

dramatic gold lighting, as if she were on a stage. Bernini treated his medium in a new way as well. He did not adhere to the classical calm and natural flow of drapery around the figure that had been used in the past. Instead, Bernini pushed the use of marble to new limits and tried to make stone look like real fabric and even clouds.

The importance of the Baroque style extended beyond Italy. In Flanders, Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) established a huge workshop and produced works of great energy and color that became models for many artists. In the mid-seventeenth century, Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–69), a Dutch artist, created some of the best-known works from the Baroque period. Rembrandt is recognized not only as a painter and printmaker, but also as one of the greatest draftsmen ever. Perhaps his best-known work is *The Night Watch* (1642), more properly known as *Sortie of Captain Banning Cocq's Company of the Civic Guard*. Like many other group portraits of the time, each member of the company depicted paid a certain sum to be included in the painting. Rembrandt chose to break with tradition and grouped the members of the company in a way that gave more attention to some members than to others. This break with tradition, as well as other problems in his life, ultimately caused the decline of his career. Though Rembrandt died in poverty, the self-portraits of his later years are considered to be some of the greatest studies of the inner life of the sitter ever to be painted.

It might be argued that the Baroque period reached its peak in France. There, Louis XIV had come to power, and his long reign was marked by a blossoming of French culture. Louis XIV united all of France and built a lavish palace at Versailles beginning in 1669. The palace and its grounds covered about two thousand acres and included various grand chateaux and gardens. There was a stable, capable of housing hundreds of horses, and a grand *orangerie*, or greenhouse, for the king's orange trees. Eventually there was also a zoo and a system of fountains and waterfalls that included a grand canal large enough for the staging of mock sea battles. The opulence and power of this "sun king," around whom the world of the court revolved, became a model that contemporaneous monarchs tried to emulate.

An important feature of Louis XIV's court that was to influence art well into the nineteenth century was the system of choosing and supporting artists called the *Salon*. This annual exhibition established a set of rules for judging art that is still influential in the art world today. It was also under the rule of Louis XIV that the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, often referred to simply as the "**Academy**," was established, and it soon came to be a means for imposing aesthetic standards and principles of taste.

To the south, the Spanish court of King Philip IV of Spain tried to emulate the court of France, and his court painter, Diego Velázquez (1599–1660), was a contemporary of Bernini. Velázquez's method of building his figures from patches of color, rather than starting from a drawing, became a model for many later artists. In fact, Velázquez's work had an influence on the movement we call Impressionism.

## **Rococo, Neoclassicism, and Romanticism**

While the **Rococo** style might be seen as an extension of the Baroque period, it is quite different in form and content. Whereas the Baroque aimed to arouse grand emotions, Rococo works were celebrations of gaiety, romance, and the frivolity of the grand life at court, particularly the court at Versailles. The emphasis was on light-hearted decoration with the use of gold and pastel colors.

Three artists who excelled at capturing the elegance and wit so valued by their aristocratic patrons are considered the greatest masters of the Rococo style. Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684–1721) was the leader of a new generation and the innovator of a new genre of painting called the *fête galante*. Paintings of this genre generally depicted members of the nobility in elegant contemporary dress enjoying leisure time in the countryside. François Boucher (1703–70) was influenced by Watteau's delicate style. He became the favorite painter of Madame Pompadour, mistress to Louis XV, and his works often transformed the characters of classical myth into scenes of courtly gallantry, with an emphasis on nubile nudes. Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732–1806) was also promoted by Madame Pompadour. Fragonard studied with Boucher, and his works strongly reflect Boucher's influence.