**Rococo** (from French-rocaille) is an artistic style that represented the further development of Baroque in the years 1735 to 1770/1790. While in France Rococo has the character of an independent style, following the period of the distinctive Baroque, in the environment of Central Europe, where it seamlessly follows Baroque, the understanding of Rococo as an independent style is questionable. It is more appropriate to use the term late baroque for Central Europe.

Characteristics

The name of the style is derived from the French rocaille (rokaj in Czech), an ornamental bent motif, somewhat reminiscent of an earlobe. This ornament of endless variation possibilities was created at the beginning of the 18th century in Italy, but it was artistically accentuated mainly in France at the time of Louis XIV. Rococo is presented primarily as a decorative style: the walls and vaults of secular and sacred buildings are covered with light, elegant ornaments, rocailles, in stucco and gold, in the form of frescoes and motifs of climbing plants. The heyday occurs at the end of 1730, and comes to us with a slight delay until around 1740. Charming frilled ornaments and plant motifs decorate every building and revel in gold and white. The fondness for flamboyant ornamentation was manifested in architecture, painting, sculpture, artistic metalwork, etc. However, ornamentation is not the only sign of Rococo artistic thought, even if it most reliably helps to determine the time of works marked by it, especially in the field of architecture. After the solemn monumentality and opulence of the art of the time of Louis XIV. establishes a light tone, a smile and a diminutive scale in all the environment of the second quarter of the 18th century. Without abandoning the stylistic principles of traditional classicism, this artistic mood characteristic of the Rococo period spread throughout Europe. The dynamism of the High Baroque alternates with lyricism, which models buildings into calm contours and surfaces with shallow wall divisions, whose sobriety is accentuated by the application of rocailles.

Architecture

In contrast to the relatively material moderation of Czech Rococo architecture, contemporary applied art shows signs of looseness of form and decorative unrestrainedness. The curved, gilded rocaille resplendent altars, the asymmetry and ornamental exuberance of the rest of the church equipment, which mainly characterize Jesuit churches, mostly newly furnished at this time, have an analogy in the layman's dwelling in the gilded curved furniture, the shine of the excess of mirrors, in tapestries and figurines with pastoral themes, in brightly colored textiles and flowered ceramics, as long as it is not shaped in the form of birds or fruit. The joy of nature is a reaction to the dogmatism and religiosity of the Baroque and a harbinger of the romanticism of the new era.

The central nominal value of the feeling of life and the intellectual relationship to the world was intimacy, the interiority of the experience, which was also transferred to nature. New sensory sensibility revealed daylight, for example. It corresponded to the desire for brightness and naturalness. It was emphasized in all types of art, in architecture by the number and size of windows in castles and palaces, in interiors by mirrors, in painting by abandoning chiaroscuro and lightening colors, pastel color matching, greater use of the pastel technique. In contrast to Baroque monumentalism, pathos and heightened expressiveness, it developed a subtle play of light and shadow to an emotionally sentimental lyricism. Space, a key component of any artistic opinion, is consistently intimate in Rococo, i.e. enclosed and served by the motif of the interior, in which the action takes place, or the motif of the exterior, which is primarily the garden. The spatial idea of gradually unfolding spaces was realized, for example, by the park architecture of castles (Versailles, Schönbrunn), painting by G.B. Tiepolo, F.A. Maulbertsch with their scenic compositions, from which relief sculpture also benefited. The entire nature, deliberately shaped by park landscaping, grottoes, waterfalls, expresses the contemporary idea of paradise, a better, natural, and therefore natural world full of harmony. A revived relationship to reality, especially natural, raised the vedute (G. A. Canale, B. Belotto, F. Guardi, G. B. Piranessi) and later also the motif of ruins in the landscape (G. P. Pannini, H. Robert) to the forefront. Rococo artists include Jean Antoine Watteau, Francois Boucher, Maurice-Quentin de La Tour, Jean Baptiste Chardin, Rosalba Carrierová, William Hogarth, Daniel Chodowiecki, Jean Baptiste Greuze, Pietro Longhi, Paul Troger, etc.

Palaces and Parks in Potsdam and Berlin is the name of one of Germany's UNESCO World Heritage Sites. As the name suggests, it is a group of palaces and other buildings in a park setting on the border between the cities of Potsdam and Berlin on the banks of the Havola River and its lakes. On an area of more than 2000 ha[1] there are dozens of buildings built by order of the Prussian and Brandenburg rulers between 1730 and 1916.

The Zwinger is a complex of Baroque buildings with a garden in the Old Town of Saxon Dresden. It is one of the most important construction works from the Baroque period in Germany. Next to the Frauenkirche, the Zwinger is the most famous monument in the city. Originally, it was supposed to be the courtyard of a magnificent castle, but it was never built. The foundation stone was laid in 1711. At that time, the architect Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann was entrusted with the execution of the works, who conceived the building as a work of art. Many sculptures with which the Zwinger was decorated were created by the sculptor Balthasar Permoser.

Pillnitz Castle is located on the right bank of the Elbe in the village of Pillnitz, today part of Dresden. It served as the residence of the Saxon electors and kings. In its appearance, the castle is an example of the European style called chinoiserie, which imitates Chinese exteriors and interiors. Especially in the Rojoka period from the second quarter of the 18th century, this style was popular and was supposed to embody the supposedly ideal Chinese world - very cultured and civilized.

The Winter Palace (Russian: Зимний дворец) is a palace in Saint Petersburg, built between 1754 and 1762 on the instructions of Tsar Peter I the Great as the winter residence of the Russian Tsars. In 1917, the palace temporarily served as the seat of the Russian Provisional Government. The Bolshevik October Revolution began with the attack on the Winter Palace on November 7, 1917.

The Winter Palace is the work of the prominent Baroque architect Rastrelli and the Swiss-Italian architect Domenico Trezzini. The first resident of the palace was Empress Catherine the Great. The palace is currently part of the buildings of the Hermitage, one of the world's largest museums.

**Architecture in the Czech Lands**

One of the few Rococo architectural monuments in the territory of the Czech Lands is the castle Nové Hrady u Skutče (district Ústí nad Orlicí) from 1774–1777, sometimes nicknamed "little Schönbrunn" or "Czech Versailles".

**Painting in Europe**

Rococo was perhaps most prominent outside the Czech lands in the area of clothing, make-up and hairstyles, which we can collectively call Rococo fashion.

François Boucher (September 29, 1703, Paris - May 30, 1770, Paris) was a French painter, one of the main representatives of Rococo painting. He also worked as the court portraitist of Madame de Pompadour. He was also an excellent draftsman, his style of drawing is reminiscent of Rubens and Watteau.

We find various themes in Boucher's work. He created, among other things, portraits, historical and mythological paintings and pastoral scenes. His choice of colors is refined and the subjects are often very sensual. In portraits, Boucher was primarily concerned with the elegant pose of the model, not with psychology. Thanks to these abilities, Boucher was considered one of the best painters of his time.

Jean Siméon Chardin [žán siméon chardén], also referred to as Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin (November 2, 1699 Paris – December 6, 1779 there) was a French painter, a master of genres and still lifes and one of the most valued painters of the 18th century. Chardin took care of the annual royal salons, where in 1759 he exhibited nine paintings. It was also the first Salon commented on by Denis Diderot, who was very sympathetic to Chardin. His popularity was also supported by engravers who printed his paintings in large numbers.

Jean-Honoré Fragonard (April 5, 1732 Grasse - August 22, 1806 Paris) was a French painter and graphic artist of the late Rococo. His work stands out for its use of colors, lightness, and attention to detail, often depicting characters in an intimate atmosphere of veiled eroticism. His work includes, in addition to various graphics, 550 paintings. His genre paintings, such as The Reader or The Swing, are especially well-known.

Hyacinthe Rigaud (July 18, 1659, Perpignan – December 27, 1743, Paris), full name Híacint Francesc Honrat Mathias Pere Martyr Andreu Joan Rigau (some sources mention Jacint Rigau as well as Ros), was a French painter of Catalan origin, the most important portraitist of King Louis XIV. His portraits stand out for their precise elaboration, and most of the people portrayed also appear in traditional poses. He created dozens of them during his lifetime, and most often they featured monarchs, ambassadors, generals, courtiers, church dignitaries and other personalities of the royal court.

He was a very popular court painter of Louis XIV, who even elevated him to knighthood in 1727. He also painted a portrait of his sovereign in 1701, and this is probably his most famous work, which is currently located in the Louvre in Paris, its replica is located in Versailles. The painting subsequently became an example for royal portraits throughout Europe.

Jean-Antoine Watteau (October 10, 1684, Valenciennes - July 18, 1721, Nogent-sur-Marne) was a French painter, considered the first of the Rococo masters. He turned away from the classicist tradition that dominated France until his time and was symbolized by the name of Nicolas Poussin. He found inspiration in the late work of Rubens and partially followed it thematically. He developed a theme called "fêtes galantes" - gallant festivities. Watteau's world, in which love plays the main role, is at first glance playful and whimsical, but at the same time it also expresses a certain melancholy.

Thomas Gainsborough (14 May 1727 Sudbury - 2 August 1788, London) was one of the most important British portrait and landscape painters of the 18th century. He portrayed many well-known personalities of his time (e.g. George III.) and even in his time he was one of the leading, popular and sought-after portrait painters.

From 1759 he worked in Bath, becoming a portraitist of noble English society, painting aristocrats, but also intimate portraits of his friends, actors and musicians.

In the sixties of the 18th century, his interest in light effects increased, the play of light on fabrics is an example of his mastery. He liked to use artificial light, he painted by candlelight. At first he received few commissions, but his position was strengthened when in 1777 he supported the royal court.

He had disagreements with the academy, so towards the end of his life he exhibited in his own home.

Next to Reynolds, the foremost English painter of the 18th century and the most sought-after portraitist of the English nobility, he combines the Vandyckian tradition with the influence of the Rococo. He showed a direct relationship with nature in his landscapes, especially in his watercolors, with which he anticipated 19th century landscape painting.

Sir Joshua Reynolds (16 July 1723 – 23 February 1792) was one of the most important and influential English portrait painters of the 18th century. He was also one of the founders and from 1768 until his death the first director of the Royal Academy of Arts. George III, King of Great Britain and Ireland between 1760-1820, knighted him for his services in 1769.

Reynolds spent hours in his studio, where he painted dozens of important portraits of English personalities. But Reynolds was also a very sociable and enthusiastic intellectual with a large number of friends from London's artistic circles.

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, also Giambattista Tiepolo (5 March 1696, Venice – 27 March 1770, Madrid), was one of the most important Venetian painters of the late Baroque. Giambattista Tiepolo came from a wealthy Venetian family. Initially, Tiepolo worked mainly in upper Italy (Venice, Udine, Bergamo, Milan). Already a renowned fresco painter, he was called by Bishop Count Schönborn to Würzburg, Germany, in 1750 to decorate the bishop's residence. In 1753 he returned to Venice, where he was the director of the painting academy between 1755-58. Finally, in 1762, he left at the invitation of the Spanish king Charles III. to Madrid, where he worked until his death. Tiepolo not only completes a series of important Venetian colorists, but also a series of important Italian Baroque fresco painters. Tiepolo's work also culminates in baroque painterly illusionism, which we can observe above all in the monumental fresco decoration. The perfectly mastered painted illusory architecture, often combined with the landscape and almost always open to an atmospheric, cloudy sky, is organically combined here with a rich figural component, made up of a number of significantly modeled figures. At the same time, the painter uses a number of bold perspective abbreviations with absolute authority, which can best be seen on the ceiling frescoes, where figures and architecture are painted from a prominent soffit. Painter's sovereignty is also manifested in the perfectly mastered composition and color presentation of the paintings, as well as in the light, yet completely precise and sure brushstroke.

**Clothing**

Expensive clothing and hairstyle, a model of high Rococo fashion on Marie Antoinette, wife of Louis XVI.

A natural reaction to the end of the Baroque period, which ended with the death of Louis XIV. 1715, was the gradual formation of a new artistic style that emphasized playfulness, carefreeness and self-indulgence.

The cut of women's and men's clothing more or less coincided with the Baroque, but was made from lighter fabrics in pastel colors[31] or with a pattern of large and small flowers. The aesthetic expression of female beauty was the contrast between the narrow waist and the huge skirt, supported by the lower hoop skirt - the crinoline. It was formed in the form of a basket, cup dome or oval. It reached its greatest dimensions in the 1840s and 1860s.[32] The skirt of the upper dress was split in the middle along its entire length, in the Baroque style, revealing the lower skirt.[33] Over time, women's hairstyles took on larger dimensions and more amazing shapes.[34] Model ships, artificial fruit, bird feathers or tried-and-true ribbons and jewelry were combed into the nails. Men's fashion was more sober compared to Baroque. The wig got smaller (no big curls) and the pants got narrower.

​**Painting in the Czech lands**

Rococo elements penetrated into our painting already around 1729, as indicated by the altar and fresco paintings of V. V. Reiner (1689–1743), in whose work there was a noticeable reduction in the figural layout and an overall calming of emotional expression in the 1930s. However, fresco painting was not the real bearer of the Rococo character - Jan Petr Molitor (1702–1756), František Antonín Müller (1697–1753), Siard Nosecký (1693–1753).

Norbert Grund (December 4, 1717 Prague-Malá Strana[1] – July 17, 1767 Prague-Malá Strana[2]) was a Czech late Baroque or Rococo painter. The basis of his work is small cabinet pictures, most often genre, but also landscapes or with biblical subjects.