Art & Architecture in the ancient World

Paleolithic Art

* Chauvet Cave Paintings
	+ Mostly depicted the animals hunted by the paleolithic peoples
	+ Some scholars think they painted them in an attempt to control their spirits
* Venus figurines
	+ Exaggerated sexual features suggest paleolithic people were focused on fertility

Paleolithic Art

* Caves & huts- nothing permanent

Neolithic Art

* Cave Paintings
	+ Often illustrate the different roles played by men and women in the early days of agriculture
	+ Also, “Aliens.”
* Wall Reliefs
	+ Etched into walls or molded onto them, often depicted important leaders and epic heroes in immense proportions
		- Pictures of… Queen of the Night (possibly the goddess Ishtar), Gilgamesh, definitely Ishtar
* Relief Tablets
	+ Like wall reliefs, but you can take them with you
	+ iReliefTablets coming soon
	+ Made of a wide array of materials, depending on the wealth of the buyer
* Busts
	+ Traditional clay and stone materials were later gilded and/or replaced with metals as metallurgy became more advanced
	+ Depicted important cultural figures… or whomever could pay for one
* Tomb Art
	+ Lavishly decorated tombs were the norm in many different cultures
		- Pretty paintings, however, were the mainstay of the Egyptians
	+ Believed that the dead would rise and make use of their chambers, so they had to look nice
* Sculptures
	+ Came in many different materials, modeled after many different things
		- Mesopotamia- usually took the form of a deity or animal
		- Mohenjo-daro dancing girl

Neolithic Architecture

* Defensive walls
	+ Protected the towns and their occupants from those attracted to the concentration of wealth and resources
	+ Jericho known for its protective walls
* Ziggurats & Pyramids
	+ Massive temples dedicated to gods (like this one, dedicated to the Sumerian moon god Nanna-Suen) often dominated city skylines in Mesopotamia
	+ Pyramids in Egypt served as tombs for mighty Pharaohs. Also, they look cool. Did you know they were supposed to be cubes?
	+ Public works like these helped rulers to consolidate their power by pressing the people into civic labor and demonstrating the wealth and opulence of the monarchy
* Irrigation
	+ Canals, aqueducts, etc. diverted water from the places where it naturally was to the places humans wanted it
	+ Allowed for the growth and cultivation of crops farther away from water sources
	+ Some places like Mohenjo-daro even had advanced plumbing systems that could remove waste from homes
	+ Demonstrated man’s power over the environment
* Public Works
	+ All of the things we’ve seen thus far required…
		- Public support, labor and wealth
	+ Served as symbols of…
		- Authority & power of the government
		- Wealth of the city and its people