



'Wanderer above the Sea of Fog' (1818)

The Romantic Vision of Caspar David Friedrich



Self portrait (1800)

Biography 1

- **German Romantic Painter**
- **1774 – 1840**
- **Born Griefswald on Baltic Coast**
- **Father was a candle maker. Mother and several siblings died early**
- **Relatively poor background**
- **Studied in Greifswald and then Copenhagen**
- **Preference was landscapes**
- **Moves to Dresden 1798**



Friedrich by Gerhard Von Kugelgen (1810-20)

Biography 2

- **Rises to prominence 1805 after winning 'Weimar Competition'**
- **Depressive episodes early in life / isolated?**
- **At his height around 1810. Sells well**
- **Marries Caroline Bommer 1818. 'Practical, humorous woman'**
- **Happy relationship with 3 children**
- **Falls out of favour by 1825**
- **Increasingly ill by 1835**
- **Dies in relative poverty**

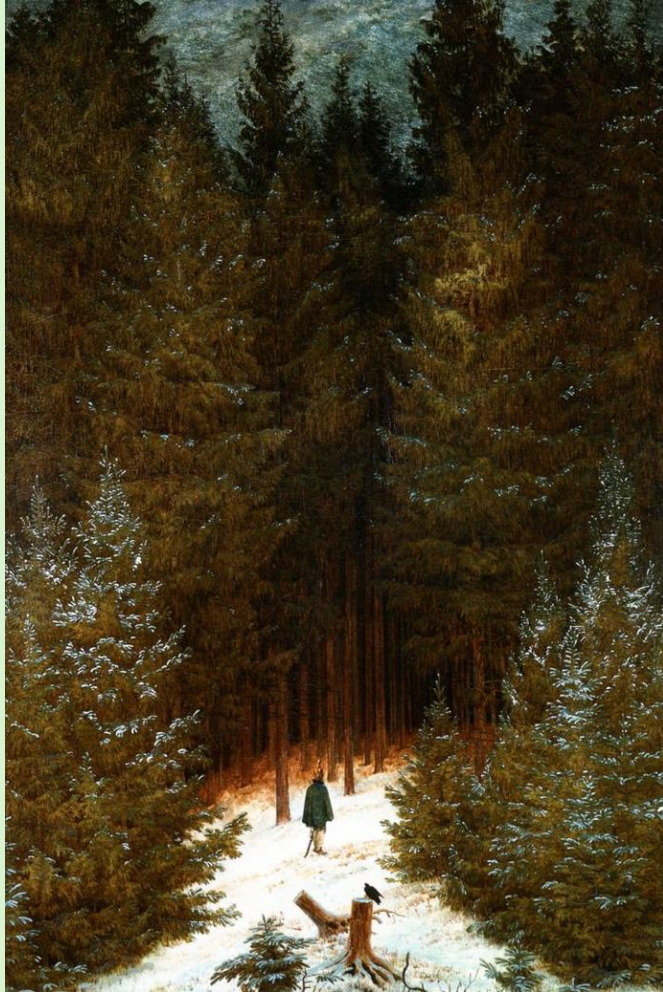
Influences 1



Tree of Crows (1822)

‘Sturm and Drang’ Movement

- **Storm and stress**
- **Proto-romanticism 1760-80**
- **Emphasises extremes of emotion**
- **Wanted to shock the audience**
- **Also literature and music**
- **Many artists dabbled i.e. Mozart**
- **Influences Friedrich’s Tutors**
- **He quickly moves beyond it**



The Chasseur in the Woods (1813)

Influences 2

German nationalism

- **Dresden part of 'Electorate of Saxony'**
- **Conquered by Napoleon 1806 - 1815**
- **Friedrich anti-French. Wants strong leader, liberty**
- **Financially contributes to guerillas**
- **Draws attention to German history 'Romantic Nationalism'**
- **At the war's end, it becomes part of the 'German Confederation'**

Influences 3

Religion and folklore

- His art is peppered with Christian symbols i.e. crosses
- Also uses folklore i.e. Dolmens
- Uses his art to help reach and contemplate the infinite (God)
- Almost like a mandala



The Tetschen Altar (1807)



The Monk by the Sea (1808)

Influences 4

German Romanticism

- **Artistic movement c.1795 - 1820**
- **Reaction to the Enlightenment which emphasised reason & materialism**
- **Art, literature, music, philosophy.**
- **Goethe, Hegel, Heine, Brahms**
- **‘Emotion over reason’**
- **‘Nature and the sublime’. Nature is no longer just a backdrop**
- **Individuality. Celebrates individual achievement**



**The Woman by a Window
(1822)**

Influences 5

Practical points

- **Starts with woodcuts. watercolours, inks, & sepia.**
- **Works in oils after c.1802**
- **His work is very symmetrical.**
- **Highly disciplined**
- **Stays true to his vision throughout his life**
- **Produces over 500 works in total**

Let's enjoy some of his art...



Two men contemplating the Moon (1819)



Morning in the Regensbirge (1811)



The Waltzmann (1824)



The Stages of Life (1835)



Moonrise by the Sea (1822)



On the Sailing Boat (1819)

Conclusion

- **Fell in and out of favour during and after his life**
- **Probably an acquired taste**
- **Could be a pastiche – easy to mock**
- **But wonderful contemplative art**
- **THE Great German Romantic Artist**
- **His work is displayed in museums across Germany**
- **Taschen “Friedrich” by Norbert Wolf**