

El Greco

The first great Spanish painter was not a native of Spain. Domenikos Theotokopoulos was born in 1540 or 1541 on an island called Crete which is in the Greek Islands. Not a lot is known of his childhood. In 1570, the first certain date in El Greco's biography, he moves to Rome, the capital of the Christian world, and the great artistic centre of Italy. It was there that he was to complete his artistic training and his introduction to the new ideas of the West. Like all great independent geniuses, El Greco could have no real followers. He was the one outstanding painter of his age, and no painter has better expressed the spirit of a particular time and place. He was understood by only a few in his time, and soon after his death was more or less forgotten.

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