LOCATING HUMANISM
in the late Middle Ages & early Renaissance
Cleveland Institute of Art Library Resources

FINDING BOOKS

Use the SUBJECT search in the library's online catalog to find books about the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The following words and phrase may be helpful.

ALCHEMY
ARCHITECTURE, GOTHIC
ARCHITECTURE, MEDIEVAL
ARCHITECTURE, RENAISSANCE
ART AND LITERATURE
ART AND MYTHOLOGY
ART AND RELIGION
ART AND SOCIETY -- ITALY
ART, BYZANTINE
ART, GOTHIC
ART, MEDIEVAL
ART PATRONAGE -- ITALY -- HISTORY
ART, RENAISSANCE -- ITALY
ART, ROMANESQUE
ARTISTS AND PATRONS -- ITALY
ARTISTS AS AUTHORS
AUTHORS AS ARTISTS
BLACK DEATH
CHIVALRY
CHRISTIAN ART AND SYMBOLISM -- MEDIEVAL, 500-1500
CHURCH ARCHITECTURE
CIVILIZATION, CLASSICAL
CIVILIZATION, MEDIEVAL
CLASSICAL LITERATURE -- HISTORY AND CRITICISM
COURTLY LOVE
DANTE, ALIGHIERI, 1265-1321. INFERNO—ILLUSTRATIONS
DEMONOLOGY
DEVIL IN ART
ECONOMIC HISTORY -- MEDIEVAL, 500-1500
EUROPE -- HISTORY -- 476-1492
EUROPE -- HISTORY -- 1492-1517
EUROPEAN LITERATURE -- RENAISSANCE, 1450-1600-- HISTORY AND CRITICISM
FEMININE BEAUTY (AESTHETICS)
FEUDALISM
FIFTEENTH CENTURY
FLORENCE (ITALY) -- HISTORY -- 1421-1737
GODDESS RELIGION
GREECE -- INTELLECTUAL LIFE -- CLASSICAL INFLUENCE
HEAVEN IN ART
HEAVEN IN LITERATURE
HELL IN ART
HELL IN LITERATURE
HUMANISM
HUMANISM IN ART
HUMANISTS
ITALY -- CIVILIZATION -- 1268-1559
LITERATURE, MEDIEVAL -- HISTORY AND CRITICISM
MARY, BLESSED VIRGIN, SAINT
MIDDLE AGES
MYTHOLOGY, CLASSICAL
MYTHOLOGY, CLASSICAL, IN ART
MYTHOLOGY, GREEK, IN ART
OCULTISM
PAINTING, RENAISSANCE -- ITALY
PLAGUE -- EUROPE -- HISTORY
PORTRAIT PAINTING, RENAISSANCE
PORTRAITS, RENAISSANCE
REFORMATION
RENAISSANCE
SOCIAL HISTORY—MEDIEVAL, 500-1500
SYMBOLISM IN ART
TROUBADOURS
UT PICTURA POESIS (AESTHETICS)
WITCHCRAFT
WOMEN IN ART

In addition to using the SUBJECT search, you may also want to use a KEYWORD (also called WORD) search. This type of search is best for very narrow topics, such as "sacred beauty," or a concept, such as "vernacular poetry," that you can't match to a subject word or phrase.
The writings of the times can help you understand the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance. To find writings by Medieval or Renaissance authors and artists, look up their name as an **AUTHOR** in the online catalog. To find information about individual authors and writers, look up their name as a **SUBJECT** in the online catalog. If you are researching **Dante**, please refer to the Dante guide in the Gund Library or download a copy from the library’s web page.

*Still don’t know where to start?* See the bibliography of suggested books at the end of this guide.

**FINDING PERIODICAL ARTICLES**

Use the same search strategies mentioned above when using periodical indexes or full text databases to find articles. Periodical indexes and full text databases cover different subjects, so it is important to select the appropriate index for your topic. Each index and database covers different publications, so that even within the same subject area, you will want to use more than one index or database.

Select periodical indexes and databases from the library’s [website](https://librarywebsite.com) or from [OhioLINK](https://ohiolink.com). Access to OhioLINK databases is limited to on-campus use. Some of the same databases may be available to you on the State Library of Ohio’s [website](https://statelibraryohio.com). You might wish to start with OhioLINK’s subject grouping of databases to find the most appropriate index or database for your topic.

**WHEN YOU NEED BASIC FACTS & DEFINITIONS**

*Cyclopedia of Literary Characters* – Gen. Ref. PN/44/.M3/1963 – Use the index in the back of the book to locate a specific character from a work of literature, or look for the title of the work to find a list of the characters and a profile of each.

*Cyclopedia of World Authors* – Gen. Ref. PN/451/.M36/1974 – Each entry, in addition to a brief biographical sketch, includes a bibliography about the author and their works.

*Oxford Art Online*  
Don’t be shy about starting your research and fact gathering with this important reference book! The article on “humanism” is very good and covers humanism in 15th-century Italy, the spread of humanism in Europe, and humanism and the visual arts. This is also a great resource for information on specific artists, art styles, and cities and countries. In addition to articles, it also provides access to several online art image collections as well as links to websites and images on the web.


*European Authors 1000-1900* – Gen. Ref. PN/451/.K8 – This source includes an in-depth biographical sketch of each author followed by a bibliography including works by and about the author.

*Oxford Online Reference* (available on the library’s website or through OhioLINK) is a selection of high quality reference books on a wide range of subjects published by Oxford University Press.
WEBSITES

In addition to printed information, you may also find some useful information on the Web. When using web resources, always remember to look at who created the site and when it was last updated to help you determine its accuracy and usefulness. If you have information on a web site that you cannot confirm, you have reason to be suspicious. The Internet is constantly changing; the library staff cannot guarantee content or address accuracy.

To help you, the Gund librarians suggest the following web sites for introductory information on humanism.

http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07538b.htm
This is a history of humanism from Dante through the Reformation, including Northern Europe, from the Catholic Encyclopedia.

http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/vatican/toc.html
This site accompanies an exhibition at the Library of Congress entitled “Rome Reborn: The Vatican Library & Renaissance Culture.” There is a section on humanism.

http://www.themiddleages.net
This has a wide range of links to Internet resources related to the Middle Ages; sponsored by Brigham Young University.

http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html
Fordham University’s “Internet Medieval Sourcebook” is filled with links.

http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/utpict.html
This University of Pennsylvania site discusses "as is painting so is poetry."

http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/dweb.shtml
This DECAMERON WEB site is very useful, with lots of links.

This site covers the plague in Renaissance Europe.

FINDING IMAGES

In addition to the digital images you find searching the web, look at ARTstor, Oxford Art Online, or Artrcyclopedia (www.artcyclopedia.com). Videos and DVDS are listed in the library’s online catalog and easily found using the special browse feature. The library staff can help you find slide transparencies and reproductions in books.

SYMBOLS & MYTH: WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Many of the artists and writers of the Middle Ages and Renaissance used symbols and myth that were understood by their audiences but which may be unfamiliar to you. You can pick up guides on
SYMBOLS and on MYTHOLOGY in the Gund Library or download a copy from the library’s website.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & FOOTNOTE STYLES

You will need to cite your sources for quotes and important information as well as list the materials you used for your research paper. Remember to include the URLs for the web sites you use in your footnotes and bibliographies. There are several different footnote and bibliography styles you may use, but you should CHECK WITH YOUR TEACHER to determine the preferred style.

The library has copies of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (Gen. Ref. LB/2369/.G53/2009) and Turabian’s Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (Gen. Ref. LB/2369/.T8/1996). You can also pick up quick guides for MLA STYLE and TURABIAN STYLE in the Gund Library or download them from the library's website.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ariès, Philippe and George Duby. History of Private Life. GT/2400/.H5713
Artz, Frederick. Mind of the Middle Ages. CB/351/.A56
Baxandall, Michael. Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy. ND/615/.B32
Bergin, Thomas. *Dante.* PQ/4335/.B4

Bergin attempts “to present the essential facts of the life and times of Dante Alighieri, to summarize the content of his works, and to suggest ... his significance...”


Covering the years 1300-1650, this includes people, places, events and literary works.


Benevolo calls Renaissance architecture the “cycle of experiments” from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries and believes it can only be understood within the broader cultural context of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. As such, his detailed and highly illustrated text recounts the development of architecture in relationship to other areas, such as painting and sculpture.


Historians consider this the most influential book written on medieval society.


A broader time frame and with more illustrations than his *Renaissance Florence,* this book focuses on the great families, economy, politics, and civic culture.


Focusing on the years 1380-1450, this book has separate chapters on Florence as the Renaissance city, its economy, the patriciate, politics, the church and faith, and culture.

Burke, Peter. *Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy.* DG/445/.B85/1987

Opening with a discussion of the arts in Renaissance Italy, Burke devotes special attention to artists and writers (including their training and status as well as their “deviance”), patrons and clients, the uses of works of art, taste, iconography, and concludes with a series of chapters that highlight the “wider society.”


This classic, two volume study covers the development of the idea of the individual, the revival of antiquity, and the rise of humanism. It examines Renaissance society (including the position of women), language and poetry, festivals, morality, and religion in daily life. It is this book that has been generally credited as popularizing the idea of a renaissance as a distinct period originating in Italy and characterized by the rise of individualism that marked the beginning of the “modern world.” This book was first published in the 19th century however, so you will also want to consult more recent books as well. The Gund Library also has a single volume edition (DG/533/.B85).

*Cambridge Companion to Dante.* PQ/4335/.C36

This is a must-read for anyone working on Dante. Fifteen essays by recognized scholars provide background information and up-to-date critical perspectives on Dante, his work, and his time.


This Cambridge Companion provides a comprehensive introduction to the key role that humanism played in Europe culture from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Essays by British and American scholars trace humanism from its origins and consider its impact on art, literature, science, teaching and scholarship, religion, philosophy, and political thinking. This is a very useful and readable book.


This lusciously illustrated book examines medieval symbolism of love through paintings, sculpture, illuminated manuscripts, jewelry, tapestries, and a broad range of decorative objects.


This small volume is intended for students and general readers and attempts to provide a feel for Italian Renaissance society.


Short and easy-to-read book - with plenty of black and white illustrations - on Donatello, Uccello, Alberti, Mantegna, and Botticelli (on illustrations to Dante).


This volume focuses on major intellectual movements from the Italian Renaissance to the French Revolution and covers politics, religion, science and the idea of nature. The first chapter gives the history and historiography of the Italian renaissance.

Cole, Bruce. *Italian Art 1250-1550, the Relation of Renaissance Art to Life and Society*. N/6915/.C6/1987


Cole explores the way artists work, their workshops and organizations, their training and materials, how they viewed themselves and how they were viewed by others, their relationships with patrons, and the display of their art.


Don’t be fooled by this title. Cole devotes only three chapters exclusively to Masaccio, using him as a way to explore early Renaissance painting and sculpture and especially their interaction.


OK, this is not an enticing title, but this is a useful book. Of special note are the chapters on “Latin and vernacular literature” (with sections on Dante, Boccaccio, and courtly love) and “mysticism, devotion, and heresy.”


Duby uses visual art to explore such issues as images in worship, life after death, portraits, and chivalry.

Dvorak, Max. *Idealism and Naturalism in Gothic Art*. N/6310/.D813

Eco, Umberto. *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*. BH/131/.E26/1986

Edgerton, Samuel. *Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective*. NC/748/.E33


This covers a variety of topics related to medieval literature (from the 6th to the 16th century) including authors, individual works, genres, themes, and historical figures and events. Although the focus is on British literature, authors, works and events from other countries are included.

Ferrante, Joan. *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature From the Twelfth Century to Dante*. PN/682/.W6/F4


This eighth edition of a standard work is well-organized, highly illustrated, and easy to use. Each chapter begins with a timeline of key political events, architecture, visual arts, and music and literature. Particularly useful for this project are chapters 9 & 10 on “late medieval style” and “Florentine Renaissance style.”


Essays cover Dante’s poetry, philosophy, language and speech and place him in historical context.


This is a brief but comprehensive survey intended for the general readers as well as students and covers economic, social, intellectual, religious, and political aspects of this period as well as art and science. Literature is not covered in any depth.


The essays in these three volumes of *Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* cover a wide range of topics presented in relationship to various artists such as Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael.


Using examples from the writings of the “great thinkers,” Gottlieb tells the story of the human quest for understanding.


Hale, John. *Italian Renaissance Painting from Masaccio to Titian*. ND/615/.H38

Hamburger, Jeffery F. *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent*. N/7850/.H35/1997

Hartt, Frederick. *History of Italian Renaissance Art*. N/6915/.H37/1993


This gracefully written and insightful slender book is for those with a strong background in medieval history.


Heer focuses on the 12th-14th centuries and devotes chapters to such topics as the aristocracy and peasantry, courtly love and literature, art and architecture, vernacular literature, religion, and science.


*Horizon Book of the Renaissance*. DG/533/.H6

This is a nice, well illustrated introduction to the Renaissance, with chapters on Petrarch, Leonardo da Vinci, Florence, Machiavelli, images of man, and women of the Renaissance. Contributors include Kenneth Clark and Jacob Bronowski.

Hughes, Robert. *Heaven and Hell in Western Art*. N/8150/.H8

With plentiful illustrations taken from the western art canon, art critic Hughes guides readers through heaven and hell - representations of bliss and torment - that follow upon judgment day.

Looking at visual art (including also music), various contributors consider the “convergence of the secular world with the sacred” centering on the image of the Virgin Mary, including within the western Christian tradition as well as in relationship to ancient goddesses.

This is an undergraduate level textbook, and each chapter begins with stated objectives, includes exercises, and concludes with a bibliography. If you can look past these textbook characteristics, you will find a clear narrative and a very broad scope—there is, for example, a chapter on humanism and music.


This is filled with many full-page, mostly color, illustrations; there is a brief introduction.

This collection of lectures explores the distinctive trends and concepts of the Renaissance, especially philosophy, science, and literature. The first three sections look at Renaissance thought in relationship to classical antiquity, the middle ages, and Byzantine learning; part four focuses on the Renaissance concept of man; and the last section covers philosophy and rhetoric.

This volume brings together Renaissance scholar Kristeller’s essays on humanistic learning, moral thought, literature, art, and rhetoric.


*Larousse Encyclopedia of Renaissance and Baroque Art.* N/6350/.H813

Lewis, C.S. *Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition.* PN/682/.A5/L4
Although this classic work focuses on the medieval tradition, Lewis’ discussion of “courtly love” traces this rise in sentiment through several centuries.

Considered by some to be Lewis’ best, *Discarded Image* traces the cultural background of literature from the middle ages into the Renaissance.

Link, Luther. *Devil: The Archfiend in Art From the Sixth to the Sixteenth Century.* N/8140/.L56/1995
Link looks at the iconography of the Satan in Western art, primarily painting.

Look here if you want a quick summary and discussion of *Divine Comedy* or *Decameron*.

Like other Magill *Masterpieces* publications, this presents selected classics, describes the works and identifies the major themes, includes some critical commentary, and recommends further readings; this is a helpful first-stop for readers new to the likes of Plato, Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Machiavelli, etc.


What makes this book so useful is its 34 page introduction laying out the emergence of Renaissance thought; this would be a good place to start if you need a basic understanding of the history of
development of the “new sense of order.” The rest of the book is really a reader, with excerpts from renaissance texts organized around political thought, the arts (including music and literature), science, and philosophy and religion.


A classic by the founder of world history who argues that epidemic disease has been a central (but much neglected) factor in human history.

*Medieval Folklore: An Encyclopedia of Myths, Legends, Tales, Beliefs, and Customs.*


The focus is European folklore from the 6th to 16th century, although the editors concentrated more on English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh folklore than on non-English speaking countries.

Merbeck, Mitchell B. *Thief, the Cross, and the Wheel: Pain the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*. N/8237.6/.P8/M47/1999

Everyone recognizes the scene of Christ’s crucifixion as representative of suffering and salvation, but Merbeck argues that it is also a scene of capital punishment in a “time when criminal justice and religion were entirely interrelated and punishment was a visual spectacle devoured by popular audience.”

Metzger, Therese and Mendal Metzeger. *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*. ND/2935/.M47/1982


This large survey book is replete with good quality black and white photographs and drawings, has a section of biographies of architects, and timeline of buildings of Florence, Rome, Northern Italy, “other Italian centres,” and Europe.

Nassar, Eugene. *Illustrations to Dante’s Inferno*. PQ/4329/.N37/1994


This textbook is intended to give students an overview of the determining features of the Renaissance and focuses broadly on Europe.


This is an easy-to-understand introduction to medieval history with plenty of illustrations.

Paoletti, John T. *Art in Renaissance Italy*. N/6915/.P26/1997

*Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*. N/6915/.P48/1997

This interdisciplinary collection of essays explores various representations of women in Renaissance and Baroque Italian fine arts, architecture, and domestic objects


This in-depth study covers (among other topics) the “cult of personality,” humanism and the portrait, court portraits, image and emblem; text is supported by illustrations.


This is a rather short book with a broad sweep, and that will be its strongest appeal. Rice covers the social world of Renaissance Italy, perspective and the transformation of art, the new political thought by the likes of Machiavelli, church reforms and revolutions, technological innovations, the connections
between the discovery of new lands and the “recovery” of ancient learning, and the rise of humanism and the early modern state.

Ricketts, Jill M. *Visualizing Boccaccio: Studies on Illustrations of The Decameron, from Giotto to Pasolini.* PQ/4287/.R44/1997

Feminist Ricketts provides a “new approach to the interpretation of Boccaccio’s Decameron ...using literary, critical, psychoanalytic, and film theories.”


Lavishly illustrated, with a short introduction and useful index.


Florence — one contemporary commentator claimed it had by the latter half of the 15th century reached “perfection in handicraft.” At this time a remarkable number of outstanding artists were working in Florence, and this exhibition catalog introduces the major patrons, projects, and artists with plentiful illustrations (many full page and in color). The catalog authors highlight how competition and collaboration as well as innovation in technique and subjects flourished. This is a beautiful book.

Ruggiers, Paul. *Florence in the Age of Dante.* DG/737/.R8

Ruderman, David B. *World of a Renaissance Jew.* BM/755/.F32/R83


Botticelli’s drawings were commissioned by Lorenzo de Pierfrancesco de Medici but left unfinished. This catalog pairs Botticelli’s drawings with commentaries on Botticelli’s response to Dante’s masterpiece. Excellent reproductions and a very useful introduction.

Shorter Cambridge Medieval History. D/117/.P75/Vol. 1&2

This is a standard encyclopedia-style reference book — very reliable and useful.


This is a lively, though not scholarly, romp through the history of hell in art and literature from antiquity to the twentieth century.


Wackernagel, Martin. *World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist.* N/6921/.F7/W313


This is a classic — about the effect of technological innovation on the middle ages.


This reader is a collection of essays by scholars on the “impact of humanism,” “courts, patrons, and poets,” and “challenges for authority.”


SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY: PEOPLE & TEXT OF THE TIMES

Alberti gives meaning to the phrase “Renaissance man.” He was a painter, sculptor, architect, writer, and art theorist, and his impact in each area was significant. For example, his three treatises on painting, sculpture, and architecture established the theoretical foundation for Renaissance art and architecture, he helped popularize the portrait medal, and his compositional formulae became central to classical architectural design.

Along with Dante and Petrarch, Boccaccio is credited with bridging medieval literary traditions and the rise of humanism that characterized the early Renaissance in Northern Italy. This collection of stories, many taken from folklore and myth, is important because of Boccacio's portrait of the human spirit as able to overcome and use all manner of circumstances. The *Decameron* is considered a masterpiece of Italian prose. The library has other editions.

A book about courtly conduct written by a Renaissance insider.

Cellini, a renowned Italian goldsmith and sculptor, was also a skilled writer, and some consider his compelling autobiography to be a masterpiece of Italian literature.

Cellini, Benvenuto. *Treatises of Benvenuto Cellini on Goldsmithing and Sculpture.*
Special Collections NB/623/.C4

Dante Alighieri. *Divine Comedy.* PQ/4315.2/.C5
Dante’s narrative poem recounts his visit to the souls of hell (the “Inferno”), purgatory, and paradise guided by Virgil at first and then Beatrice (Dante’s deceased beloved). Long considered one of the world’s greatest pieces of literature, this work has inspired many artists. The library has several editions of this famous work – by a variety of translators and with illustrations by a range of artists. Call numbers vary slightly, so check the catalog.

Poems and autobiography written several years after the death of his beloved Beatrice.


Fourth in the series “Culture of Mankind,” this book provides selected writings from the Renaissance covering politics, history, visual arts (by Albrecht Dürer, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Andrea Palladio, Benvenuto Cellini), music, literature (including Spenser, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Cervantes, etc), science (Vesalius, Leonardo da Vinci, Galileo), philosophy (Erasmus, for example) and religion. The elegantly brief introduction puts these documents into their historical context.

PQ/4615/.B6/A23/1965


With Boccaccio, Petrarch is one of the literary giants of the Italian Renaissance. He was one of the first to see a new cultural framework in Platonic thought and ancient Greek writings and is credited with the rediscovery of Latin manuscripts that helped change the course of learning and scholarship. He is best remembered for his vernacular love poems. He turned his back on the medieval tradition of courtly love and the medieval concept of a woman as a spiritual symbol, preferring instead to depict his muse and love Laura as a real woman.


Petrarch, Francesco. *Petrarch’s Secret, or the Soul’s Conflict with Passion.* PQ/4496/.E29/S33/1975

Ross, James. *Portable Renaissance Reader.* PN/6012/.R65

This is an anthology of writings on a wide range of topics from power and profit to art and nature by writers as diverse as Vasari, Michelangelo, Lorenzo di Medici, Petrarch, Erasmus, Alberti, Vesalius, Copernicus, Galileo, Martin Luther, and Machiavelli.


Vasari (painter, writer, architect, and art collector) is considered by many to be the prototype of the intellectual artist and the founder of critical art historiography. First published in 1550, with the second edition in 1568 being the one most frequently published and translated, Vasari’s *Lives...* includes an introduction to art and architecture and then three chronologically grouped biographies of over 100 artists (from Cimhbe to Michelangelo who was the only living artist included), their workshops, and associates. Vasari’s writings tell readers as much about him, his sensibilities, and his views on art, as they do about the artists themselves.

Some of the online resources mentioned in this guide are accessible only in the Gund Library, or from an Institute computer. If you believe you should have access but do not, please contact the library staff.

You may be able to use OhioLINK resources from off-campus if you have set up a PIN account.

**CAN’T FIND ANYTHING?**

*Ask the library staff for help.*

[www.cia.edu/library](http://www.cia.edu/library)

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