

Baroque

Architecture

What Baroque did to the classical language it inherited, and why.

Renaissance

- Flat wall, applied order
- Static, frontal composition
- Circle and square
- Even, clear daylight
- Parts read separately

Baroque

- Wall itself bends in plan
- Movement, oblique views
- Oval and interlocking geometry
- Hidden and dramatic light sources
- Parts fused into one effect

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Baroque kept the classical vocabulary and broke its grammar, in the service of persuasion.

Borromini's San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Rome, 1638-41, is the compact case. Bernini's colonnade at St Peter's is the urban one.