

# AEGEAN ART 4-1

# Colored M & M's

"Colored M & M's."

This phrase is used to reference the chronological order of the three cultures examined under the art historical period of the Aegean: Cycladic, Minoan, and Mycenaean



# The 3 cultures locations

- ▣ Cycladic-group of island people
- ▣ Minoan- people of the large island of Crete
- ▣ Mycenaean- people of the mainland of Greece





# Cycladic Islands in the Bronze Age

3000-1600BCE

- ▣ Left no written word- art is source of information
- ▣ Agriculture, herding, trade, and crafts
- ▣ Hillside burial chambers
- ▣ Terra cotta- an orange-brown low fired clay
- ▣ Marble being used as sculpting material

**Title:** Two figures of women

**Medium:** Marble

**Size:** heights 13" (33 cm) and 25" (63.4 cm)

**Date:** c. 2500–2200 BCE

**Marble – durable**

**Ranging in size from a few inches to 5 feet tall**

**Often found lying on graves**

**Stylized?**

**Why simplified forms?**

**Tools?**

**Why female?**

**Meant to lie on back**

**Painted faces and hair originally**



**Title:** *Seated Harp Player*

**Medium:** Marble

**Size:** height 11 ½" (29.2 cm)

**Date:** c. 2700–2500 BCE

Sculpture in the round- carved on all sides,  
meant to be viewed from all angles

The harpist is still stylized but now has  
more details.

Why is his head back? Or feet apart?

Chair?

These stylized marble statutes could have  
been used for many reason.

- votive figures
- broken ceremonially in burial rituals
- decorations



# Crete and Minoan Civilizations

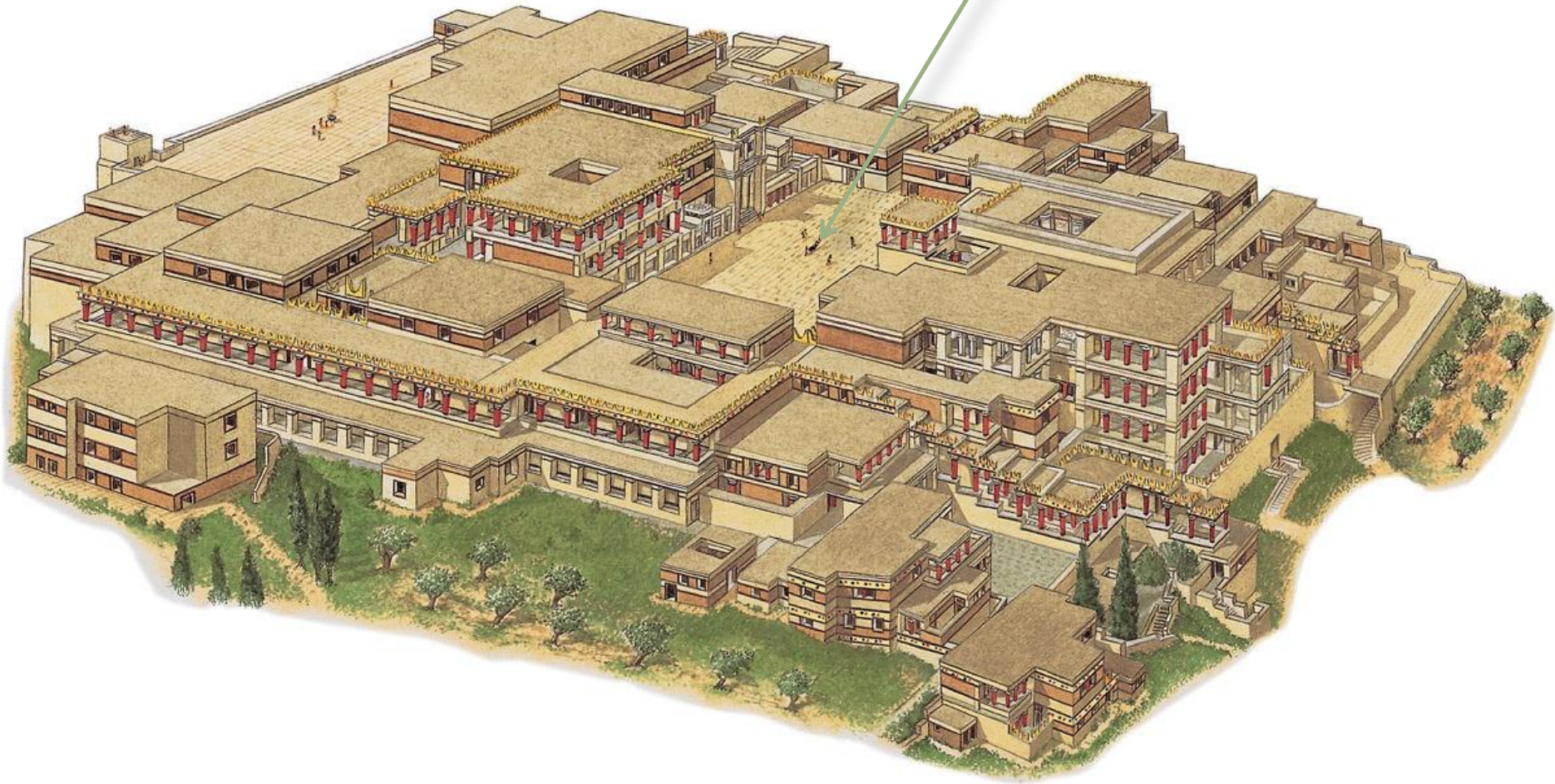
- ❑ Island of Crete- the Minoan culture flourished from 1900-1375 BCE
- ❑ Minoan comes from King Minos
- ❑ Crete largest Island 150 miles long, 36 miles wide
- ❑ Crops and herding, wealthy seas power because of safe ports





# Reconstruction of the palace complex, Knossos, Crete

Large central  
courtyard



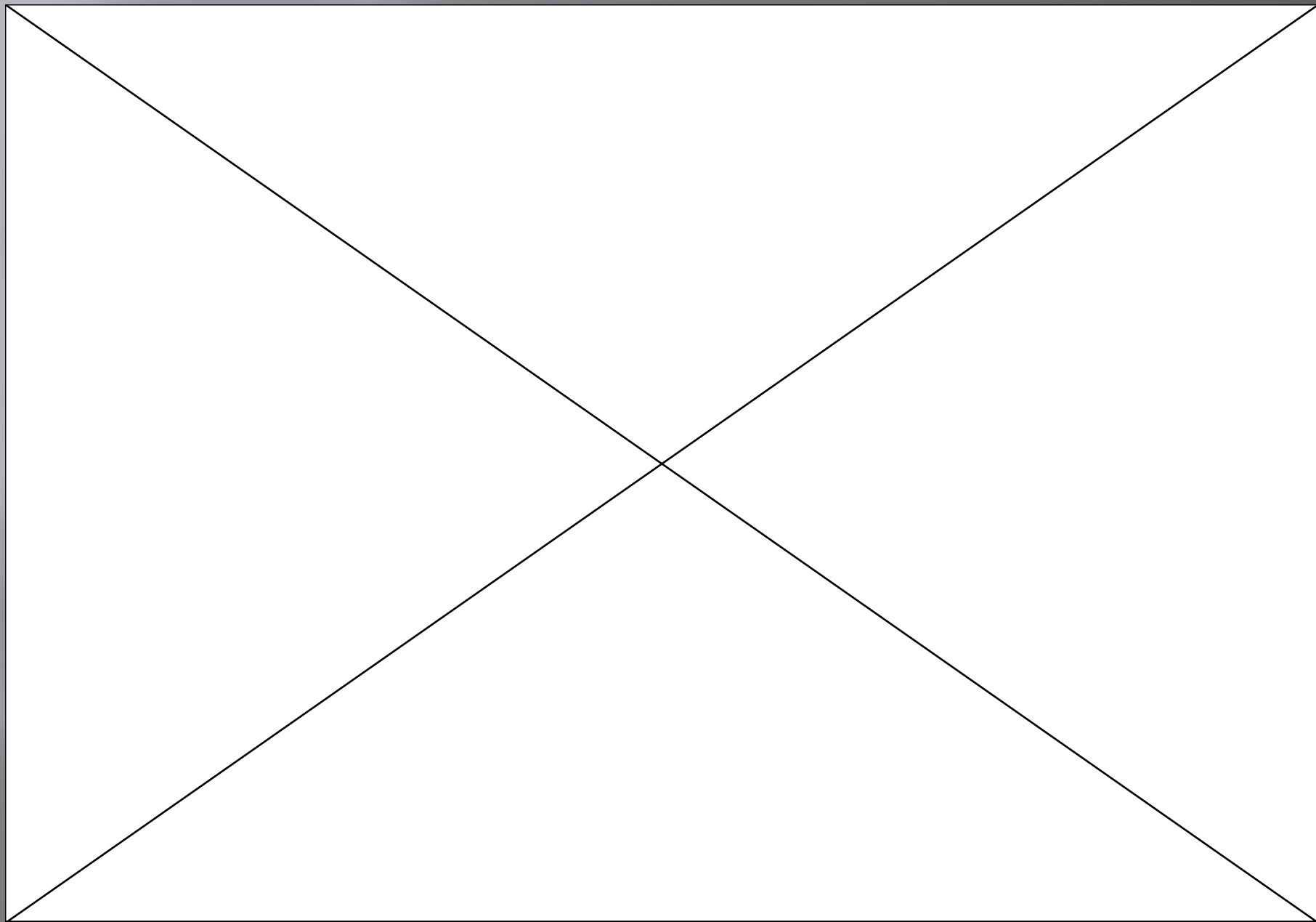
Dressed stone- face a wall with finished, cut stone  
1700 Earthquake!

Old Palace period 1900-1700 BCE



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jjo5AV6\\_sHU&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jjo5AV6_sHU&feature=related)







**Title:** *Kamares Ware Jug*  
**Medium:** Ceramic  
**Size:** height 10 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (27 cm)  
**Date:** c. 2000–1900 BCE

Inside the palace, workshops attributed to the mass production of ceramics and metalwork.

Extraordinary methods from creating pottery and metalwork were developed.

Kamares ware was known for:

- Extremely thin walls
- color
- graceful and stylized paint decoration

Globular Body and Beaked pouring spout

Stylized or non-realistic looking representations of plant life





# Jewelry Vocab

Lost-wax casting- a wax form is covered with clay or plaster then melted away to create a hollow form, then molten metal fills the form, when cooled the clay is broken away and the metal form remains

Inlay- pieces of one material are decoratively put into another material

Filigree- delicate, lacelike ornamental work

Repousse'- hammering metal from the back to create a protruding image

Granulation-technique for decorating gold in which tiny balls of precious metal are fused to the main surface

Niello- black sulfur alloy rubbed into fine lines of metal detail for contrast

Gilding- the application of gold-leaf or gold pigment to the surface of another medium

**Title:** *Pendant of Gold Bees*

**Medium:** Gold

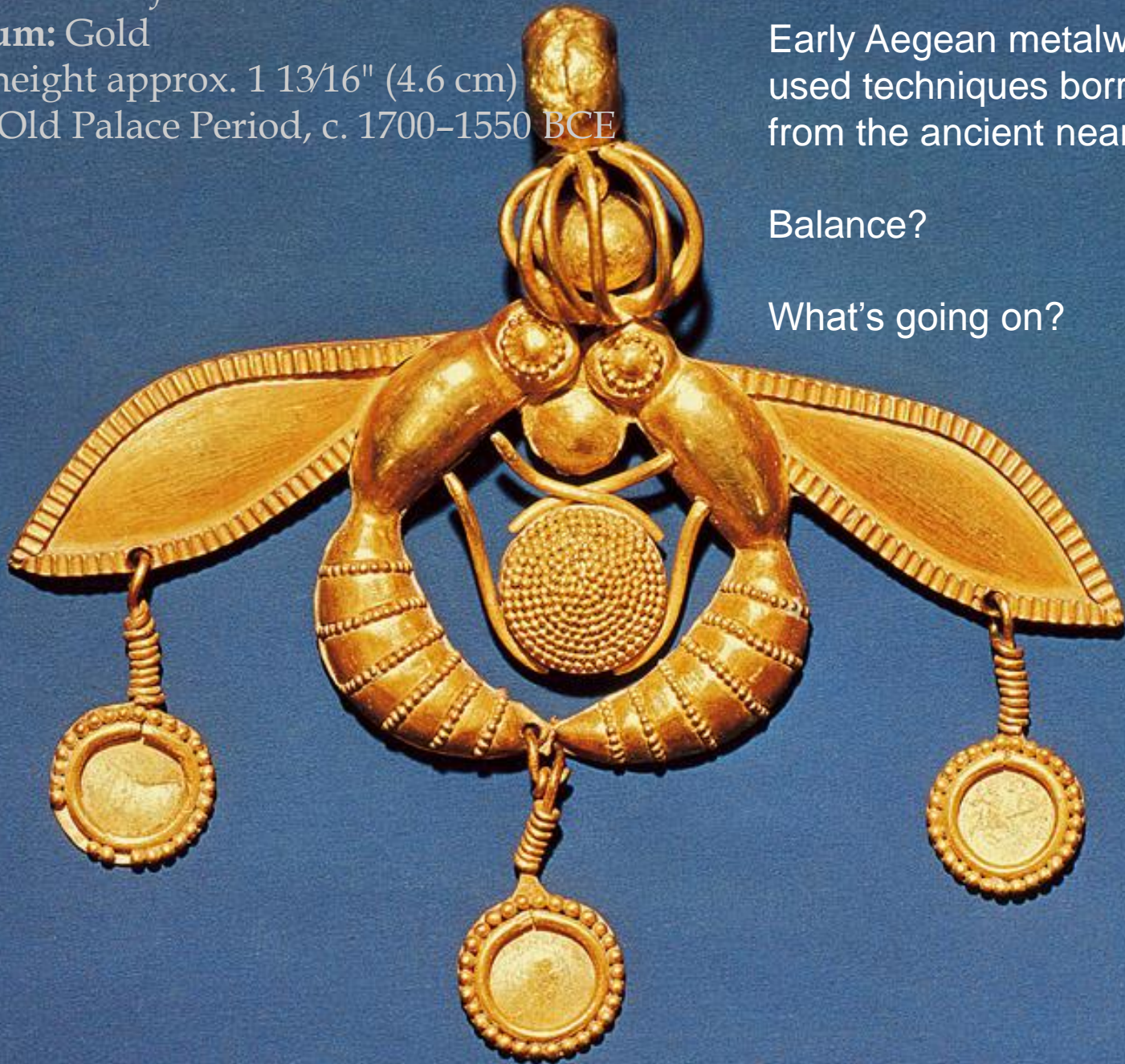
**Size:** height approx. 1 13/16" (4.6 cm)

**Date:** Old Palace Period, c. 1700–1550 BCE

Early Aegean metalwork  
used techniques borrowed  
from the ancient near east

Balance?

What's going on?







## Reconstruction of the palace complex, Knossos, Crete

The second palace period  
1700-1450 BCE

1700-earthquake forced people  
to rebuild the palace

Because of the double axe motif  
being used throughout the  
palace it became known as the  
Labyrinth or “house of the  
double axes”.

Due to the Maze like structure  
of palace, Labyrinth came to  
mean “maze”

The Columns were originally  
tree trunks with the tapered or  
small ends at the bottom.

The top was known as a cushion  
top.





**Title:** *Woman Or Goddess with Snakes*

**Medium:** Faience

**Size:** height 11<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (29.5 cm)

**Date:** New Palace period, c. 1700–1550 BCE

Females holding snake were found all the way back to date 6000BCE

Thought to have been associated with:

- Water
- Regenerative Power
- Protection of the home

Found in a store Room in Knossos, she is a strong presence.

A cat or leopard sits on her head to suggest royalty or protection

Due to her complex detailing and both realistic and stylized elements, scholars disagree on if she is a representation of goddess or human.



# Quick Write



Look at the image of the Woman or Goddess with Snakes. Now, based on your observations write a paragraph that supports the view that the figure is a deity rather than a human.

**Title:** *Harvester Vase*

**Medium:** Steatite

**Size:** diameter 4 ½" (11.3 cm)

**Date:** New Palace Period, c. 1650–1450 BCE

Rhyton- a container from which fluids were intended to be drunk, or else poured in some ceremony

Steatite- greenish brown soap stone

May have been covered in gold leaf

27 men (Rowdy)

What can we say about their placement on the vase?

What are they doing?









**Title:** *Bull's-Head Rhyton*

**Medium:** Steatite with shell rock crystal and red jasper the gilt-wood horns restored

**Size:** height 12" (30.5 cm)

**Date:** c.1550–1450 BCE

- steatite rhyton in the shape of a bull's head from the **Little Palace of Knossos**.
- The horns were gilded, the eyes made of rock crystal and the muzzle of mother of pearl
- It was a libation vessel used in sacred rituals. It was filled with the appropriate liquid through the hole in the neck and emptied during the ritual through another hole in the nostrils.
- The art of stone carving, which had suffered a decline in the Old Palace Period, was revived and perfected in New Palace times.



**Title:** *Octopus Flask*

**Medium:** Marine style ceramic

**Size:** height 11" (28 cm)

**Date:** c. 1500–1450 BCE

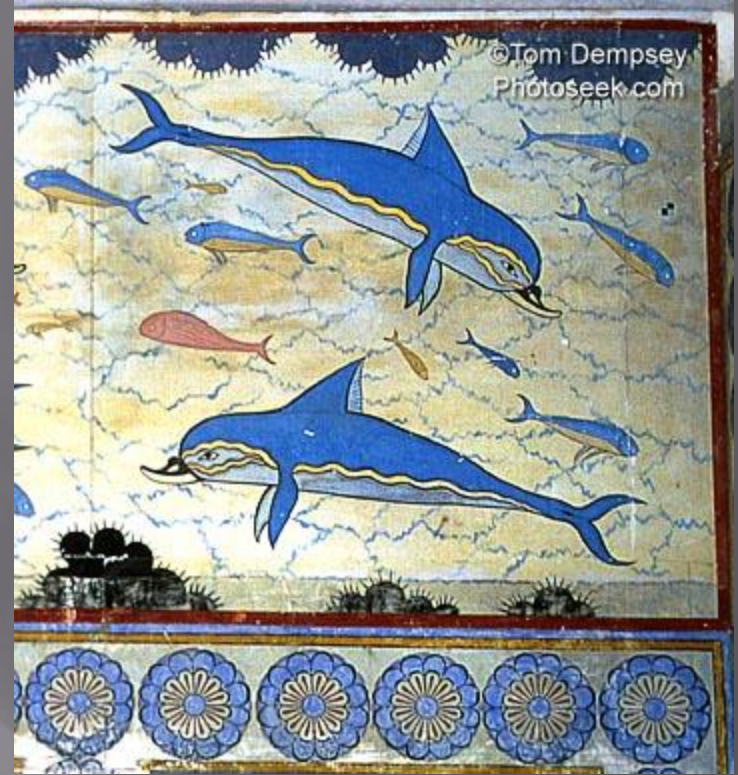
- No priesthood or rigid artistic styles
- Minoan art reflected a freedom and willingness to assimilate other artistic traditions from throughout the region.
- Common motifs are creatures of the sea. Marine Style.
- a bold painting of an octopus glides around and covers the surface of this flask.
- Note how successfully the artist has drawn the suckers on the tentacles, and how the coiling circles of the ends of the tentacles are repeated in the shapes of the handles flanking the spout.
- The Minoan artist did not constrain the design within banded areas, but rather let the images freely flow around the vessel.





# Frescoes

Frescoes-large scale  
wall paintings



Minoans used two techniques

Buon Fresco- painted while the plaster is still wet

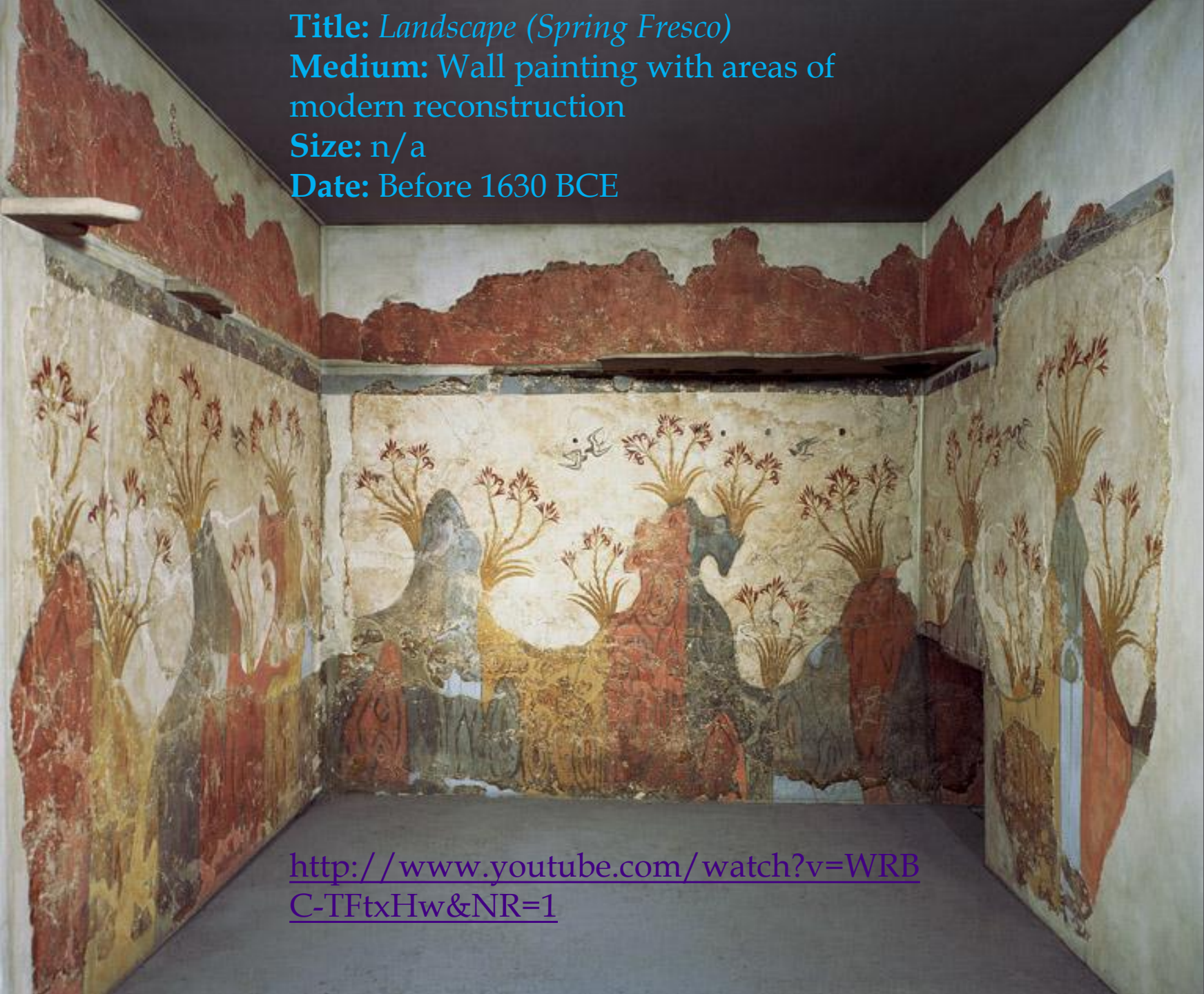
Fresco Secco-painted on dry plaster

**Title:** *Landscape (Spring Fresco)*

**Medium:** Wall painting with areas of modern reconstruction

**Size:** n/a

**Date:** Before 1630 BCE



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRB C-TFtxHw&NR=1>