Chapter 5: Ancient Greece
The paintings on the vase are some of the earliest examples of Greek figure painting.

Human figure and animals are represented as 2D, geometric shapes.

Depictions of the human figure and narrative reappeared in Greek art during the Geometric period.

Fig. 5-2. Geometric krater, from the Dipylon cemetery, Athens, Greece, ca. 740 BCE. 3’ 4.5” high.
The composite creatures represented on the amphora show strong influence from the East, or the Orient.

The Corinthians invented a new vase-painting technique – black-figure painting – that produced dark silhouetted figures against a colored background.

Fig. 5-5. Corinthian black-figure amphora with animal friezes, from Rhodes, Greece, ca. 625-600 BCE. 1’ 2” high.
The kouros figure’s left foot steps forward, a stance characteristic of Egyptian statuary.

However, unlike Egyptian figure, the calf bearer is mostly nude. The Greek convention of representing male figures nude suggests the figures’ perfection.

The so-called Archaic smile developed as a means to represent a living person.
Fig. 5-14. Elevations of the Doric and Ionic orders.
This reconstruction drawing depicts how ancient Greek architecture actually appeared – brightly painted.

The porch of the Siphnian Treasury was supported by elaborate caryatids (female column figures) instead of Ionic columns.
Archaic Vase Painting
Exekias

The painted vase is an example of the development of black-figure painting and figure representation during the Archaic period.

Fig. 5-21. Exekias, Achilles and Ajax playing a dice game (detail from an Athenian black-figure amphora), from Vulci, Italy, ca. 540-530 BCE. Whole vessel 2’ high; detail 8.5” high.
The Andokides Painter is attributed with inventing red-figure painting. Red silhouettes appear on a dark background. It is the opposite of black-figure painting.

Fig. 5-22. Andokides Painter, Achilles and Ajax playing a dice game (Athenian bilingual amphora), from Orvieto, Italy, ca. 525-520 BCE. Red-figure side. 1’ 9” high.
The *Kritios Boy* is the first known example to show *contrapposto*, or courtier balance/weight shift. The convention is what separates Classical statuary from Archaic statuary. Figure sculpture and statuary became increasingly more naturalistic and realistic during the Classical periods, and *contrapposto* revolutionized this development.

Fig. 5-34. *Kritios Boy*, from the Acropolis, Athens, Greece, ca. 480 BCE. Marble, 3’ 10” high.
The Parthenon was built according to perfect mathematical proportions.

It represents a balanced marriage of the Ionic and Doric orders in one structure.

It represents in architectural form the Greek ideal of the Classical period.
This Late Classical sculpture shows the move toward dynamism and drama characteristic of Hellenistic art that was taking place.

The dynamism comes from the sense that Herakles would fall if his club slipped out from under him.

Herakles, the ultimate symbol of strength and power in Greek mythology, appears exhausted and weary. Lysippos represented a humanized Herakles (versus an ideal).

Fig. 5-66. Lysippos, Weary Herakles (*Farnese Herakles*). Roman model copy from Rome, Italy, signed by Glykon of Athens, of a bronze original of ca. 320 BCE, 10’ 5” high.
Greek theaters were typically built against a hillside so that the earth supported the cavea of stone seats.

The theaters were built to have excellent acoustics – to matter where an audience member sat in the audience, he could hear everything being said from the theater orchestra.

Fig. 5-71. Polykleitos the Younger, Theater, Epidaurus, Greece, ca. 350 BCE.
The **Corinthian capital** solved the problems architects encountered with Doric and Ionic capitals.

Specifically, all four sides of the Corinthian column have a similar appearance and do not have to be modified at the corners of buildings.
The dramatic and dynamic Hellenistic sculptural program of the Altar of Zeus at Pergamon symbolized and alluded to Athenians’ defeat of the Persians. The literal subject of the program is a battle of Zeus and the gods against giants – a theme called gigantomachy.

Fig. 5-78. Reconstructed west front of the Altar of Zeus, Pergamon, Turkey, ca. 175 BCE.
The Laocoon group epitomizes Hellenistic sculpture style. The scene and figures exude drama and emotion, and the composition is highly dynamic.

Fig. 5-88. Athanadoros, Hagesandros, and Polydoros of Rhodes, Laocoon and his sons, from Rome, Italy, early first century CE. Marble, 7’ 10.5” high.