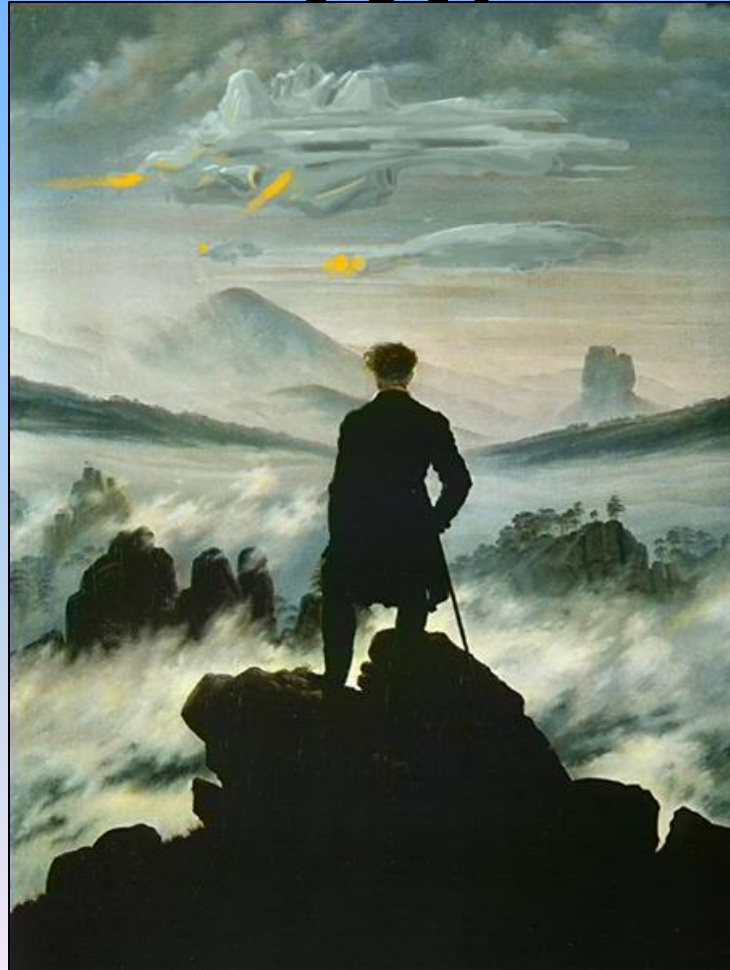


Romanticism



Definition

- ❖ A movement in art, literature, and music during the 19th century.
- ❖ Characterized by the 5 “I”s
 - ❖ Imagination
 - ❖ Intuition
 - ❖ Idealism
 - ❖ Inspiration
 - ❖ Individuality



Imagination

- ❖ Imagination was emphasized over “reason.”
- ❖ This was a backlash against the rationalism characterized by the Neoclassical Period, Revolutionary Period, or “Age of Reason.”
- ❖ Imagination was considered necessary for creating all art.



Intuition

- ❖ Romantics placed value on “intuition,” or feeling and instincts, over reason.
- ❖ Emotions were important in the Romantic movement.



Idealism

- ❖ Idealism is the concept that we can make the world a better place.
- ❖ Idealism refers to any theory that emphasizes the spirit and the mind over matter – thought has a crucial role in making the world the way it is.



Inspiration

- ❖ The Romanticist is an “inspired creator” rather than a “technical master.”
- ❖ This means
“going with the moment” or being spontaneous rather than
“getting it precise.”



Individuality

- ❖ Romantics celebrated the individual.
- ❖ Women's Rights and Abolitionism were taking root as major movements, stirring thought about an individual's rights.



Individuality

❖ In Walt Whitman's poem "I Hear America Singing," he acknowledges people's individual occupations and their contributions to America. (Excerpt below)

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be
blithe and strong,

The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves
off work,

The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the
deckhand singing on the steamboat deck,

Origins

- ❖ Romanticism began to take root as a movement following the French Revolution.
- ❖ The publication of *Lyrical Ballads* by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1792 in Europe is considered the beginning of literary Romanticism.

American Romanticism

- Many American Romantic writers imitated the European writing style and themes, but did so with an American slant.
- Romanticism embraced themes prevalent in Europe in the Middle Ages, like chivalry and courtly love, but American Romantics put these themes in uniquely American settings.
- American novelists explored the vast unknown lands – something the Europeans could not do

The New American Hero

American Romantic literature created this unique hero

- he was youthful
- he was innocent
- he was intuitive
- he was one with nature
- he was a loner, sometimes uneasy around women
- he was handsome
- he was brave
- he was moral and honorable



Connected Movements

- ❖ American writers also explored supernatural and gothic themes, which contributed to the American Gothic movement.
- ❖ Some wrote about nature, embracing the idea that nature is the ultimate source of wisdom, beauty, and morality itself, which contributed to the movement of Transcendentalism.