Roman Art: Pompeii and Herculaneum
August 24, 79 AD
A Real City with Real People: The Everyday
Thermopolia
...hot food stands
Pistrina
Pistrina = bakery
Aerial view of the forum (looking northeast), Pompeii, Italy, second century BCE and later. (1) forum, (2) Temple of Jupiter (Capitolium), (3) basilica.
The Forum
Aerial view of the amphitheater, Pompeii, Italy, ca. 70 BCE.
Brawl in the Pompeii amphitheater, wall painting from House I,3,23, Pompeii, Italy, ca. 60–79 CE. Fresco, 5’ 7” x 6’ 1”. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.
Pompeii was surrounded by a wall about 2 miles long.
Outside the Wall

• Pompeians buried their dead outside the city wall.
Inside the Walls

• Buildings are packed close together
Houses
Restored view and plan of a typical Roman house of the Late Republic and Early Empire (John Burge). (1) fauces, (2) atrium, (3) impluvium, (4) cubiculum, (5) ala, (6) tablinum, (7) triclinium, (8) peristyle.
Floor Plan – Villa of the Mysteries
• The main entrance often included mosaics
“CAVE CANEM” House of the Tragic Poet
Atrium
An atrium had a compluvium and an impluvium.
What was the purpose of these features?
Purposes:

• Collect rain water
• Allow light to come in
Reconstruction of the atrium at the Villa of the Faun
Peristyles (court yards)

House of the Vettii
Villa of the Mysteries
Wall Paintings

• Generally, elaborate paintings covered the walls of every room
Studious Girl, Fresco from a Pompeii Home. Not a portrait of an individual. Its purpose is too show that the inhabitants of the house were literate and cultured people.
The Four Pompeian Styles

• Division = Based on differences in treatment of wall and painted space
First Pompeian Style

• began 2\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE

• \textbf{Goal}: imitate expensive marble
House of Sallust
Samnite House, Herculaneum
Second Pompeian Style

• Began early 1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE

• **Goal:** create a 3D world on a 2D surface
Villa of the Mysteries
(oecus – banquet hall)
Dionysiac mystery frieze, Second Style wall paintings in Room 5 of the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii, Italy, ca. 60–50 BCE. Fresco, frieze 5’ 4” high.
Second Pompeian Style (cont.)

• Realistic depiction of architecture
From cubiculum M of the Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor, Boscoreale (House of P. Fannius), Italy, ca. 50-40 BCE. Fresco, 8’9” high. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
House of P. Fannius (cubiculum)
Gardenscape, Second Style wall painting, from the Villa of Livia, Primaporta, Italy, ca. 30–20 BCE. Fresco, 6′ 7″ high. Museo Nazionale Romano-Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Rome.
Third Pompeian Style

• Began late 1st century BCE

• **Goal**: delicate designs on monochrome backgrounds
Detail of a Third Style wall painting, from cubiculum 15 of the Villa of Agrippa Postumus, Boscotrecase, Italy, ca. 10 BCE. Fresco, 7’ 8” high. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
Third Pompeian Style (cont.)

- Wall surface treated as flat space

- Unrealistic, delicate architecture
Villa of Agrippina
Postumus

Thin, wispy columns

Tiny landscape
Fourth Pompeian Style

• Begins after 63 C.E.

• Goal: Unites elements of previous styles
Fourth Pompeian Style (cont.)

- Intricate

- Combines realistic architecture (2\textsuperscript{nd} style) and fantasy (3\textsuperscript{rd} style)
Fourth Style wall paintings in Room 78 of the Domus Aurea (Golden House) of Nero, Rome, Italy, 64–68 CE.
Fourth Style wall paintings in the Ixion Room (triclinium P) of the House of the Vettii, Pompeii, Italy, ca. 70–79 CE.
Fantasy scene

Architecture
Portrait of a husband and wife, wall painting from House VII,2,6, Pompeii, Italy, ca. 70–79 CE. Fresco, 1’ 11” X 1’ 8 1/2”. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.
Still life with peaches, detail of a Fourth Style wall painting, from Herculaneum, Italy, ca. 62–79 CE. Fresco, 1’ 2” x 1’ 1 1/2”. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples.
Mosaic
Alexander Mosaic
Alexander Mosaic (cont.)

• Originally in the House of the Faun

• 9 X 17 Feet
Alexander Mosaic (cont.)

• Copy of late 4\textsuperscript{th} century BC painting by Greek artist Philoxenos
• Tiny tesserae give the work the unusually subtle gradations of colors
Neptune and Amphitrite, wall mosaic in the summer triclinium of the House of Neptune and Amphitrite, Herculaneum, Italy, ca. 62–79 CE.
Cat & Quail Mosaic
Which Style is it?

A.
C.