

Portraits Through the Centuries



2000 BCE – 2016 AD

What is a portrait?

A portrait is a piece of art that depicts a real person.

This is a portrait:



This is not a portrait:





Throughout history, mankind has created portraits in very different ways for very different reasons.

Centuries ago the main purpose was to show what people looked like. There was no TV or Internet, so if you wanted to see what someone looked like, you had to look at art.

Portraits were made to remember
those who had passed on...



Tutankhamen

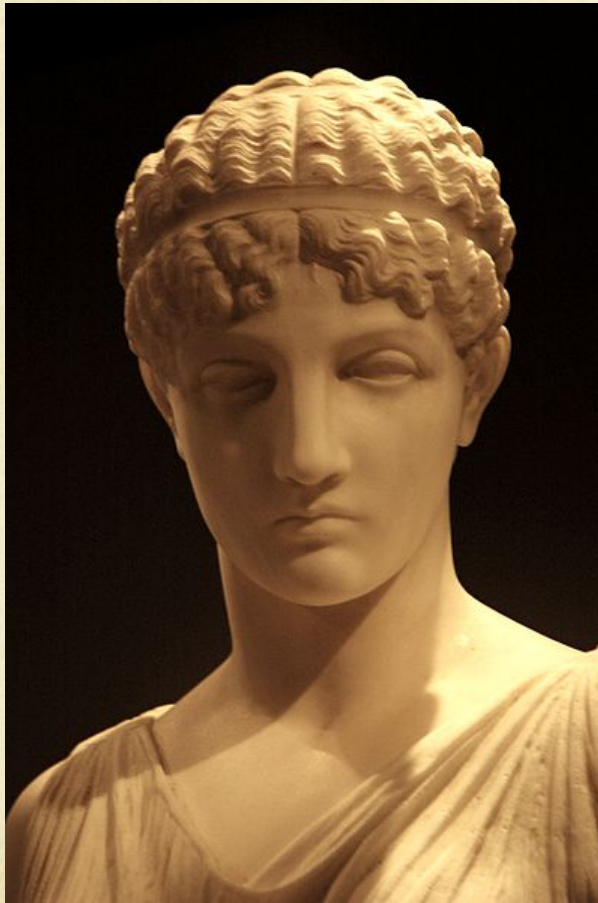
1355 - 1346 BCE

Egypt

Burial Mask

Gold with Inlay

To portray simple beauty...



Greek Sculpture of a Woman

850 - 31 BCE

Exact date of completion
unknown

Marble

To elevate kings into gods...



Mayan King Pacal

603 – 683 AD

Central American

Exact date of completion
unknown

Relief Stone Sculpture

Artists experimented with very different materials like mosaic...



Justinian I

Byzantine Emperor

527 – 565 AD

Exact date of completion
unknown

Mosaic: Stone, Glass

Painting on fabric...



Emperor Xuanzong
and his horse,
“Night-Shining
White”

China

Aprox. 700 AD

Ink on Silk

Stained glass windows



A Pope

Middle Ages Europe

500 – 1400 AD

Exact date of completion
unknown

Stained Glass

This is the most famous portrait in the world



Leonardo da Vinci painted the Mona Lisa somewhere between 1503 – 1519, during the period of art known as the Renaissance.



Not this Leonardo



‘Rena’... what?

Artwork done between the 1400’s – 1700’s was part of the Renaissance movement, or ‘rebirth’, of the classical style of Greek and Roman art.

This life size sculpture is part of a much larger group of sculptures by the artist Michelangelo. The entire group took him 14 years (1520 – 1534) to carve out of marble!

Who was Michelangelo?



Michelangelo is one of the most important artists in history. This life size sculpture, The Pieta, which is in Rome, is the most famous sculpture in the world. He created it when he was only 24 years old!

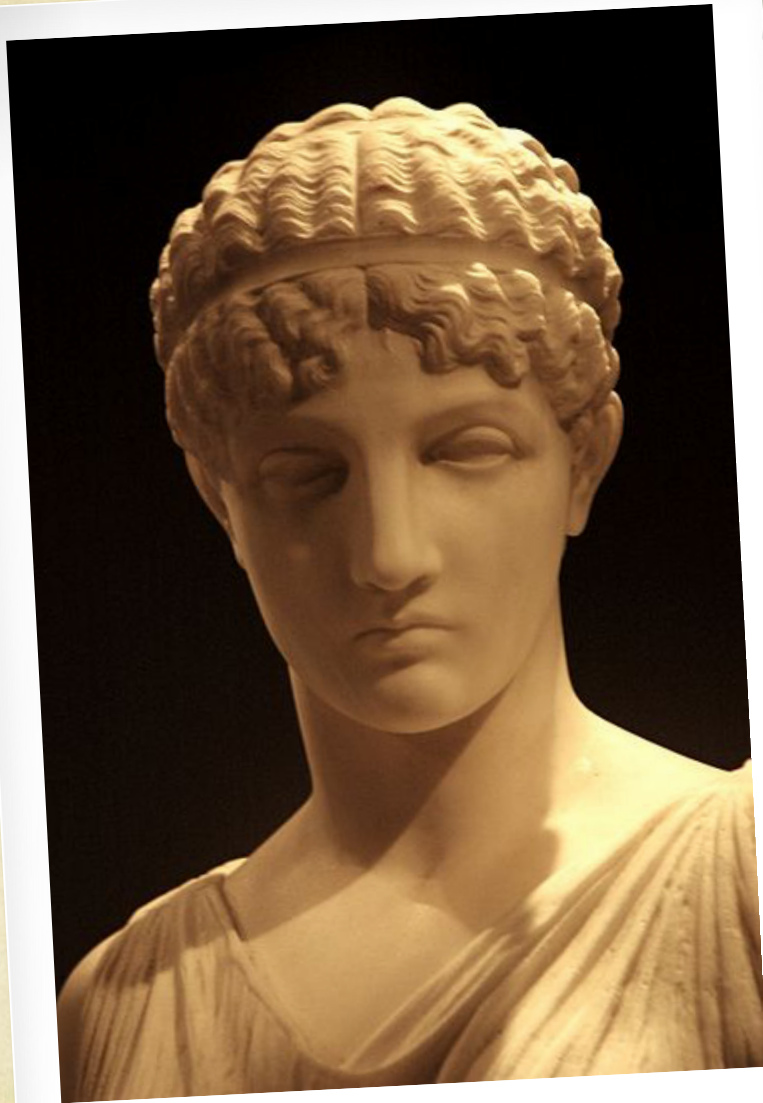
1498 – 1499

Marble

Not this Michelangelo



Michaelangelo



Remember her?

For almost 1,000 years after the
Greeks and Romans created
artwork like this...

... artists created work like this:
flat and kind of cartoonish.
These were the Middle Ages.



Left: Chartres Cathedral Doorway Sculptures
c. 1145 - 1155

Above: Illustration from a religious book.
c. 1000 - 1020

But the world was changing, and so was art

Artists like Michelangelo, Leonardo, Donatello and Raphael—the *Super Heroes of the Renaissance!*—wanted to create art that was more life-like.



The David by Michelangelo, 1501, Marble



These guys were named after artists!

What happened next?



As the centuries passed and art materials improved, paintings became more and more lifelike.

Look at the detail on her dress!

This portrait of Princess Albert de Broglie by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres was painted in 1853.

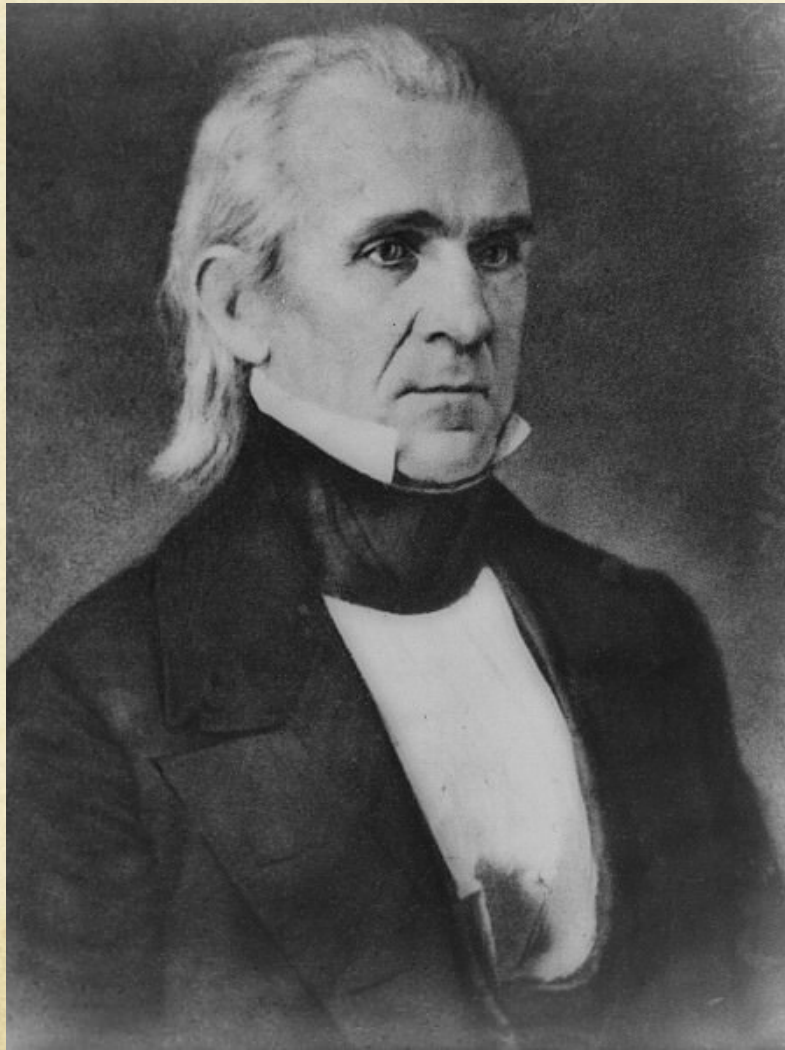
Hmmm... what was invented just a few years earlier?

Do you know what this is?



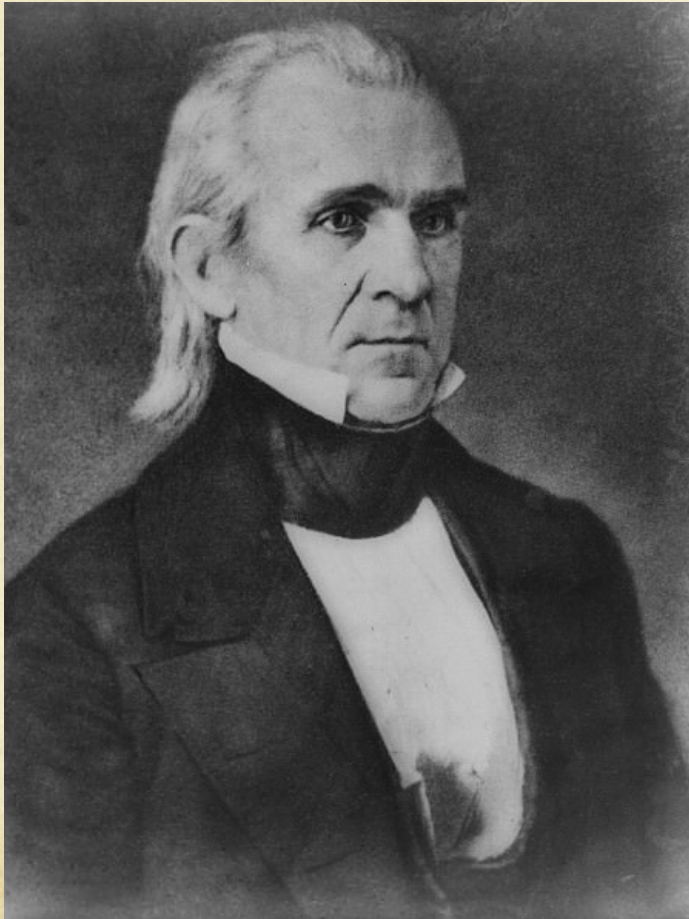
This is one of the earliest cameras from around 1836.

Photography changed everything!



This is a photograph of James A. Polk, the 11th President of the United States. It is the first photograph of a sitting US President. It was taken in 1849.

How did photography change art?



Capturing life as it happened

Photography allowed artists to take pictures of their subjects so they didn't have to come in and sit for hours on end. The artists could then work from the photos, capturing all the tiny details without saying, "Sit still!"

It also allowed them to capture life as it happened. Can you imagine trying to get these children to sit still for a painting?

These paintings were done by American painter, Mary Cassatt, in the late 1800's.





Pablo Picasso: Head of a Woman 1938



Gustav Klimt: Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer 1907

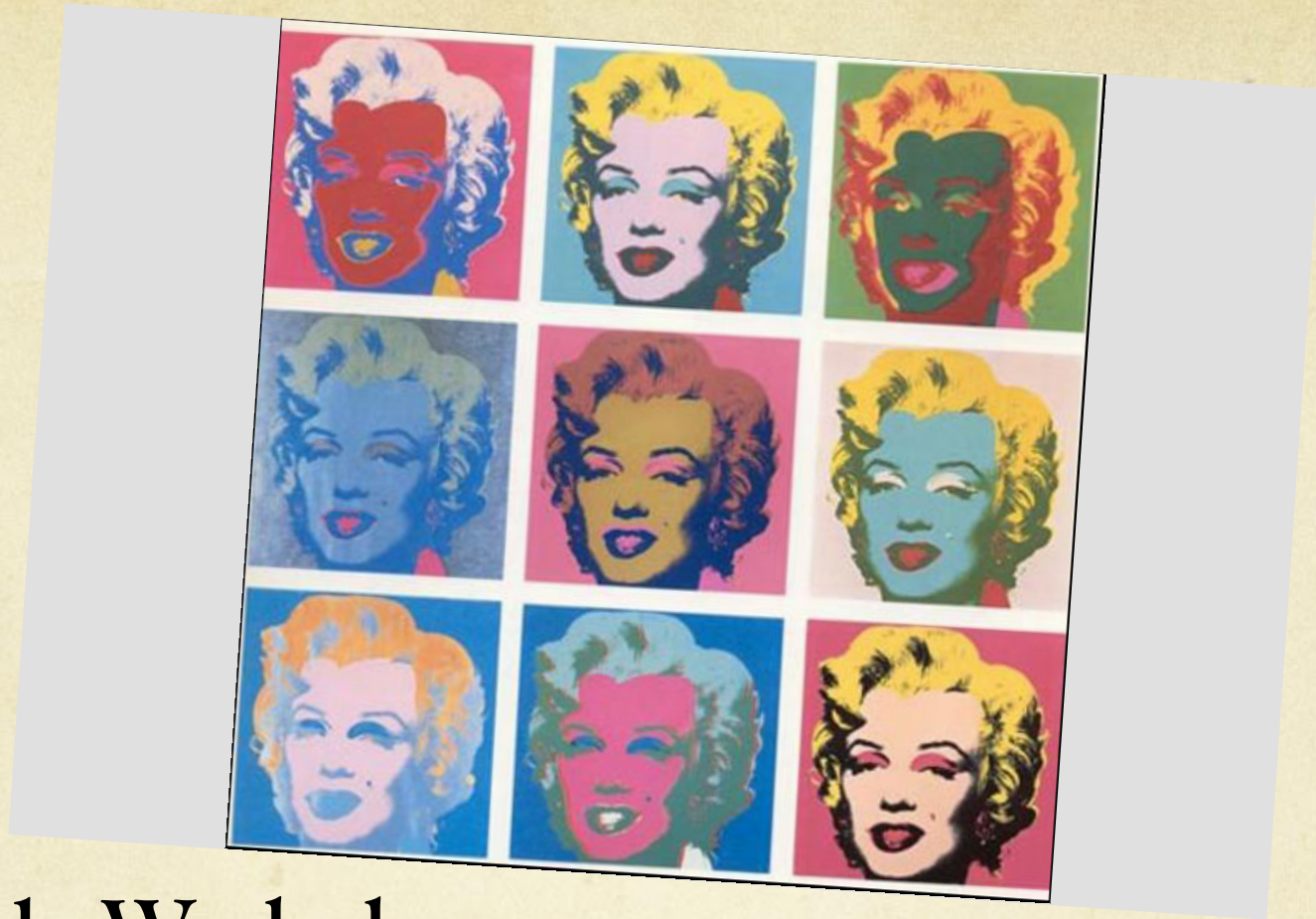
The 20th Century and beyond

Once photography—and later, television—became common place, it was no longer necessary for artists to create realistic portraits. They were free to experiment with line, color, shape, space and texture. They started to create art that expressed how they felt about their subjects rather than just what they looked like.



Mexican Artist Frida Kahlo

Painted self portraits that symbolized the physical and emotional pain she endured as the result of chronic illness.

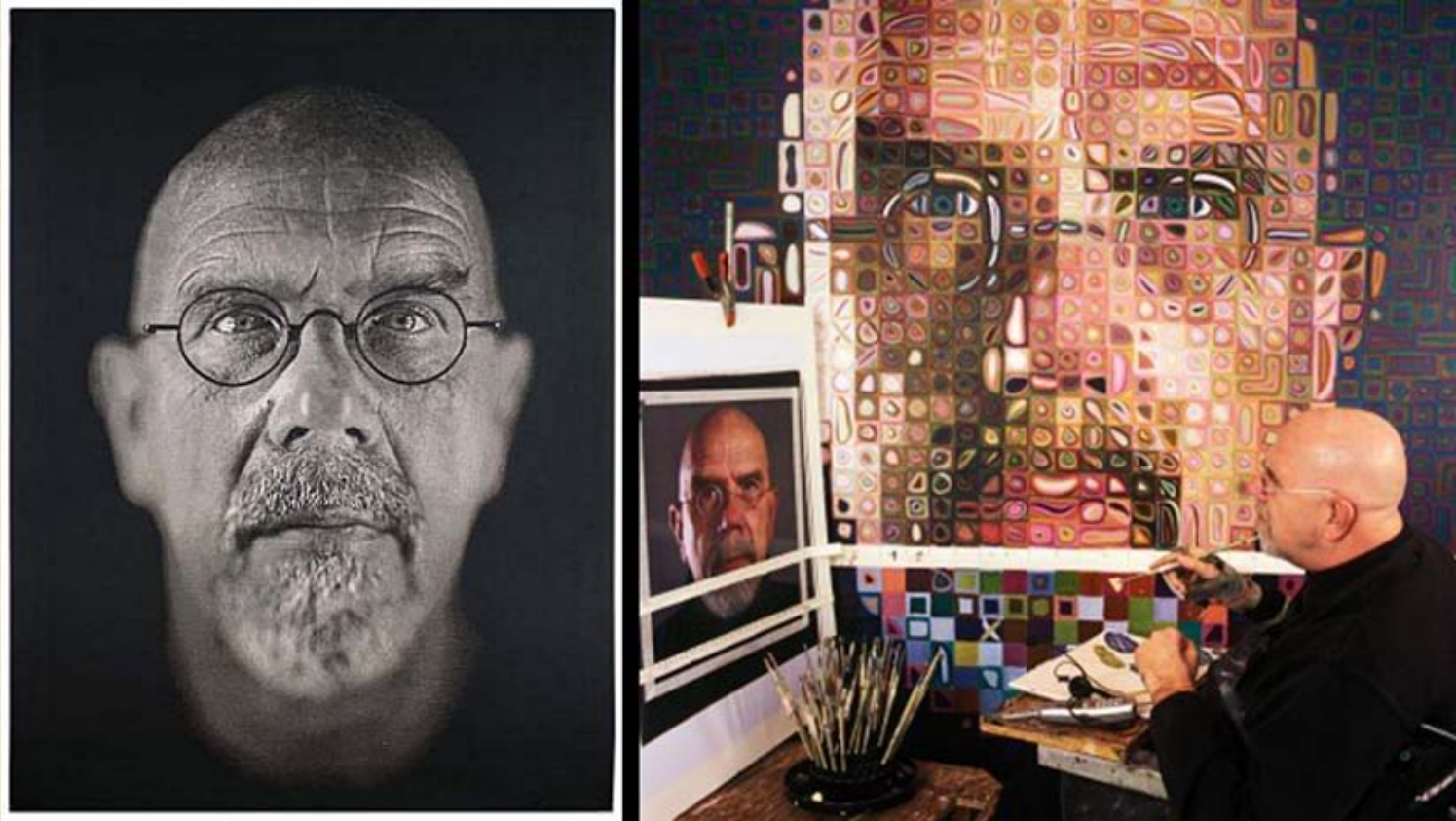


Andy Warhol

Used printmaking techniques to create portraits of famous people using flat colors and repeated patterns.

This is the famous 1950's – 1960's actress, Marilyn Monroe.

Entering the digital age



American artist, Chuck Close, creates artwork that reflects the influence of computer technology. Here he is at work on a self portrait. The next 3 slides are examples of his different techniques...

It's all in the details



Look at the close ups. They look like mini paintings inside the larger one. They all work together to create an incredibly life-like image. Do you see the eye in the painting on the right?

These are not photographs

They're paintings! These enormous pieces are so detailed, they're sometimes mistaken for photographs. How might technology play a role in their creation?

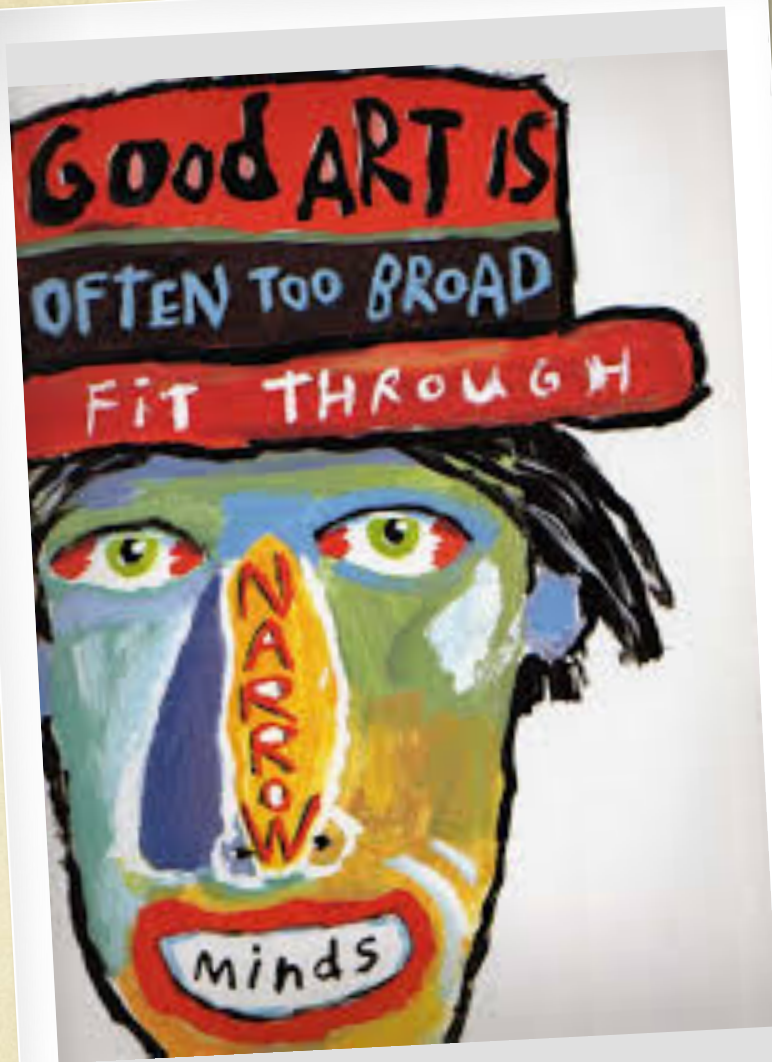


These aren't photos either

They're tapestries—woven wall hangings—that are each over 8 feet tall!

Technology plays a large role in the creation of fabric and textiles.





The sky is the limit!

These days, artists are free to create art in any way that best expresses what's inside them.

One of my favorite 20th Century artists is Fred Babb. I love what he says about art.

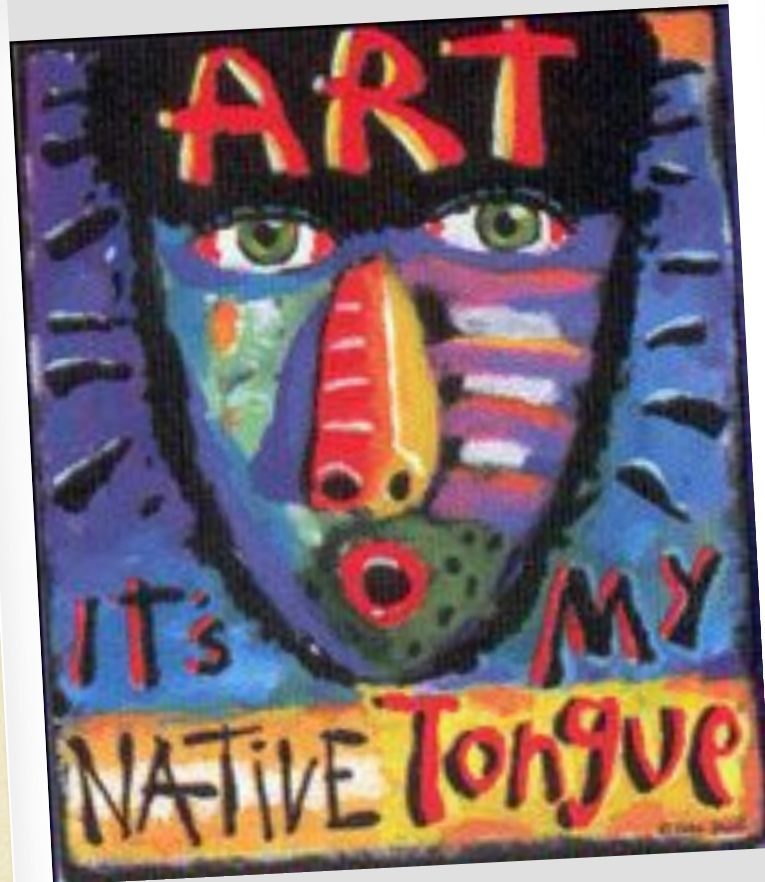


This is Fred

Actually, they're both Fred. All of his art, including his many self portraits, is colorful and funny, just like his personality. It also contains many uplifting messages about art.

While Fred is no longer alive, his art lives on and continues to make the world smile.





What's your 'native tongue'?

Fred's 'native tongue' was art.
That means it was his first and
most important form of
communication.

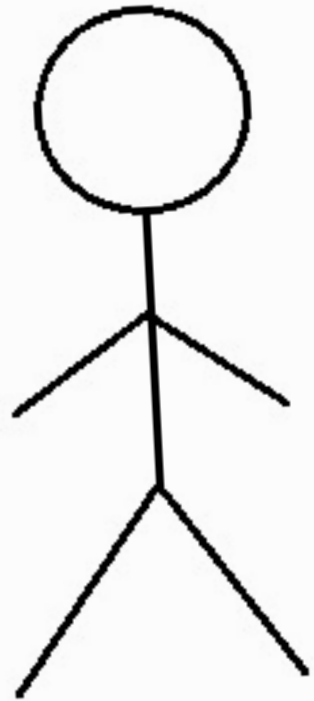


What's next?

Now that you've gotten a brief history of portraits, what will yours look like?

You're pretty much free to do anything. Drawing, collage, painting, photography, some combination of all of them.

Just remember what Fred says.



And no stick
figures!