



GIOTTO – What's the concept?

Giotto Di Bondone, born around 1267 in Colle di Vespignano, was the first real Renaissance painter, who ushered out the flat, one-dimensional artwork of medieval times, and brought paintings into a second dimension. During his early years, Giotto apprenticed under master Florentine painter Cimabue, but soon out-painted his teacher, and became independent.

Most of Giotto's paintings are religious in subject. His most famous work includes 38 frescoes in the Arena Chapel in Padua, and his depiction of the life of St. Francis Assisi in the Church of Santa Croce. Though many of the paintings attributed to Giotto are not signed, the general style and skill of these paintings indicates he executed them.

Giotto's style of two-dimensional painting was unusual for the time in which he lived (nearly 100 years before other masters like Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo). Pope Boniface VIII was said to have sent a messenger to see Giotto, and ask for a sample of his work. Giotto took his brush and painted a perfect circle on the canvas. The messenger took the circle back to the Pope, and when Boniface saw Giotto's work, he hired him on the spot.

Giotto spent many years of his life as a commissioned painter for clergymen and other wealthy people of Italy. In 1334, the city of Florence honored Giotto by giving him the title of *Magnus Magister* (Great Master).

Giotto was said to be a short, homely man, who saved his money and left a wife and six children at his death in 1337.