PRIFYSGOL CYMRU
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

The Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology in Culture
School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology
AHAN7024: HEAVENLY DISCOURSES

Week 6
Art and Iconography

Darrelyn Gunzburg
Tutor: Heavenly Discourses

AIM

Understanding how the sky
has been translated into a painting or image
inside buildings and monuments.

What is an image?

A representation of the external form of a person or thing in sculpture, painting, and so on.

Who is the imagined spectator in the making of this work?

What is iconography?

From the Greek *eikon* meaning image or likeness.

The study of the symbolic meanings that pictorial forms convey in order to deal with complex themes and ideas, and the ways that they change and develop.

Where paintings depend heavily on such symbolic forms of meaning the viewer may need specific kinds of knowledge in order to 'read' them.

Some works of art are organised as complex allegories that clearly invite us to regard their pictured objects as decipherable symbols. Other paintings may make use of similar objects but in ways that require no such deciphering. In one case the clues may point in one way, in another case in another. There is no clear line dividing the one type of work from the other and no hard and fast rule that will tell us what to do in any given case. **In the absence of documentary evidence, the best we can do is respond to the clues.**

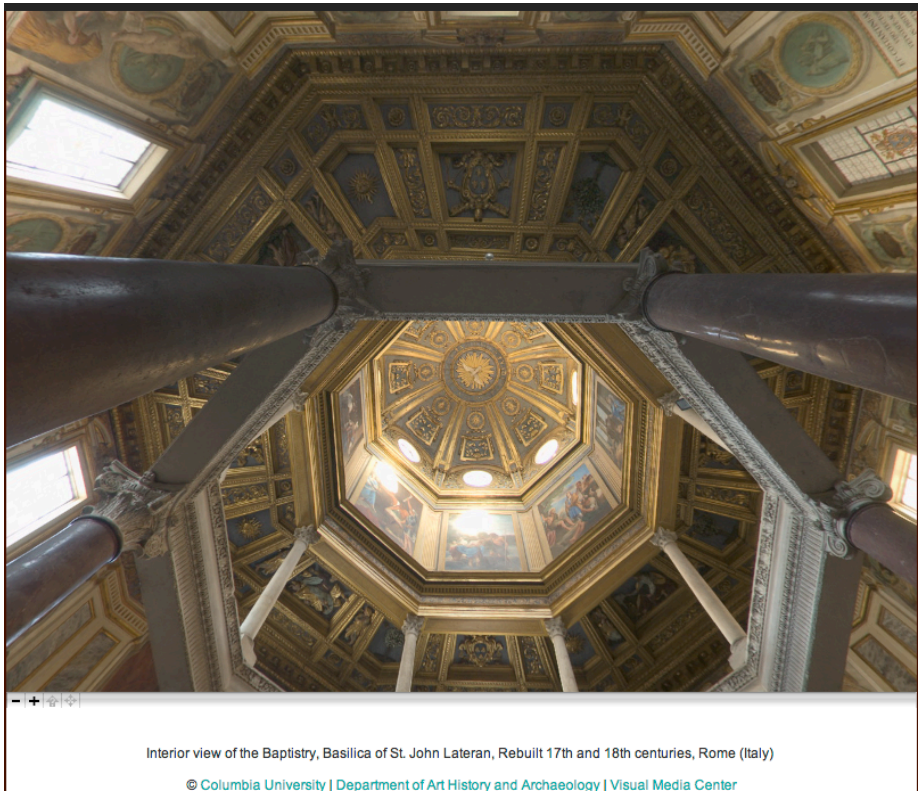
Harrison, Charles. *An Introduction to Art*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009, p.130.

What is iconology?

Begins where iconography ends.

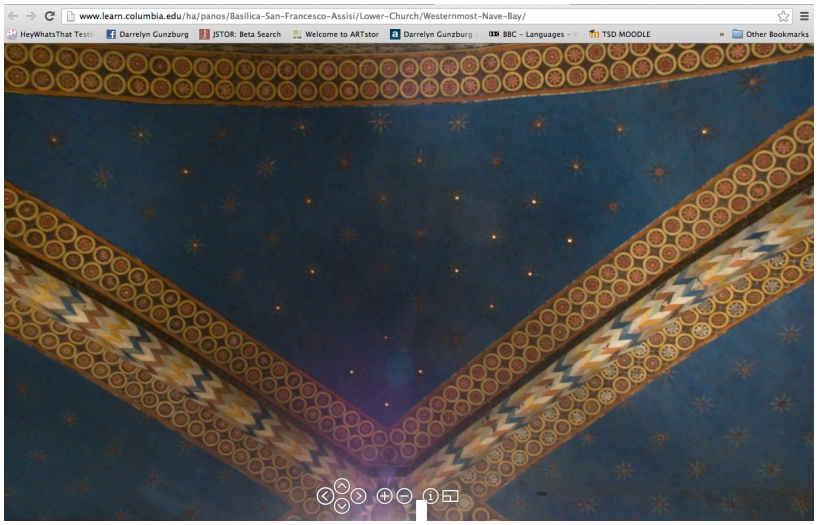
Iconology takes the identification achieved through iconographic analysis and attempts to explain how and why such imagery was chosen in terms of the broader cultural background of the image. The idea is **to explain why we can see these images as 'symptomatic' or characteristic of a particular culture.**

D'Alleva, Anne. *Methods & Theories of Art History*. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2005, p.21.

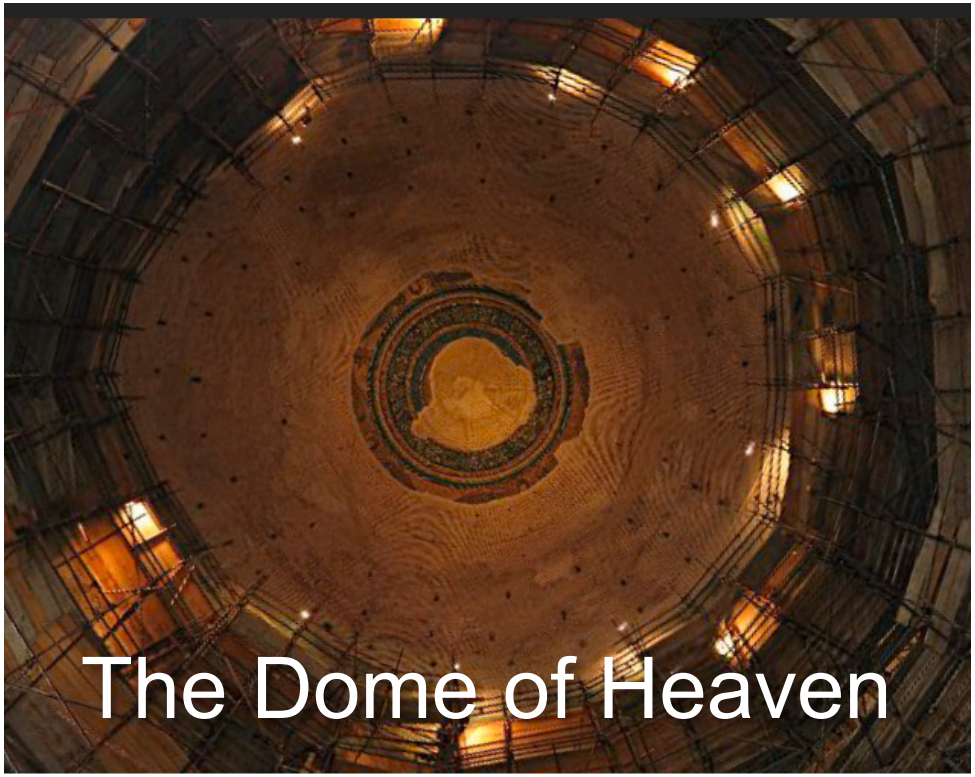


Interior view of the Baptistry, Basilica of St. John Lateran, Rebuilt 17th and 18th centuries, Rome (Italy)

© Columbia University | Department of Art History and Archaeology | Visual Media Center

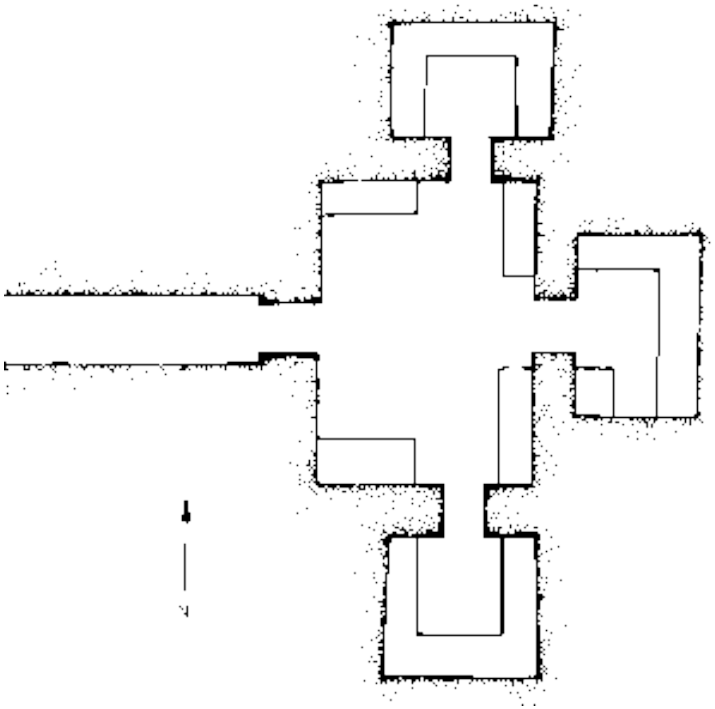






Hagios Georgios Interior view (with restoration scaffolding), begun ca. 300, Thessaloniki (Greece)

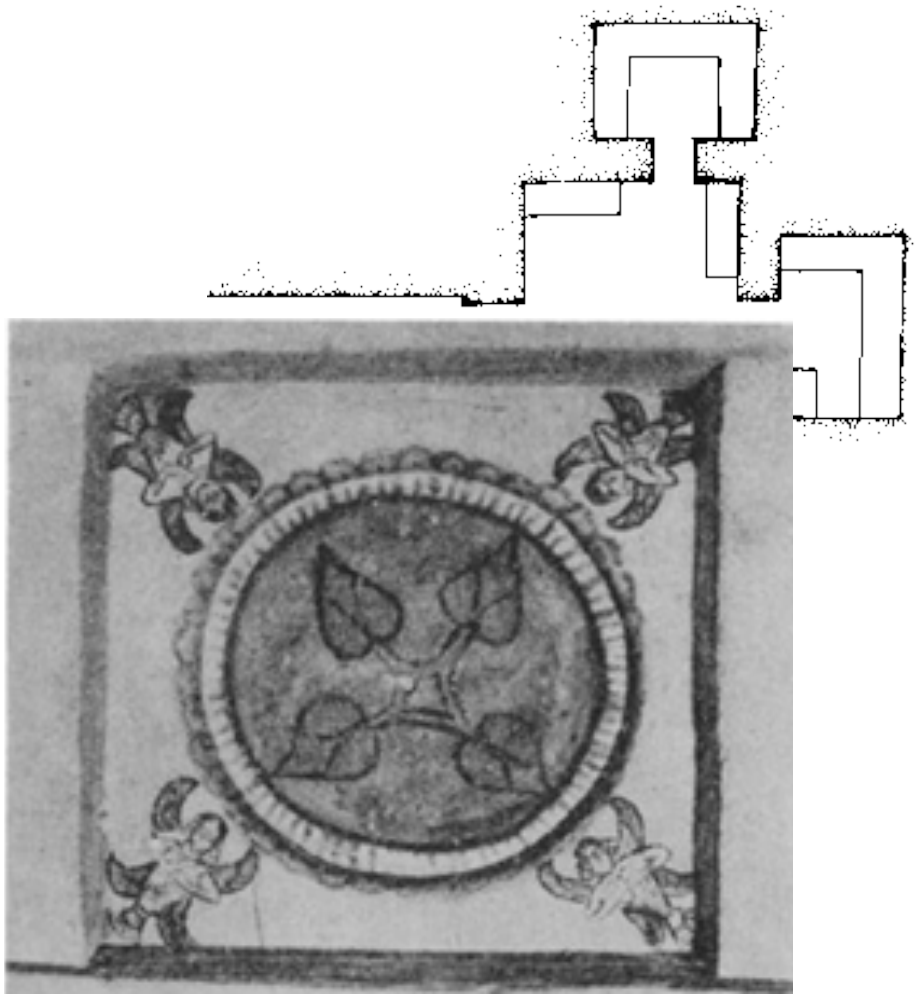
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Etrurian Tomb of the Monkey (Tomba della Scimmia)
Chiusi, Italy
Period : 480- 470 BCE

Lehmann, Karl. 'The Dome of Heaven.' *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 1 1945: 1-27.



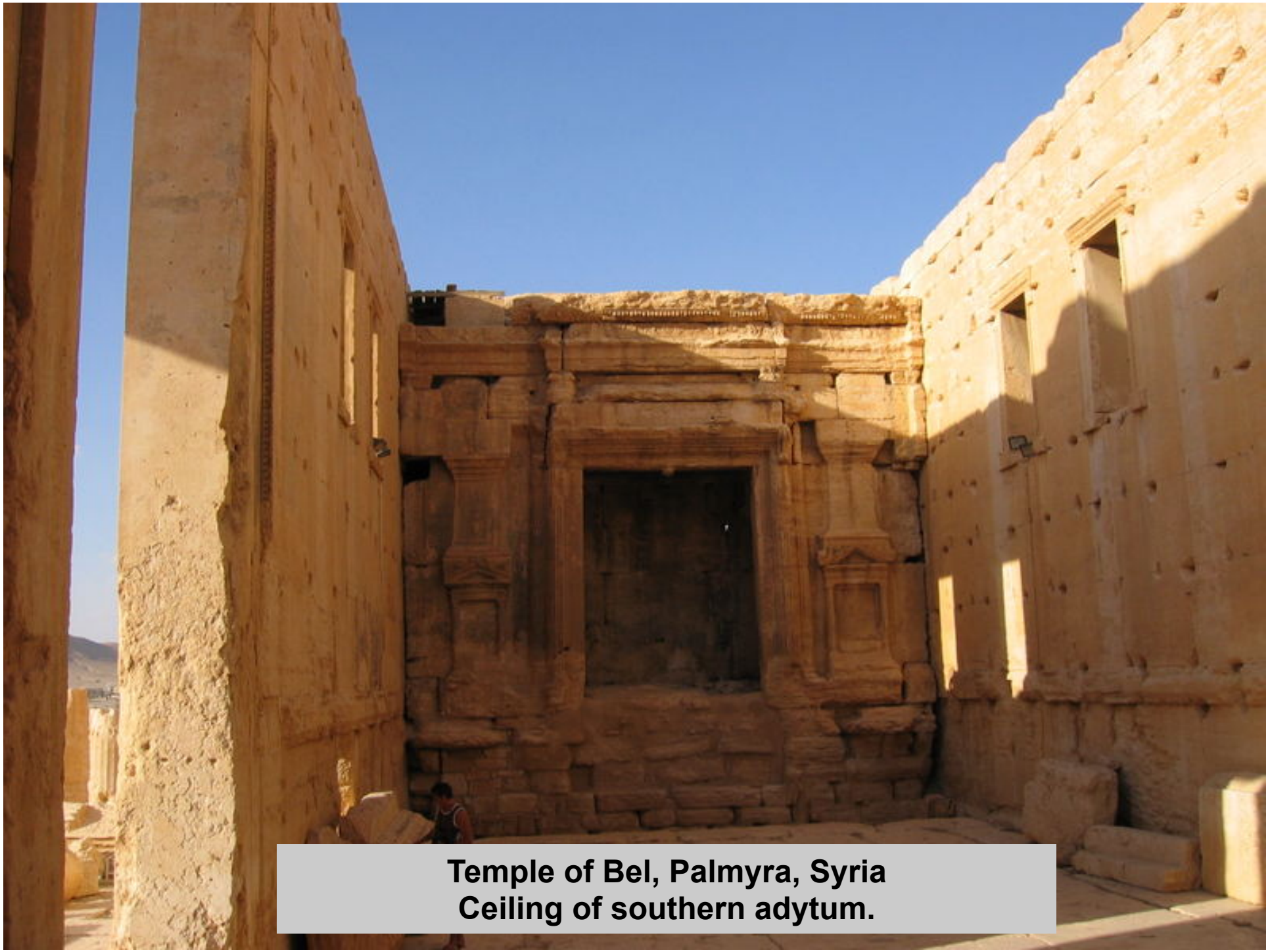


Etrurian Tomb of the Monkey (Tomba della Scimmia)
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Lehmann, Karl. 'The Dome of Heaven.' *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 1 1945: 1-27.



Temple of Bel, Palmyra, Syria.
Dedicated in 45 CE and rebuilt by Agrippa about a century later.



Temple of Bel, Palmyra, Syria
Ceiling of southern adytum.



Temple of Bel, Palmyra, Syria
Ceiling of southern adytum.

Early Christian patterns of heaven on vaults and ceilings combine three attributes:

1. decorative ideals of formal beauty

2. an order of speculative reasoning

3. the concept of a permanently established world.

Lehmann, Karl. 'The Dome of Heaven.' *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 1 1945: 1-27.

1. The Sirens were heavenly demons of astrological character.

2. Sirens and related winged figures continued to be used in a similar diagonal position as the supporters of a central representation on ceilings.

3. The canopy as a symbol of heaven was a common central element in the decoration of ancient ceilings.

Lehmann, Karl. 'The Dome of Heaven.' *The Art Bulletin* 27, no. 1 1945: 1-27.

Basilica di San Marco Venice, Italy



Venice, San Marco, East Dome, Late Byzantine, 1100-1300



Venice, San Marco, East Dome, Late Byzantine, 1100-1300





Stephenson, David. *Visions of Heaven, the Dome in European Architecture*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005.


San Cataldo, Palermo, Italy. c.1161



Church of the
Chora,
Istanbul, Turkey
c.1050-1320
fresco
c.1303-20



Church of the Chora,
Istanbul, Turkey
c. 1050-1320
mosaics
c.1303-20



Battistero,
Padua, Italy
c.1200-1378
Fresco
mid-1370s :
Guisto
de’Menabuoi

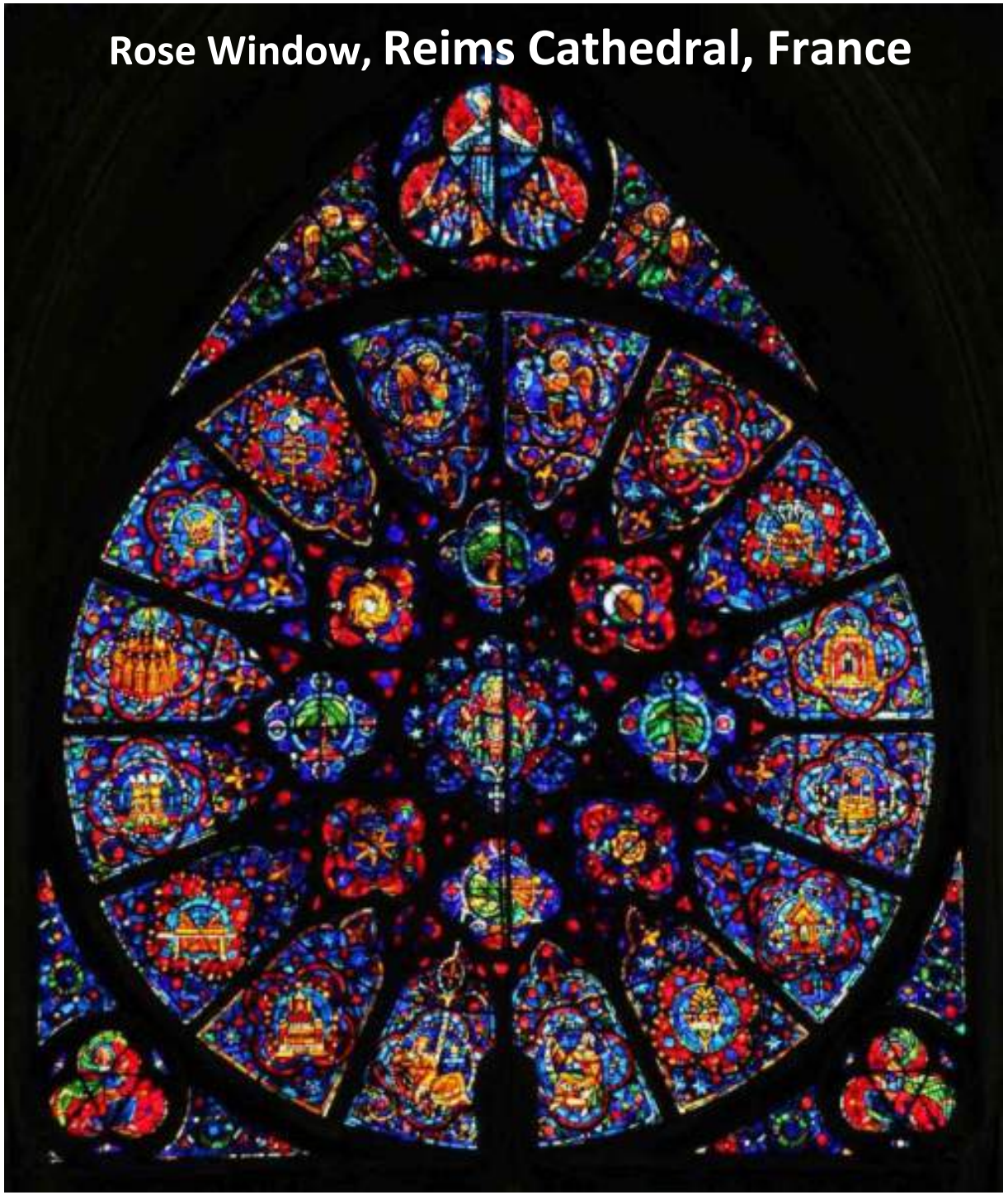

Duomo, Parma, Italy, 1090-1130
Remodelled with fresco 1523-30 by Correggio (1489?-1534)


Capella dei Pazzi (Pazzi Chapel) Santa Croce, Florence, Italy
Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446)

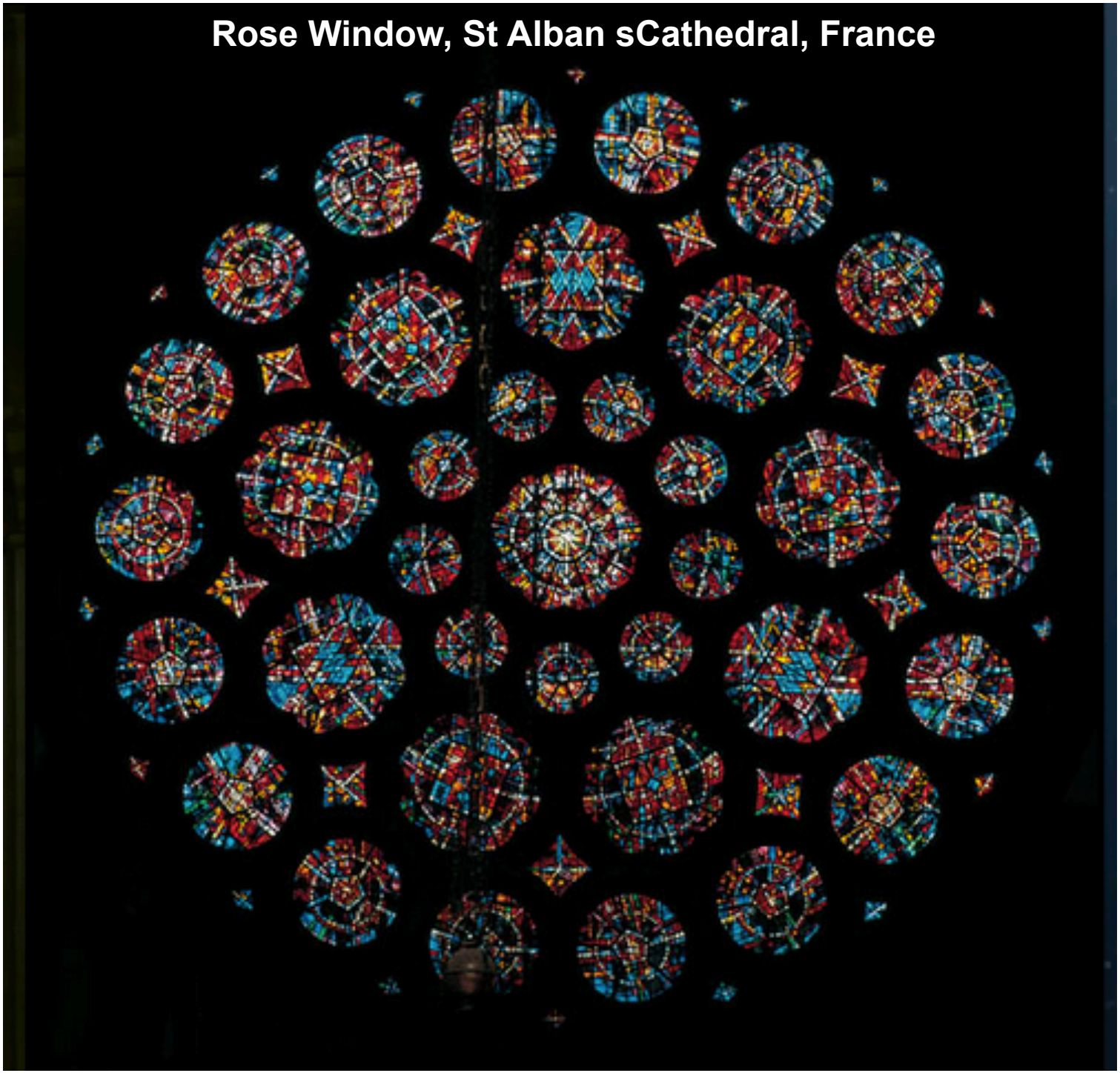

San Sisto, Piacenza, Italy, 1499-1514
Alessio Tramello (c.1470-1529)



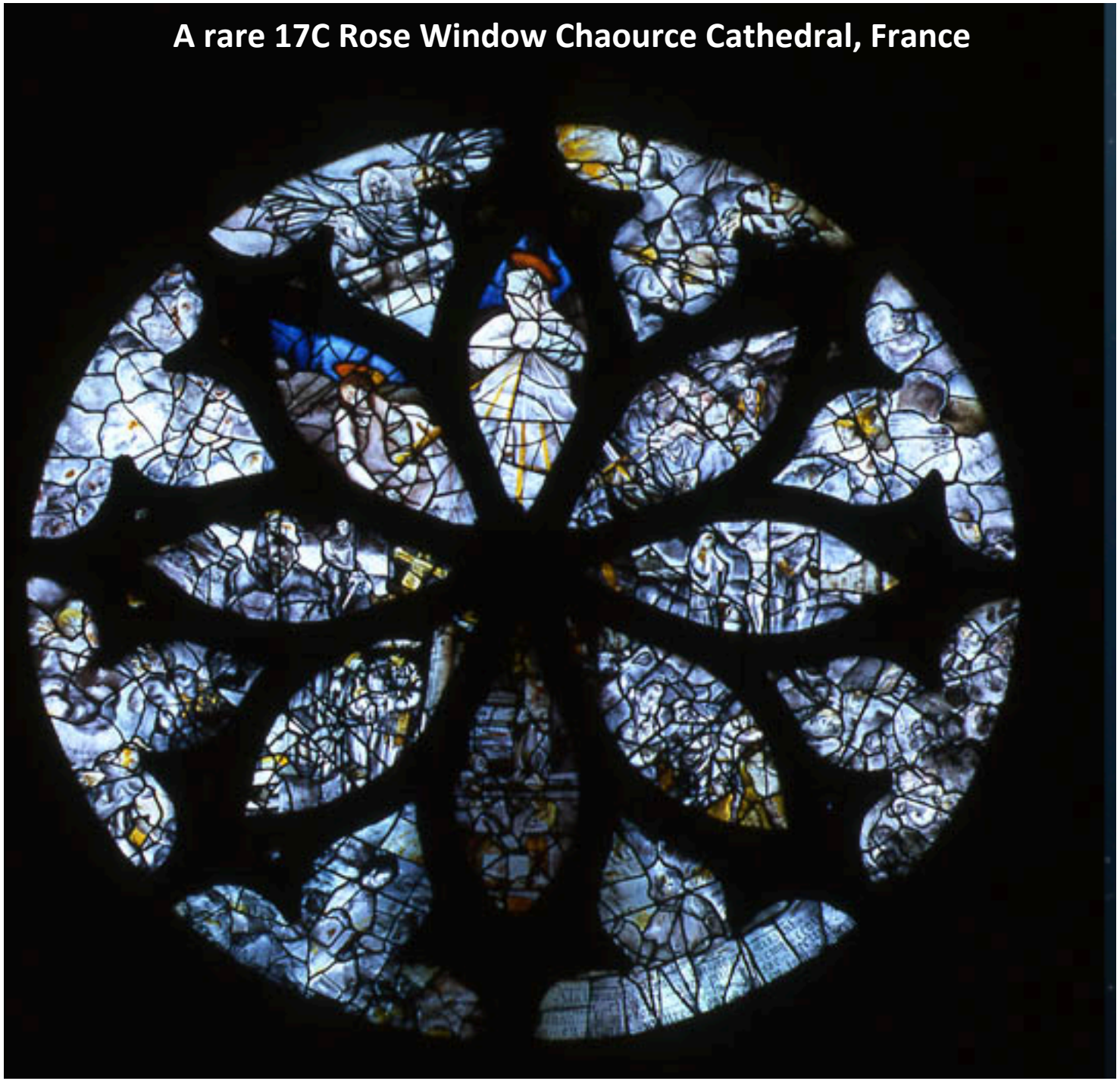
Santa Maria della Consolazione
Todi, Italy, 1508-1607
Cola di Caprarola (d. 1518) , possibly after a design by Donato Bramante

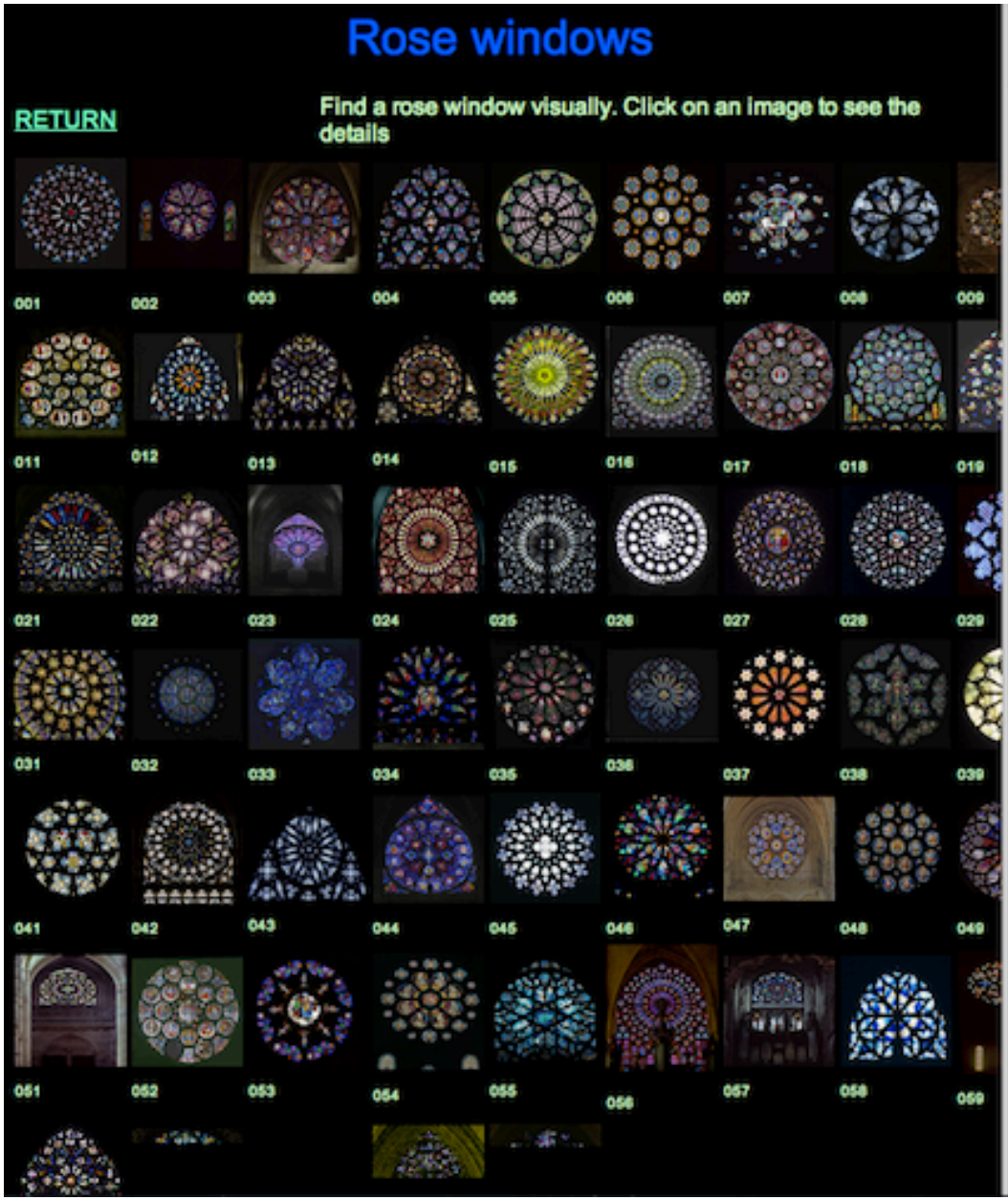

Rose Window, Reims Cathedral, France

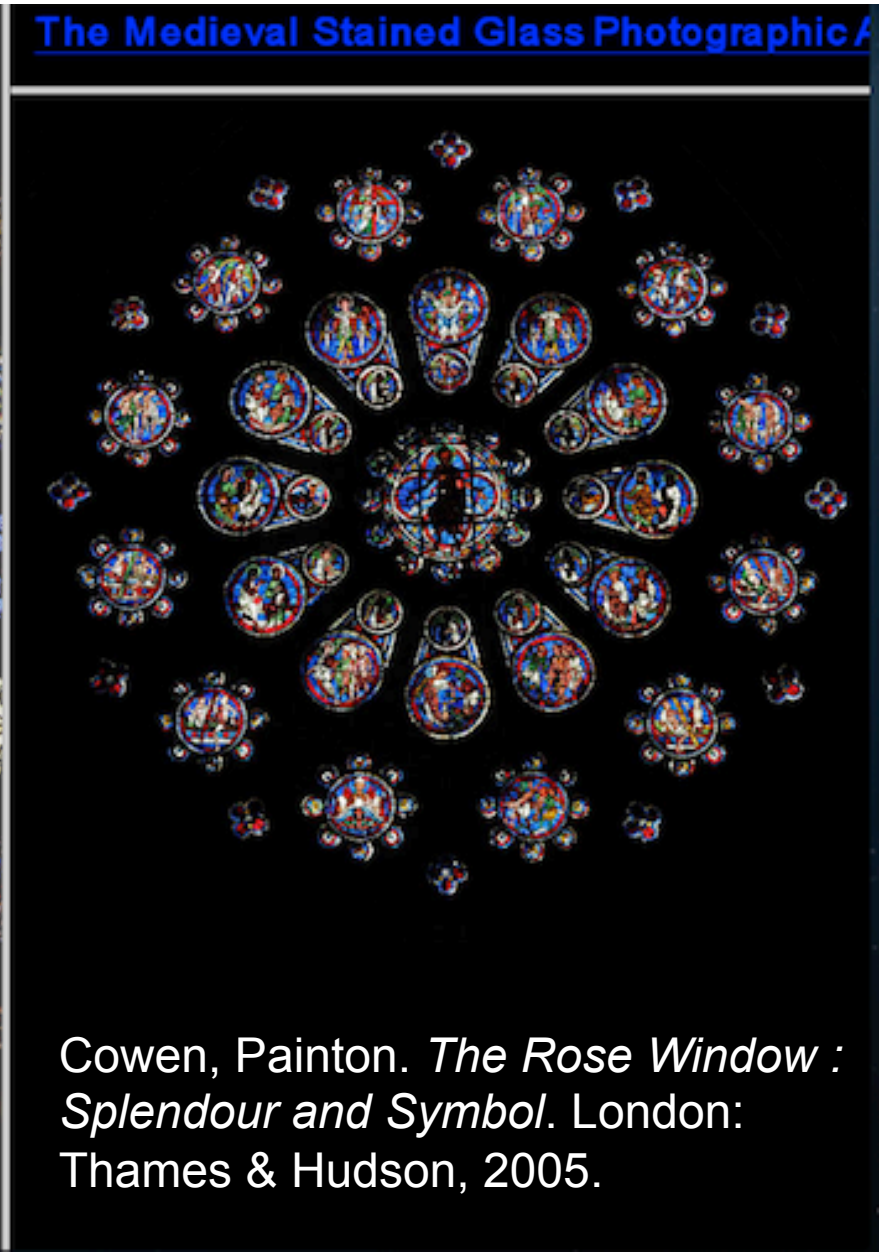
Rose Window, St Alban sCathedral, France



A rare 17C Rose Window Chaource Cathedral, France







Cowen, Painton. *The Rose Window : Splendour and Symbol*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

http://www.therosewindow.com/pilot/scope.htm
is run by Painton Cowen and contains full photographic coverage for almost all famous medieval monuments located in Britain and in France.





Qusayr Amra is one of several castles, hunting lodges and fortresses built across the deserts of Syria and Jordan during the first half of the eighth century, roughly 100 years after the death of Muhammad, used as **desert retreats** to escape plague and intrigue found in big cities like Damascus, providing safety and relaxation.

Probably built by the **Umayyad caliph al-Walid II 724-743** while he was still an *amir*, or prince. It is made of sand-colored limestone … the main hall comprises three barrel-vaulted aisles — among the first of their kind — 45 feet long and 35 feet wide. A door on the western wall leads into an attached bath complex, once fed by rain water stored in an underground cistern.

The Roman style baths include an *apodypterium*, or changing room; a *tepidarium*, or warm room; and a *caldarium*, or hot room, along with a domed chamber for housing firewood. Iinterior decoration. Brightly colored **frescoes,** and **mosaics** over the walls of the caldarium, cover practically every inch of wall and ceiling presenting images of battle and the hunt, symbols of the zodiac, and mythological scenes. The harsh climate, graffiti, and bad restoration have diminished the beauty of the paintings, but their exuberance remains palpable.



On the one hand, it is a masterpiece of Islamic architecture, commissioned by an Arab prince a full century after Muslim armies captured Jordan. It also depicts the amorphous line between antiquity and the Middle Ages, between Jordan's Roman past and its Islamic future. Although debates about the meaning of the fresco cycles continue, the overall message is one of the caliph's might, as expressed through courtly luxury, through his indulgent fineries and his mastery over the environment with the use of water, especially in the context of the surrounding desert.

Qusayr Amra seems to have been abandoned not long after al-Walid's death in 744. Within a decade, Abbasid revolutionaries would sweep the Umayyads from power, claiming to restore dignity to a caliphate tarred by the impious and the power-hungry. Whatever we make of al-Walid, Qusayr Amra offers a snapshot of a civilization in the making. It is a meditation on the eclectic cocktail of ingredients — Greek, Roman, Persian, pagan and Christian — that mixed to produce Islam's first courtly culture.

Christian C. Sahner, 'Snapshot of a Civilization in the Making' *Wall St Journal*, 27 Nov 2010. http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704141104575588302922407126.html

Betsy Williams, Metropolitan Museum of Art ,New York: http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2012/byzantium-and-islam/blog/where-in-the-world/posts/qusayr-amra

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Patricia Baker, ‘The Frescoes of Amra’, *Saudi Aramco World,* Vol. 31, No. 4, (1980).

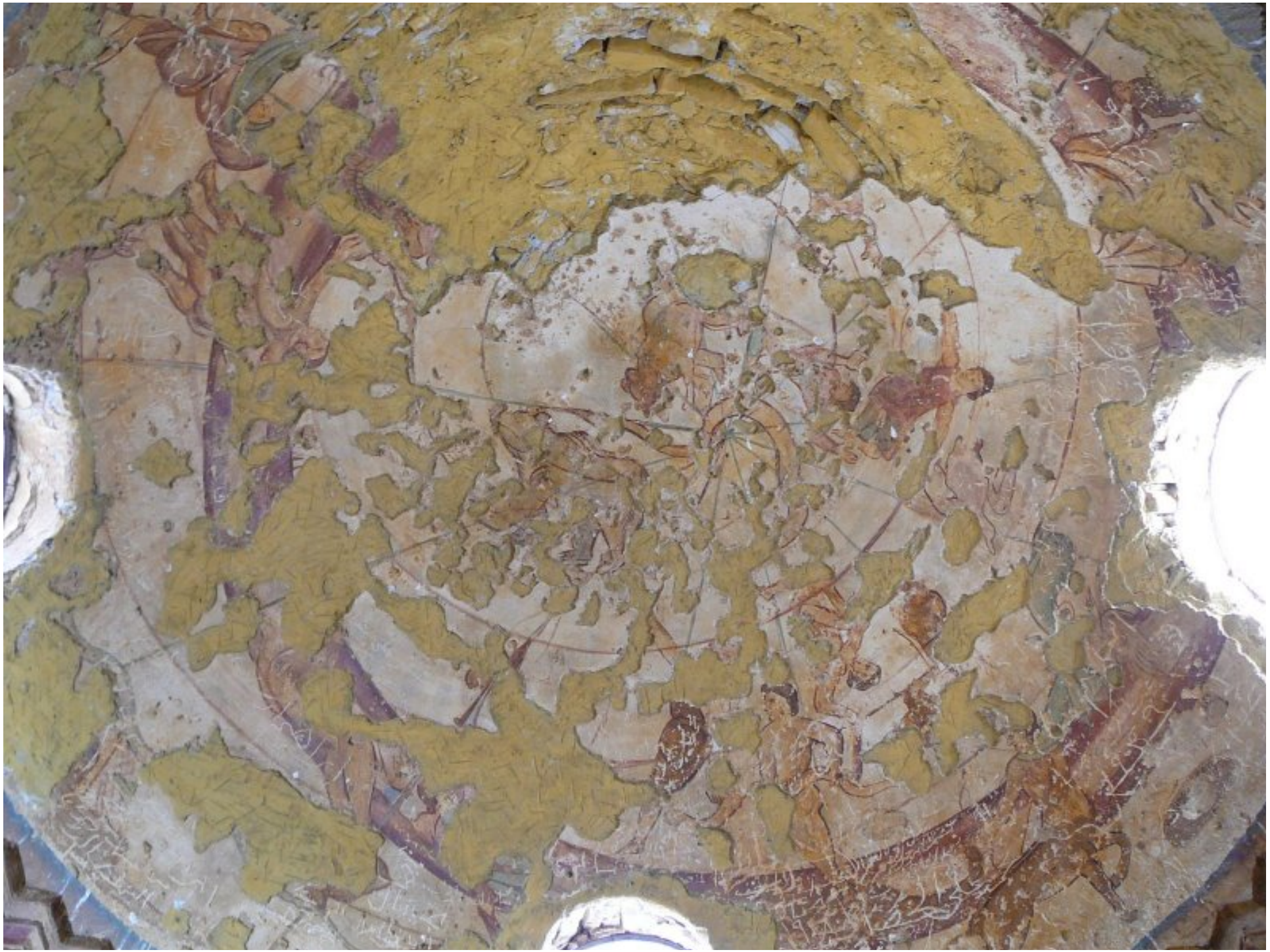
Khouri, Rami, ‘Qasr' Amra’ Saudi Aramco World*,* Vol. 41, No. 5, (1990).

Savage-Smith, Emelie,’ Celestial Mapping’. In: *The History of Cartography.* Volume 2, Book 1: Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies, edited by John Harley and David Woodward. (1992) pp.12-76.

Online at:
http://press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V1/Volume1.html

Fowden, Garth. *Qusayr Amra: Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria*. Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 2004.

5 min short video – World Monuments Fund:
http://on.aol.com/video/a-look-at-centuries-old-murals-at-qusayr-amra-in-jordan-517741948





Part of early Christian mosaic pavement.
Representation of the months. Second half of the 6th century.
Thebes Archaeological Museum.

Top left: **July** with a bouquet of wheat, and
Top right: **February** with two fowls.





Basilica di San Miniato al Monte, Florence.



Dated 1207 by a Latin inscription in the nave:
zodiac and marble pavement constructed.
San Miniato al Monte, Florence.



34. *Aries, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer, Bede's* De temporum ratione, *thirteenth century. Egerton MS 3088, f. 17v*

Aries, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer. From Bede's *De temporum ratione*, (c.722-725). 13th century, Egerton MS 3088, f. 17.v.

Page, Sophie. *Astrology in Medieval Manuscripts.* London: The British Library, 2002, p.44.









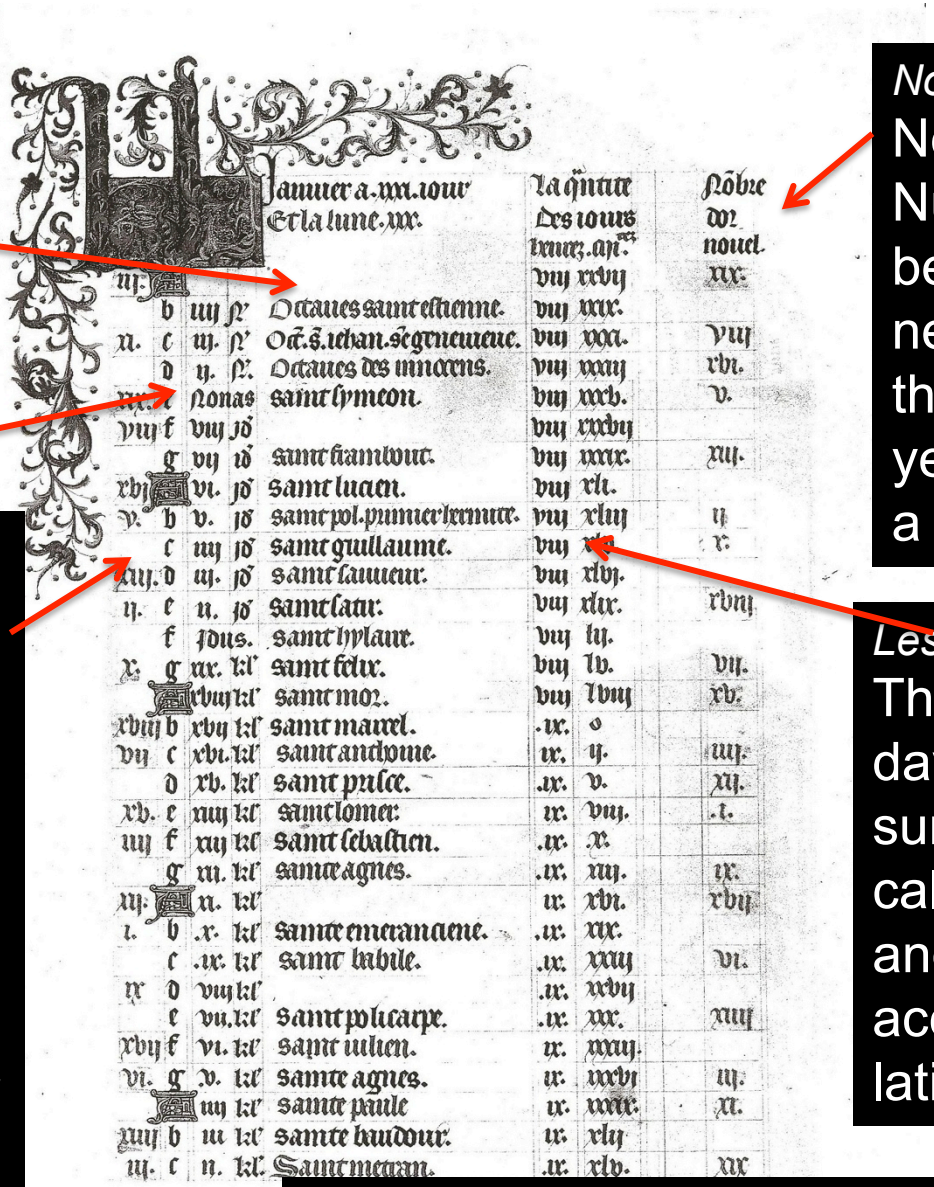


Belles Heures, Limbourg Brothers (c.1405-08/9)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The great feasts and saints for each day.

Number of days in the solar and lunar months.

The traditional Golden Number, written in Roman numerals. This number situations a given year within the Metonic 19-year cycle which co-ordinates the phases of the moon with the solar year. The Roman numerals identify the phases of the moon within a given year in the 19-year cycle.



Nombre des nouvel
New Golden Number which became necessary when the imprecise 19-year cycle led to a discrepancy.

Les quanitites des jours
The length of each day between sunrise and sunset, calculated in hours and minutes according to the latitude of Paris..

Nones (7th day of the long months, March, May, Quinctilis, October, and the 5th of the others), ides (15th if the month was long, and the 13th if the month was short),and kalends (the first of the month), all of which situate feast days in the month.

Très Riches Heures,
Limbourg Brothers (c.1412-1416)

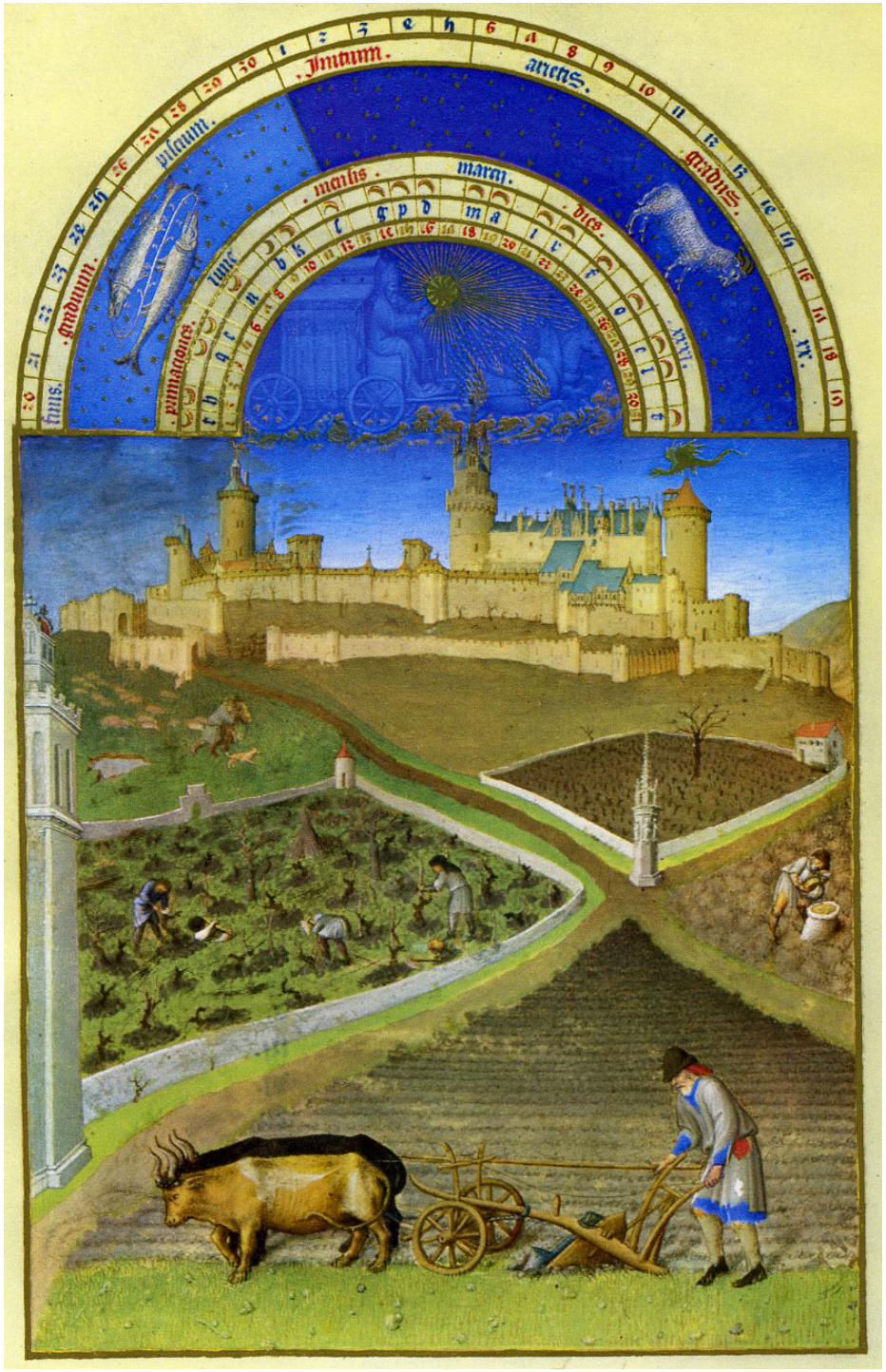




January


mensis
februarius
aquarius
pisces
aries
gradus
finis.
xxviii.

February



March



June



Guido Reni (1575-1642)
Apollo in His Chariot Preceded by Dawn (1613-1614)
freso,
Casino Pallavicini-Rospigliosi, Rome

Gahtan, Maia Wellington. ‘Giorgio Vasari and the Image of the Hour.’ In *ASP Conference Series (Proceedings of a conference held October 18-23, 2009 in Venezia, Italy)*, edited by Enrico Maria Corsini, 169-179. San Francisco: Astronomical Society of the Pacific, 2011.



Grand Central Station, New York, ceiling fresco.



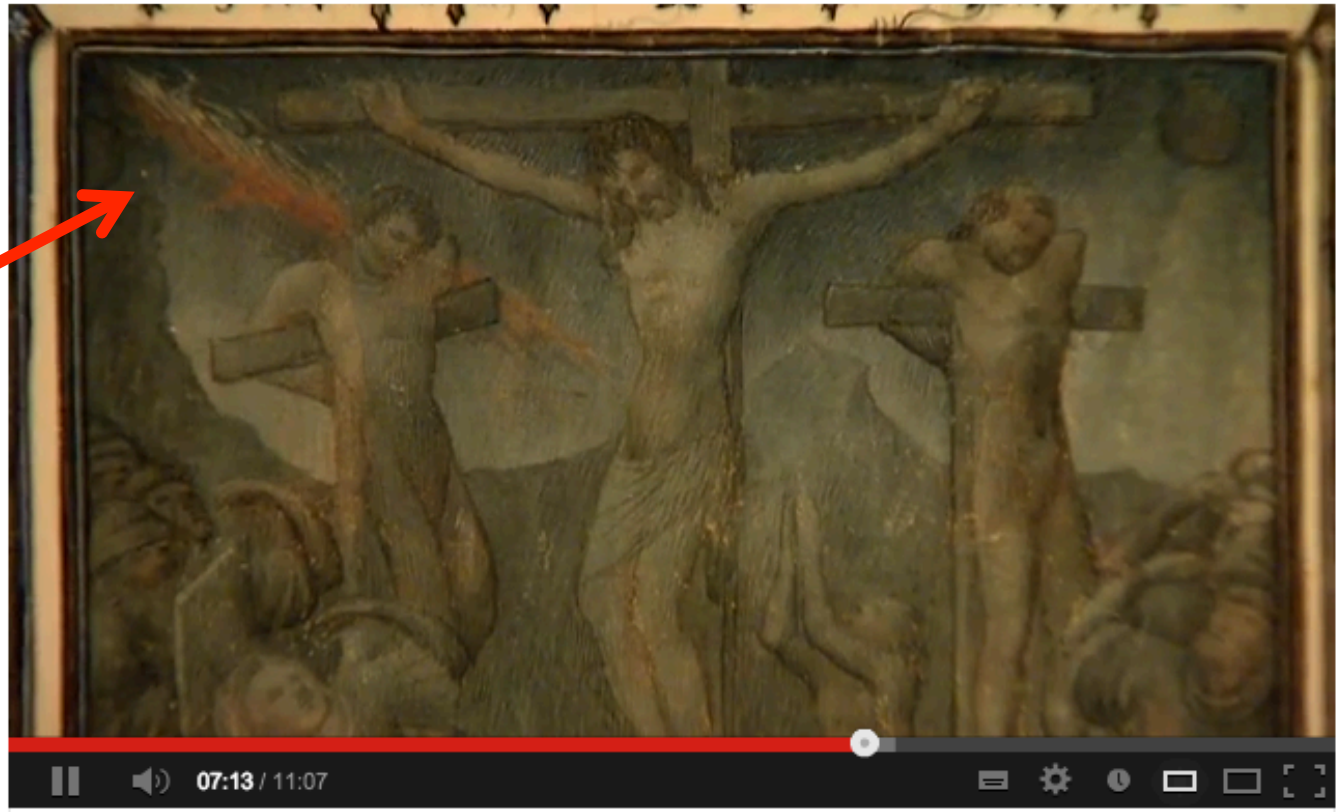




Grand Central Station, New York, ceiling fresco.



Giotto di Bondone,
Adoration of the Magi
(c.1304-1306)
Arena Chapel, Padova.



The Art of Illumination: The Limbourg Brothers and the Belles Heures of Jean de France, Duc de Berry

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27. Observation of meteorological phenomena, fourteenth century. Harley MS 3487, f.140v.

Observation of meteorological phenomena, 14th century. Harley MS 3487, f.140v.

Page, Sophie. *Astrology in Medieval Manuscripts*. London: The British Library, 2002, p.37.



Palazzo Pubblico
Siena, Italy









Sala dei Nove, Palazzo Pubblico
Siena, Italy.

Starn, Randolph. *Ambrogio Lorenzetti, the Pala*
Braziller, 1994, p.27.



Plate 215 Ambrogio Lorenzetti, detail of *The Good City*, 1337–40, fresco, east wall, Sala dei Nove, Palazzo Pubblico, Siena

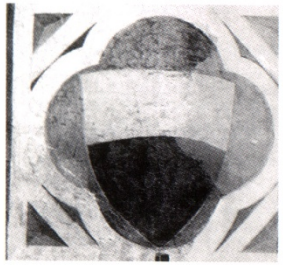
Medallions of the east wall, "The Good City-Republic"





The Quadrivium, Philosophy, and the Sienese Coat of Arms

Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astrology were the four mathematical branches of the medieval school curriculum. (Music was the science of measure, harmony, proportion, not performing art.) Geometry, her compass poised on a drawing board, closely resembles Nicola and Giovanni Pisano's relief on the *Fontana Maggiore* at Perugia. Astrology holds an armillary sphere rather than an older type of astrolabe. The figures of the quadrivium are oriented toward Philosophy in a queenly frontal pose, her crown, scepter, and volumes of books signifying her place as the culmination of human learning. However, it is the medallion containing the Sienese coat of arms on the other side of the original door that completes the series and in effect anchors the liberal arts in the Sienese republic.





Starn, Randolph. *Ambrogio Lorenzetti, the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena*. New York: George Braziller, 1994, p.97.

Medallions of the west wall, "The City-State under Tyranny"



Jupiter, with rulership of Sagittarius (left) and Pisces (right).

Starn, Randolph. *Ambrogio Lorenzetti, the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena*. New York: George Braziller, 1994, p.90.

The heavenly order as medieval cosmology



Cosmological diagram, early 14th century, Royal MS 19 C 1, f.50.

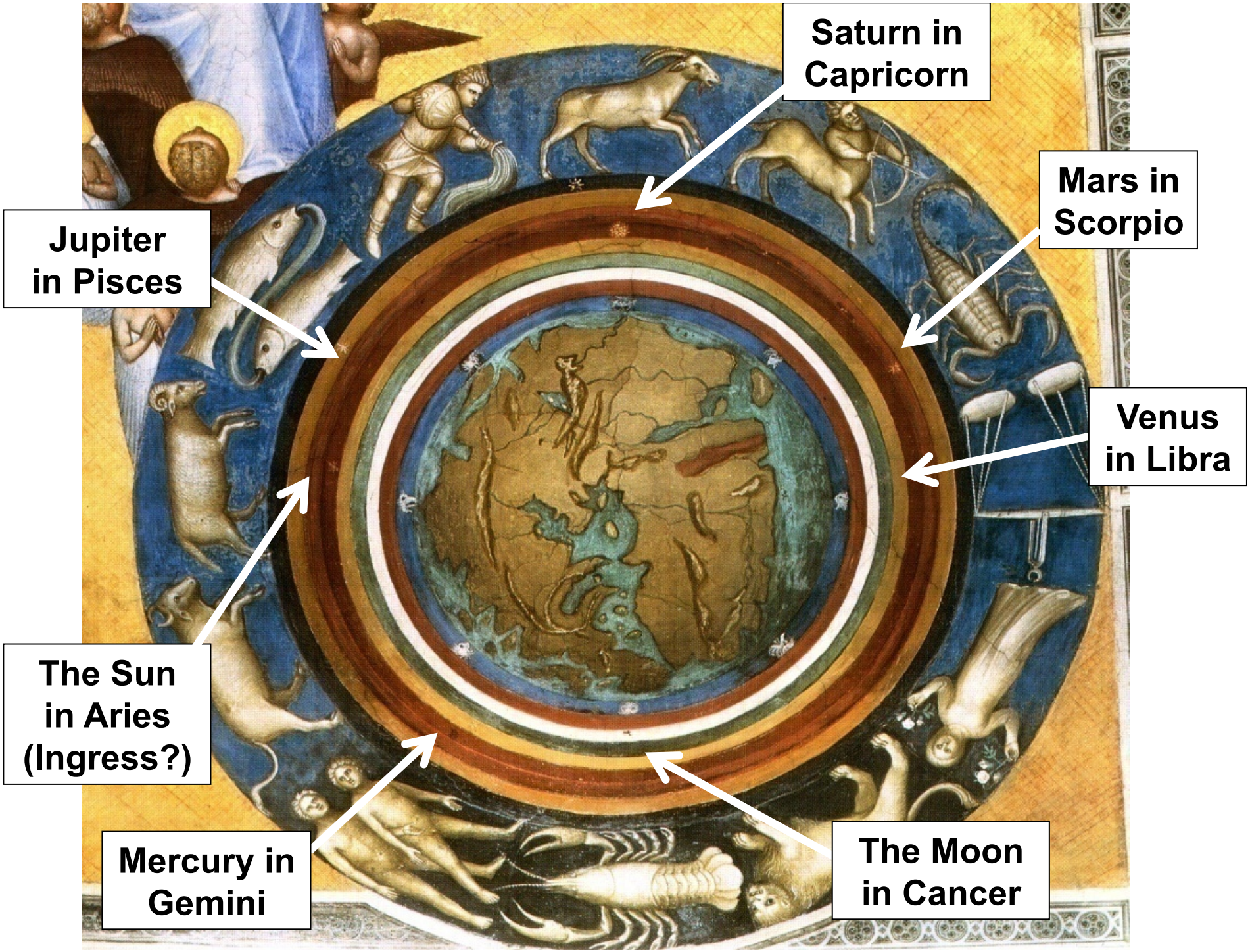
Page, Sophie. Astrology in Medieval Manuscripts. London: The British Library, 2002, p.36.

The heavenly order as medieval cosmology: **Anima Mundi**



Guisto de'Menabuoi, *The Creation of the World*, late 1370s, fresco, drum, Baptistery, Padua.

Norman, Diana. *Siena, Florence and Padua: Art, Society and Religion 1280-1400, Volume I: Interpretive Essays, p.211.*


Saturn in Capricorn
Mars in Scorpio
Jupiter in Pisces
Venus in Libra
The Sun in Aries (Ingress?)
Mercury in Gemini
The Moon in Cancer



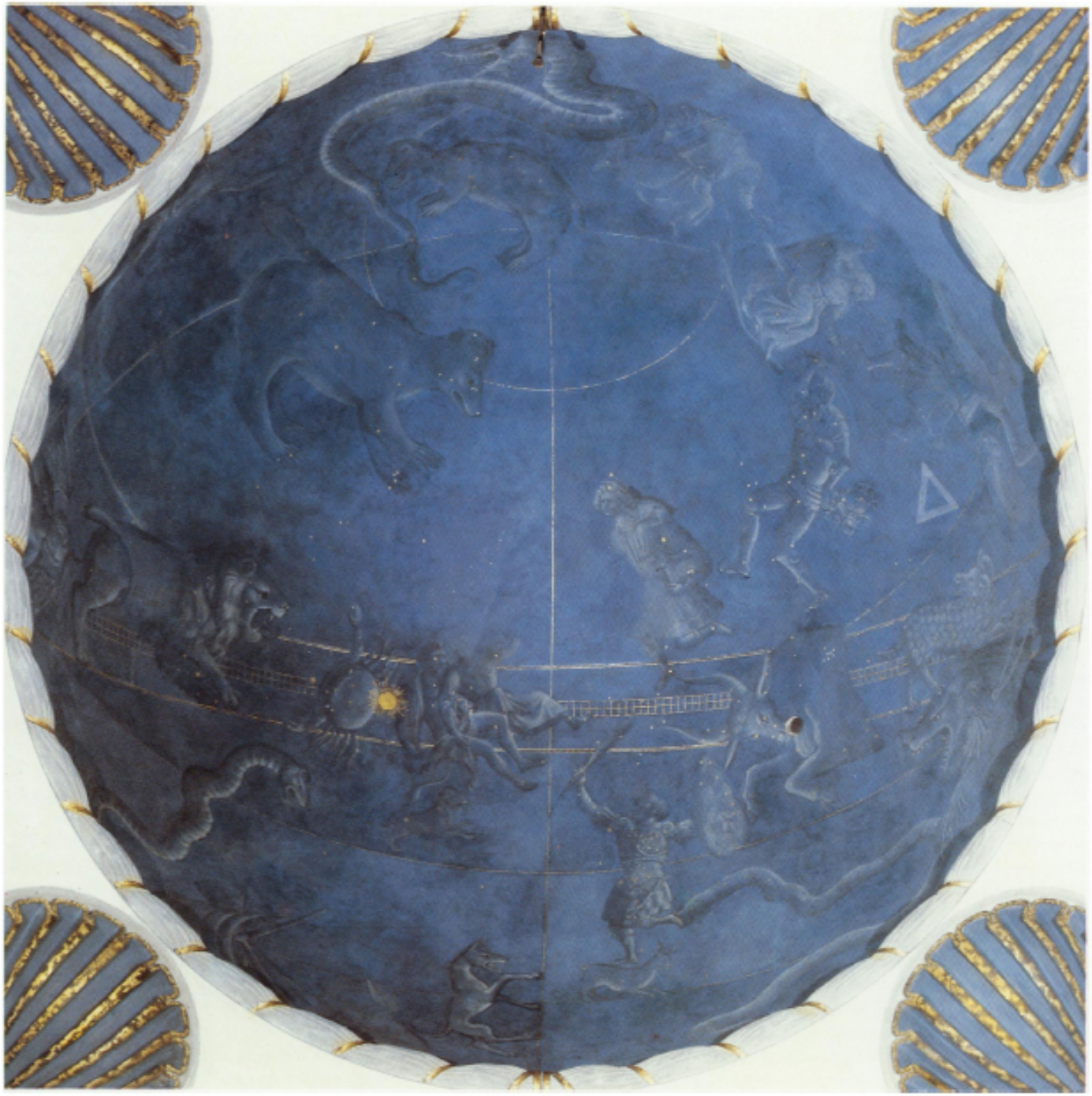
The painted sky in the dome above the altar area (‘scarsella’) of the Sacristia Vecchia in Florence's San Lorenzo.

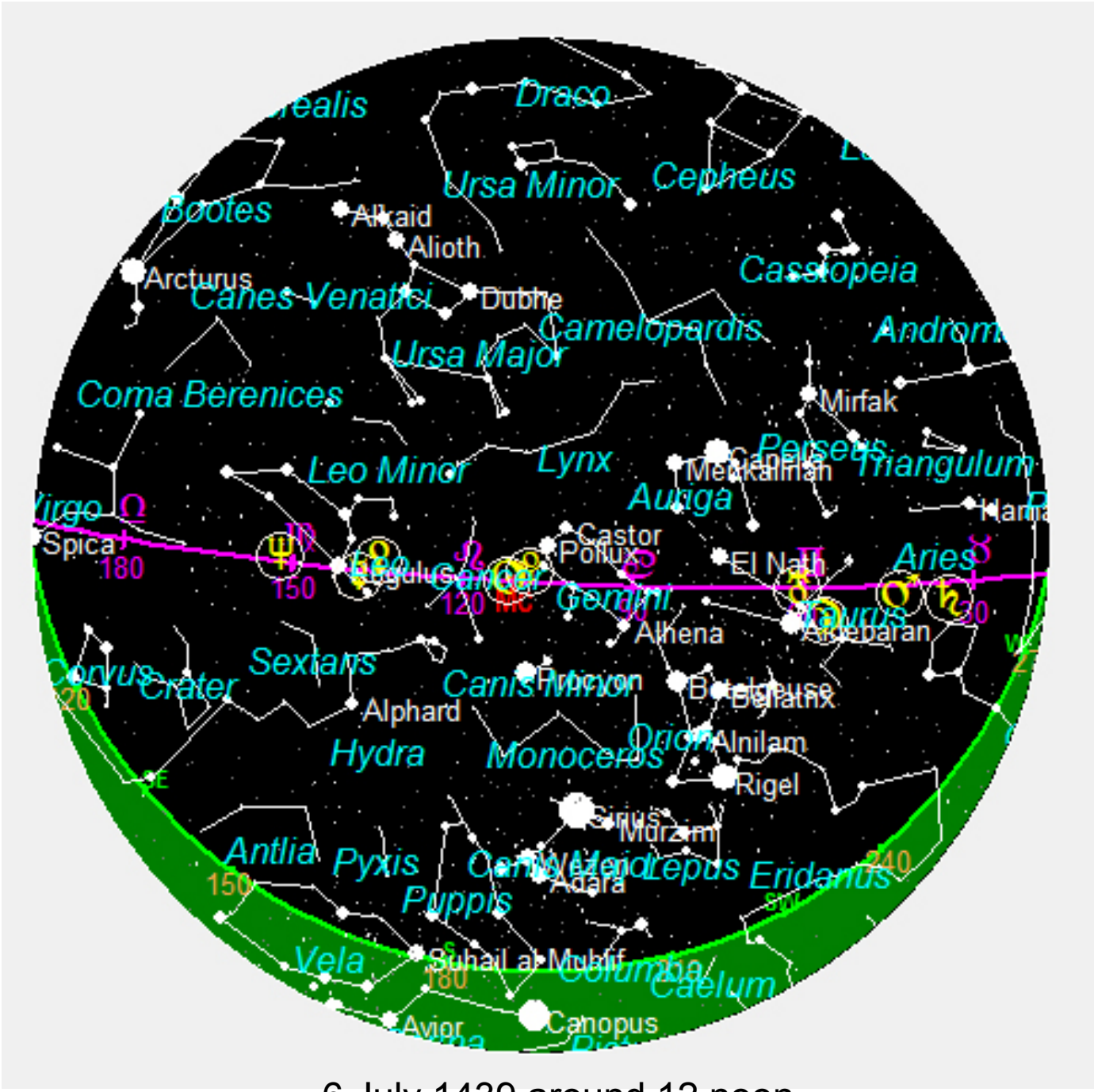
Beck attributes this to Leo Battista Alberti sometime between 1435 and 1439.

Beck, James, ‘Leon Battista Alberti and the "Night Sky" at San Lorenzo’
Artibus et Historiae, 10, No. 19 (1989), p.13.

Heilborn dates this to 6 July 1439 around 12 noon (Council of Florence).

Patricia Fortini Brown, 'Laetentur Caeli: The Council of Florence and the Astronomical Fresco in the Old Sacristy,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 44(1981): p.177.





6 July 1439 around 12 noon

‘And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars...’

Book of Revelations 12:1
‘The Woman of the Apocalypse’

Written by John near the end of the first century as visions that he received on the isle of Patmos.



The Madonna of Humility
Lippo di Dalmasio
c. 1360 - 1410
Bologna

Egg tempera (highly repainted)
on canvas, 110 x 87 cm.



Madonna of Humility
c. 1420
22.8 x 17.8 cm

Lorenzo Monaco
(c.1370 - c.1425)



Madonna and Child
1320
Simone Martini

Tempera on wood,
21 x 26 cm

New York,
Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
Robert Lehman
Collection





The Annunciation, 1333
Simone Martin in collaboration with Lippo Memmi
33x23 cm, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy.

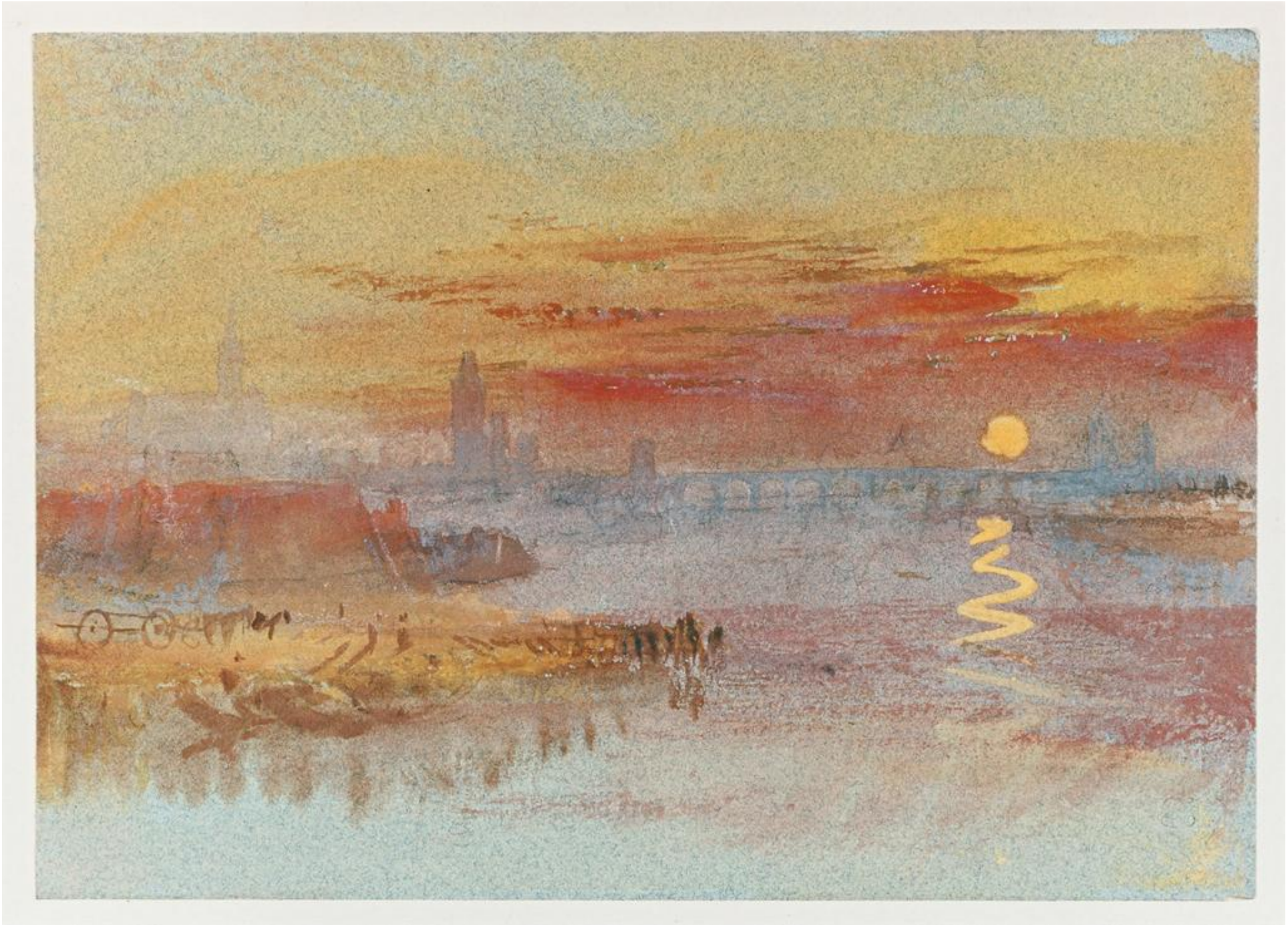


Duccio di Buoninsegna. *Triptych (The Holy Virgin and the Christ Child with St. Dominic and St. Aurea).* c.1300.
Tempera on panel. The National Gallery, London, UK.





The Maestà *(Virgin and Child in Majesty),* 1311 Duccio di Buoninsegna egg tempera, Museo del Opera, Siena.



J.M.W.Turner (1775-1851), *Sunset on Rouen, c.1830*, watercolor, British Museum



J.M.W.Turner (1775-1851),
The Bay of Uri on Lake Lucern, from Brunnen, c.1841-42,
gouache, pencil, watercolour on paper, 24.4 x 29.5 cm, British Museum



Sir John Everett Millais
(1829-1896)
The Blind Girl, 1856
Oil on canvas
80.8 cm x 53.4 cm
Birmingham Museums
and Art Gallery



Joan Miro(1893-1983)
Constell-lacions: Iconografia
The Railway Station, Majorca
(*Photo*: D.Gunzburg)



Joan Miro(1893-1983)
Constellation: Toward the Rainbow, 1941
Gouache and oil wash on paper
45.7 cm x 38.1 cm
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Joan Miro(1893-1983)
Images of the Moon
The Railway Station, Majorca (*Photo*: D.Gunzburg)



Joan Miro(1893-1983)
Wall of The Moon
Ceramics
Unesco Building, France

AIM

Understanding how the sky
has been translated into a painting or image
inside buildings and monuments.