

# Baroque architecture

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# Baroque architecture

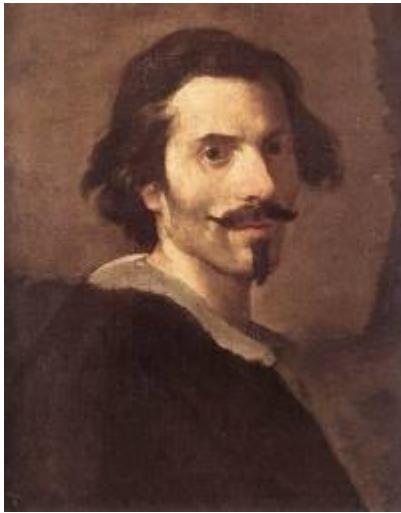
- Architectural style originating in late 16th-century Italy and lasting in some regions, notably Germany and colonial South America, until the 18th century. It had its origins in the Counter-Reformation, when the Catholic Church launched an overtly emotional and sensory appeal to the faithful through art and architecture.
- Complex architectural plan shapes, often based on the oval, and the dynamic opposition and interpenetration of spaces were favoured to heighten the feeling of motion and sensuality.
- Other characteristic qualities include **grandeur, drama and contrast (especially in lighting), curvaceousness, and an often dizzying array of rich surface treatments, twisting elements, and gilded statuary.**
- Architects unabashedly applied bright colours and illusory, vividly painted ceilings.

# Significant architects

- Outstanding practitioners in Italy included Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Carlo Maderno (1556–1629), Francesco Borromini, and Guarino Guarini (1624–83).
- Classical elements subdued Baroque architecture in France. In central Europe, the Baroque arrived late but flourished in the works of such architects as the Austrian Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723).
- Its impact in Britain can be seen in the works of Christopher Wren.
- The late Baroque style is often referred to as Rococo or, in Spain and Spanish America, as Churrigueresque.

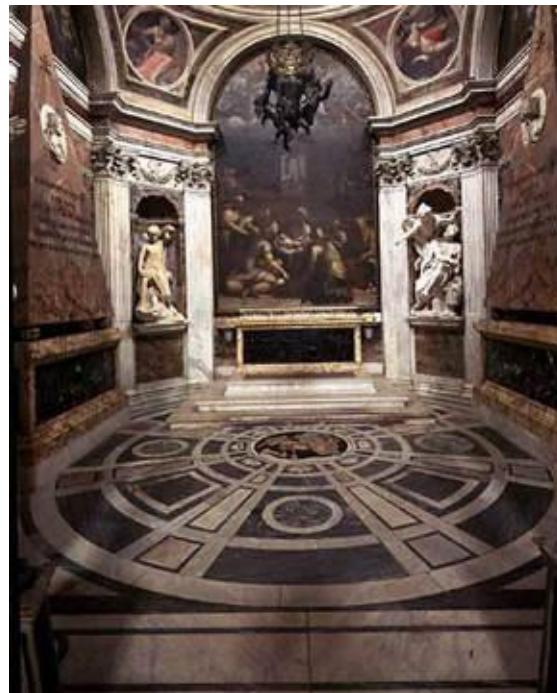
# Bernini and Borromini

- Two main architects of the baroque era were **Bernini** and **Borromini**. Bernini's first medium was sculpture. He liked to incorporate lots of it into his buildings. A sculptor and mason, Francesco Borromini went to **Rome in 1614**, and trained under Bernini and Carlo Maderna. Lots of Borromini's buildings incorporated many shapes and different forms.



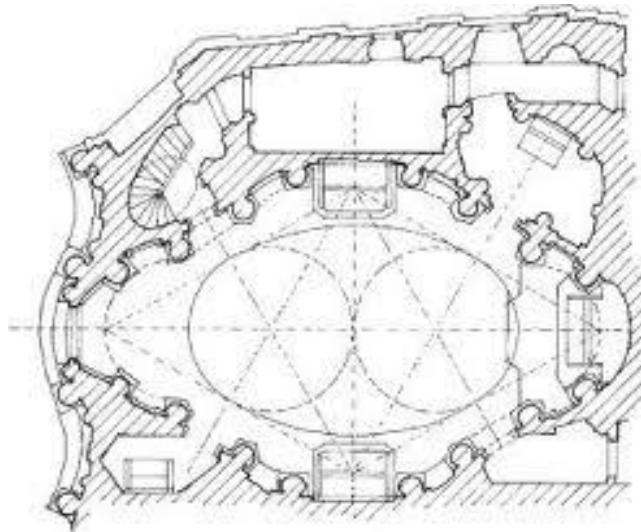
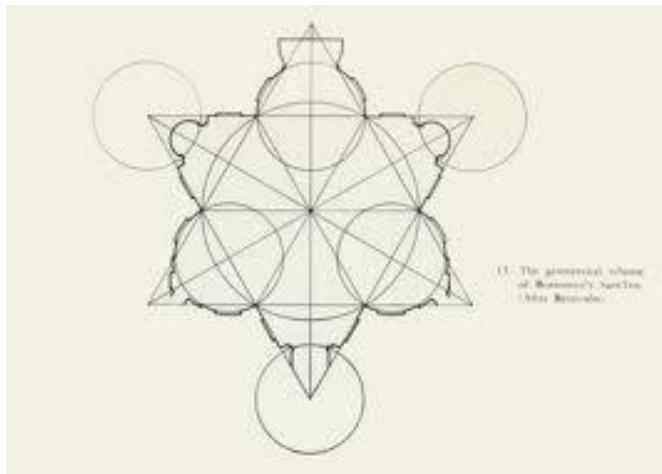
# Bernini

**Santa Maria dei  
Popolo, Roma, 1652**

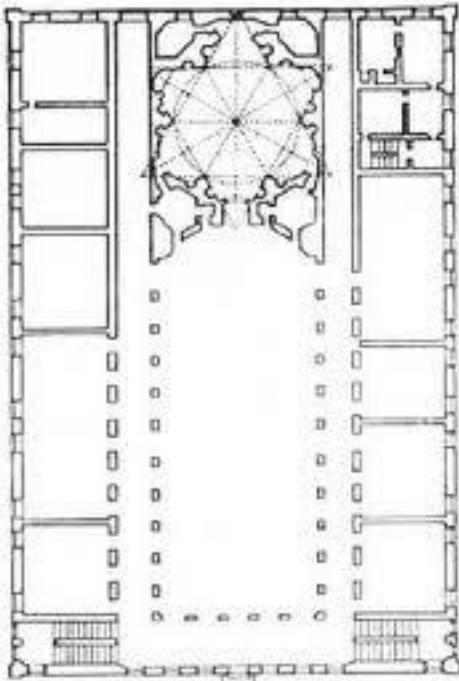




# Borromini



# Francesco Borromini



# Carlo Maderno



# The word „baroque“

- **The word Baroque means a misshapen pearl.** This period of architecture was called baroque because it was considered very odd. Baroque architecture evolved out of Renaissance architecture in Italy. In the 1600's, the renaissance architects began to get bored with the symmetry and same old forms they had been using for the past 200 years. They started to make bold, curving, and not at all symmetrical buildings, with ornate decorations. They started to make curving facades, and used the double curve (in at the sides, out in the middle) on many different buildings.
- **The baroque architects used marble, gilt, and bronze in abundance.** Baroque pediments (triangular area between the rooftop and the end of the roofs) were often highly decorated, or interrupted at the center. The tips were sometimes turned into scrolls and gilded. Many of the ceilings used something called illusionism. That is when paintings are elaborately done, to make it look like the painting is actually an engraving, or protrusion on the wall or ceiling. Baroque art and architecture was **often used to express emotion**, and was very elaborate. It was popular mostly among the upper class.
- **The most distinct shape of the Baroque style is the oval.** It was a very common shape among baroque buildings. Creating buildings out of complex interlacing ovals allowed the architects to have large open spaces that were different than just plain circles. The domes on many churches were oval shaped, but some were circular. That posed a problem because manly ceiling spaces were oval shaped. To accomplish putting a circular dome on an oval space, the architect had to use very strange angles, but it did create space for sculptures and paintings.



# Christopher Wren

- Following the Great Fire of 1666, which had hopelessly damaged most of the City of London. Christopher Wren proposed within 10 days an ideal plan for the City calling for straight streets, etc, hich was deemed impractical.
- Later, however, Christopher Wren was active in establishing new safety regulations for buildings and, significantly, was busy as the chief architect for the rebuilding of **over 40 parish churches**, developing the single steeple ". . . large enough for a good Ring of Bells ..." as an important British urban design and architectural element, which had considerable later influence in the United States.
- His principal work, the evolutionary design and **construction of the new St. Paul's Cathedral**, started soon after 1670 (although Christopher Wren had proposed a reconstructed dome for the former edifice shortly before the fire' and was eventually completed in 1711.
- In 1698, Christopher Wren became Surveyor of Westminster Abbey.

# Christopher Wren



# Christopher Wren

His significant work for the Church of England: for the Crown (under four sovereigns), including the Hampton Court Palace enlargement (1689-1700) and the Greenwich Naval Hospital (1696 - 1716); and for academia, including **the Library for Trinity College at Cambridge (1676 - 1684)** consumed most of his effort, and Christopher Wren also advised friends and colleagues on architectural matters.

- Christopher Wren worked with the finest building materials and craftsmen on all of his projects. Christopher Wren was knighted ca 1673, was President of the Royal Society from 1681 to 1683, and entered Parliament in 1685, serving in the House of Common intermittently for a total of about three years (through 1702) from several residence district. Christopher Wren was interred **in St. Paul's** in 1723, his marker bearing the legend, in Latin, "Reader

# Kensington Palace



# Baroque in Prague

- **Nerudova Street** (Nerudova ulice)
  - Named after the poet and journalist Jan Neruda, who lived at No 47 in the **House of Two Suns**, it is the picturesque narrow street that leads up to Prague castle as a part of Royal Way. There is a splendid selection of heraldic beasts and emblems on the houses, for example the Red Eagle, **the Three Fiddles**, the Golden Horseshoe, the Green lobster and the White Swan. There are also a number of grand Baroque buildings, such as the Thun-Hohenstain Palace, the Morzin Palace, the Church of Our Lady of Unceasing Succour.

## **Lesser Town Square** (Malostranské náměstí)

- Started as a market place it has always been the centre of life in the Lesser Town. Today, there are official buildings and restaurants. The important buildings include the St Nicholas Church, the Town Hall, the Sternberg Palace, the Smiřický Palace. On the facade of the Baroque Kaiserstain Palace there is a bust of the great Czech soprano Emma Destinn who lived there between 1908 and 1914.

## **St Nicholas Church** (Kostel sv. Mikuláše)

- It is the dominant of the **Lesser Town Square** and one of central Europe's finest baroque buildings begun by Kristof Dientzenhofer, continued by his son Kilian and finished by Anselmo Lurago. The statues, frescoes and paintings inside the church are by leading artists of the day, such as Karel Škréta and Johann Kracker.

## **Wallenstein Palace** (Valdštejnský palác)

- Built between 1624 and 1630 by Albrecht von Wallenstein, generalissimo of the Habsburg armies, it was meant to overshadow even the Prague Castle. It is so large that 23 houses, three gardens and the municipal brick kiln had to be razed to make way for the palace and its grounds. There are also splendid gardens laid out as they were in those days. Now it houses the Senate of the Czech Republic.

## **Church of st Thomas** (Kostel sv. Tomáše)

- This original Gothic church was founded for the Order of Augustinian Hermits by Wenceslas II in 1285 and completed in 1379, along with an Augustinian Monastery and St Thomas' Brewery. In the richly decorated interior are paintings and statues by Czech artists including Karel Škréta and Václav Vavřinec Reiner.

## **Vrtba Garden** (Vrtbovská zahrada)

- This beautiful Baroque garden was designed by František Maxmilián Kaňka in about 1720. Statues and vases are by Mathias Brown. There is a good view of Prague Castle and the Lesser Town from the terrace .

# Baroque in Prague

## Statues - Charles Bridge (Karlův most)

Named after the Emperor Charles IV in 19th century the Charles Bridge is Prague's most familiar monument. Designed by Petr Parler, it was completed in 1400 and it connects the Lesser Town with the Old Town. Although it is now pedestrianised, it withstood wheeled traffic for 600 years.

There are thirty statues on the bridge, many of them have been replaced with copies.

Originals are kept in the Lapidarium of the National Museum and at Vyšehrad. The magnificent Gothic Old Town Bridge Tower was designed by Petr Parler and built at the end of the 14th century. It is considered the finest Gothic tower in central Europe, mainly for its decoration. There are marvellous views of the Vltava river Valley, the Žofín, Střelecký Island, the Old Town and the Lesser Town.



# Baroque statues

There are **30 statues** mounted to the balustrade of **Charles Bridge** in Prague.

They form two rows, one on each side. For the purpose of this article, they are listed in the order they are passed when crossing the bridge from the Old Town to the Lesser Quarter, and are divided into two categories: those on the north side of the bridge and those on the south side. The statue of Bruncvík is also included, although it is not considered one of the principal statues.

# Baroque in Prague

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## **Maltese Square** (Maltézské náměstí)

- It was named after the Knights of Malta who in 1169 established a monastery that used to stay beside the Church of Our Lady Below the Chain.
- The largest building, Nostitz Palace, is home to the Dutch embassy and in summer there are concerts given at the palace.
- Opposit the French embassy there is the John Lennon Wall that used to be a kind of political focus before 1989.

# Kampa Island (Kampa)

- Known as the Venice of Prague, Kampa Island has been formed by a branch of the Vltava called the Devil's Stream (Čertovka).
- Two old mills
- Originally there were only gardens on the island but it was also used for washing clothes and bleaching linen.
- In the 17th century the island became well known for its pottery markets.
- Today it is an elegant part of Prague with a village-like character.



# Kampa



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# Wallenstein Palais



# Strahov Monastery



**Hall of Theology, Library**

Praemonstrate  
Order

# Strahov Monastery, Chapel St. Roch



# St. George Basilique, Castle



# Church of Our Lady Victorious

(Chrám Panny Marie Vítězné)

- Originally a Carmelite church this Early Baroque church was built on the site of an earlier protestant Hussite Church after the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. Inside, there is the miraculous Infant Child of Prague, one of the most revered images in the Catholic world, dating from the year 1628.

# Our Lady Victorious, Lesser Town



# Benedictine Monastery Břevnov



# Baroque Garden



# From Petřín Hill (Laurenziberg)

The beautiful sight to Barock churches and gardens.

Remarks about Petřín Hill:

- With a height of 318 m the Petřín Hill is a rague. network of eight parks offering magnificent panoramas of Prague.
- Most of the vineyards from the 12th century were transformed into gardens and orchards by the 18th century and today it is a great place for quiet walks easily accessible from Hradčany and Strahov or by funicular railway from Újezd.
- Up the hill there is **the Štefánik Observatory**,
- **the 60m high Observation Tower** – an imitation of the Eifel Tower, **the Hunger Wall** that was built by the poor of the city in return for food in the 14th century,
- **the Mirror Maze**,
- **the Church of St Lawrence**
- and the wooden Church of St Michael.