

103. THE OATH OF THE
HORATII. JACQUES-
LOUIS DAVID. 1784 C.E.
OIL ON CANVAS.

**JACQUES-
LOUIS DAVID**



FORM

- ▶ NEOCLASSICAL
- ▶ Simplistic and Symbolic
- ▶ Rejection of Rococo
- ▶ Organized and structured
- ▶ Male Figures = constructed with geometric shapes
- ▶ Female Figure = organic/realistic shapes
- ▶ Vanishing point on the swords



FORM

- ▶ Men are rigid and angular, showing strength and determination



FORM

- ▶ women are curvilinear - showing softness and weakness as well as a lack of agency



FUNCTION

- ▶ Shows 3 sons taking an oath to their father
- ▶ Revolutionary thinking? 5 years before French Revolution and Jacques-Louis was a revolutionary. Idea of swearing and oath to the Republic that will require dedication and sacrifice.



CONTEXT

- ▶ Legend of Horatii
 - ▶ Conflict between Rome and city of Alba Longa
 - ▶ Instead of declaring war, they sent 3 representatives to settle dispute
 - ▶ 3 brothers of the Horatii (Roman) vs. 3 brothers of the Curatii (Alban)
 - ▶ Typical for battles to be won as men remain standing
 - ▶ Held moral value in Roman culture. Sacrifice for the defense of your city is a noble case
- ▶ Time of Painting
 - ▶ France was on the verge of its Revolution and the end of the monarchy
 - ▶ David picked up on the independent ideas resurfacing all over the world (revolutionary thinking)



CONTENT

- ▶ Horatii brothers and father
 - ▶ note the attention to detail in the musculature = Neoclassical ideals



CONTENT

- ▶ Women and children
 - ▶ some are the sisters of the Horatii, who are married to the Curatii. Some are Curatii married to the Horatii brothers. Either way it will end in tragedy



CONTENT

- ▶ Roman arches and Tuscan columns
= a Neoclassical setting



COMPARE WITH

- ▶ Roman and Greek art
- ▶ Neoclassical art

