue's legendary position in Italian painting being overshadowed by his very own prodigy, Giotto di Bondone (1267 &ndash; 1337). Vasari's account tells of Cimabue discovering a young Giotto sketching a sheep from his herd, using a pointed rock upon a smooth stone. Cimabue was so taken by Giotto's natural talent that he convinced the boy's father that he was suited for an apprenticeship in Florence. Though again, Vasari's creative liberties may have told more legend than fact.

All the same, Cimabue was a prominent artist in Florence and Rome and his famous frescos, though badly damaged over time, are highly acclaimed for the time. These included two pieces, *The Crucifixion and Deposition in the Basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi*, the main Franciscan church in Assisi. He also completed a fresco later in life for the lower church in Assisi of *The Virgin with Saint Francis*. One of his most cherished works is the *Madonna of Santa Trinita*, from the Santa Trinita Church in Florence, which now resides in the Uffizi Gallery. For most of history, and even still some now, much of Cimabue's work is confused and misattributed with that of his contemporary, the Sienese artist Duccio (1255 &ndash; 1319).

Recently in 2000, findings from curators in London and New York have proven that two similar works, *The Flagellation of Jesus and Virgin and Child*, possibly from 1280, are the true Cimabue. These findings help to distinguish Cimabue's works from that of Duccio, who in their time might have also been rivals.

His mosaic piece, *Saint John the Baptist*, was thought to be the only true surviving piece of Cimabue's for some time. As his only documented Mosaic work it was originally done in 1301 for the *Opera del Duomo* in Pisa, and has been restored since. It is attributed to Cenni de Pepo, and the artist was also known as *Bencivieni Di Pepo* or *Benevenuto Di Giuseppe*.

---

**Copyright Notice:** This document was generated on [ArtRev.com](http://ArtRev.com) on 6/18/2018 1:43:38 PM (U.S. Eastern Time Zone) - Copyright 2018 ArtRev.com, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The entire contents of this brochure is the property of ArtRev.com and/or its content suppliers. You may not modify, copy, reproduce, republish, or distribute any portion of this brochure without the prior express written consent of ArtRev.com, Inc.

**Authenticity & Price Match Guarantee:** Shop with confidence. ArtRev.com is proud to be the first online art retailer to offer a "[lifetime authenticity guarantee](#)" with every limited edition or original work of art. Most limited edition and original artworks ship with a Certificate of Authenticity free of charge. This certificate is an official and valuable document that most insurance companies require in order to insure artworks against damage or theft. ArtRev.com will make every possible attempt to match or beat the advertised price of any major Internet competitor, art gallery, or frame shop; given that they are authorized to sell the item from the publisher or artist, and have the exact item in stock available for immediate sale.

**Disclaimer:** The biography shown in this brochure is not meant to be a complete and comprehensive exploration of the life of the featured artist and is not guaranteed to be up-to-date. While information provided about each artist is carefully studied and reviewed prior to publishing; ArtRev.com assumes no liability for the content provided on this page. Biography Last Updated on 9/2/2008 7:49:53 PM. Please [let us know](#) if any information is out-of-date or inaccurate.