

He wrote, in the form of a dialog between viewers,

Impression — I was certain of it. I was just telling myself that, since I was impressed, there had to be some impression in it ... and what freedom, what ease of workmanship! Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than that seascape.

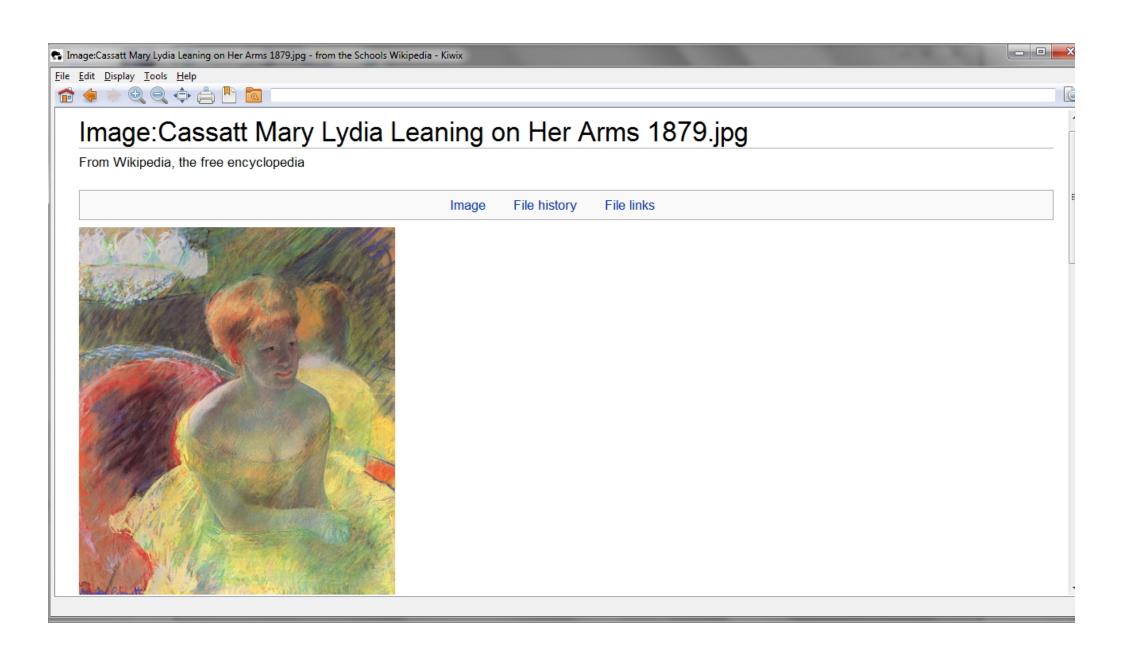
The term "Impressionists" quickly gained favour with the public. It was also accepted by the artists themselves, even though they were a diverse group in style and temperament, unified primarily by their spirit of independence and rebellion.

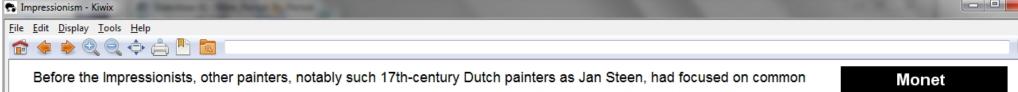
Monet, Sisley, Morisot, and Pissarro may be considered the "purest" Impressionists, in their consistent pursuit of an art of spontaneity, sunlight, and colour. Degas rejected much of this, as he believed in the primacy of drawing over colour and belittled the practice of painting outdoors. Renoir turned against Impressionism for a time in the 1880s, and never entirely regained his commitment to its ideas. Édouard Manet, despite his role as a leader to the group, never abandoned his liberal use of black as a colour, and never participated in the Impressionist exhibitions. He continued to submit his works to the Salon, where his Spanish Singer had won a 2nd class medal in 1861, and he urged the others to do likewise, arguing that "the Salon is the real field of battle" where a reputation could be made.

Among the artists of the core group (minus Bazille, who had died in the Franco-Prussian War in 1870), defections occurred as Cézanne, followed later by Renoir, Sisley, and Monet, abstained from the group exhibitions in order to submit their works to the Salon. Disagreements arose from issues such as Guillaumin's membership in the group, championed by Pissarro and Cézanne against opposition from Monet and Degas, who thought him unworthy. Degas invited Mary Cassatt to display her work in the 1879 exhibition, but he also caused dissention by insisting on the inclusion of Jean-François Raffaëlli, Ludovic Lepic, and other realists who did not represent Impressionist practices, leading Monet in 1880 to accuse the Impressionists of "opening doors to first-come daubers". The group divided over the invitation of Signac and Seurat to exhibit with them in 1886. Pissarro was the only artist to show at all eight Impressionist exhibitions.



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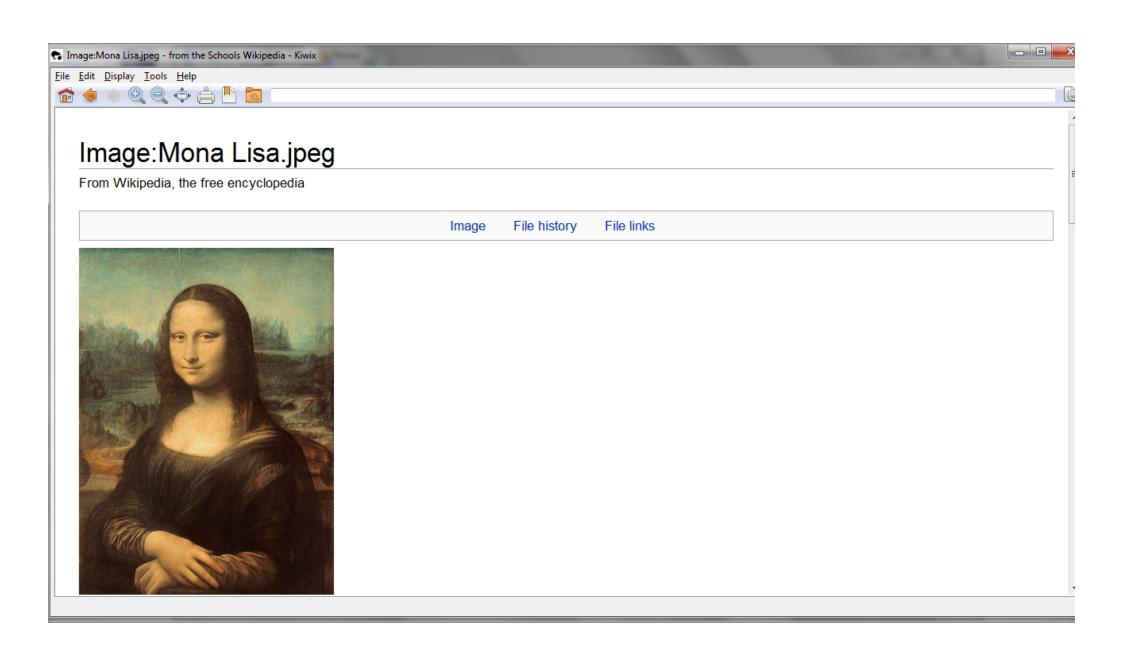
Before the Impressionists, other painters, notably such 17th-century Dutch painters as Jan Steen, had focused on common subjects, but their approaches to composition were traditional. They arranged their compositions in such a way that the main subject commanded the viewer's attention. The Impressionists relaxed the boundary between subject and background so that the effect of an Impressionist painting often resembles a snapshot, a part of a larger reality captured as if by chance. Photography was gaining popularity, and as cameras became more portable, photographs became more candid. Photography inspired Impressionists to capture the moment, not only in the fleeting lights of a landscape, but in the day-to-day lives of people.

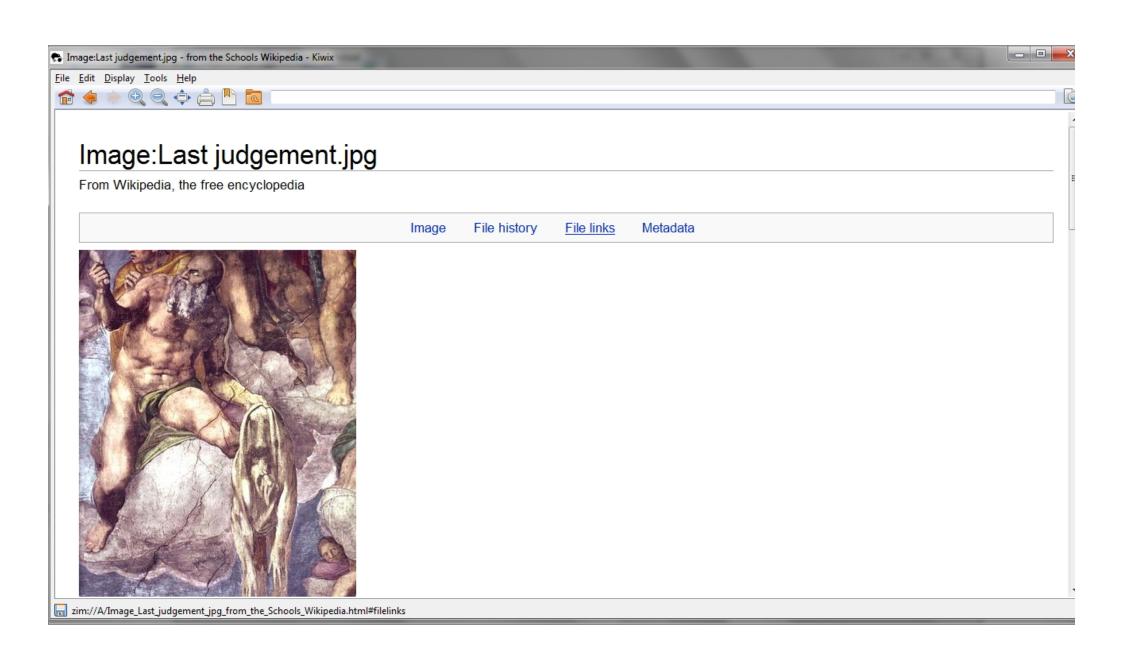
The rise of the impressionist movement can be seen in part as a reaction by artists to the newly established medium of photography. The taking of fixed or still images challenged painters by providing a new medium with which to capture reality. Initially photography's presence seemed to undermine the artist's depiction of nature and their ability to mirror reality. Both portrait and landscape paintings were deemed somewhat deficient and lacking in truth as photography "produced lifelike images much more efficiently and reliably".

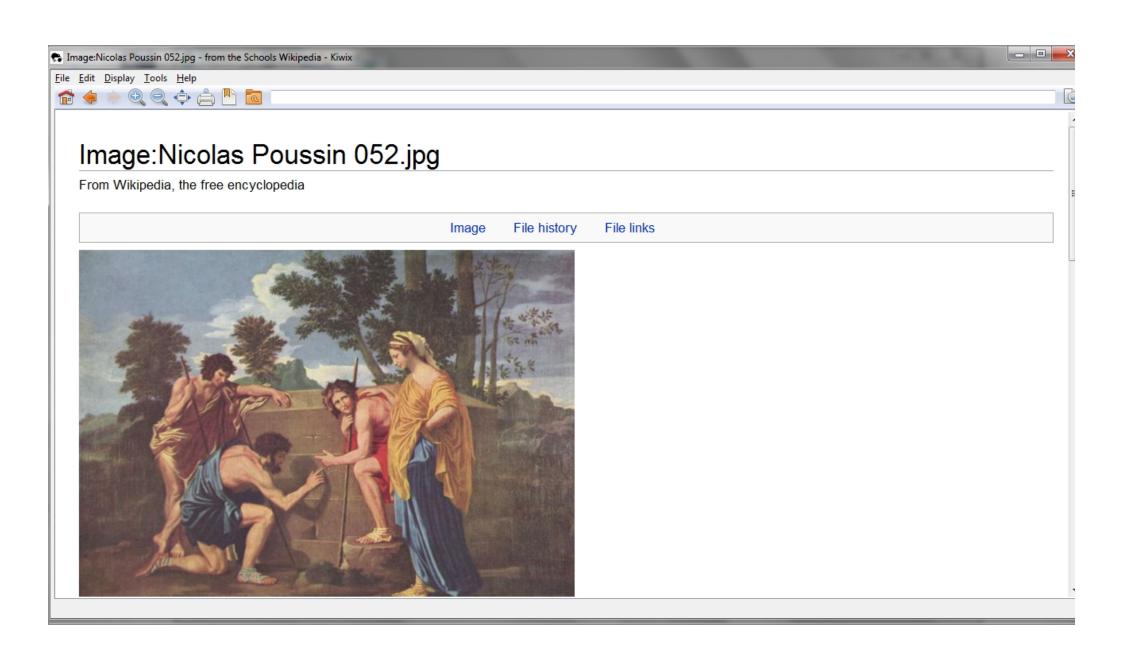
In spite of this, photography actually inspired artists to pursue other means of artistic expression, and rather than competing with photography to emulate reality, artists focused "on the one thing they could inevitably do better than the photograph – by further developing into an art form its very subjectivity in the conception of the image, the very subjectivity that photography eliminated". The Impressionists sought to express their perceptions of nature, rather than create exacting reflections or mirror images of the world. This allowed artists to subjectively depict what they saw with their "tacit imperatives of taste and conscience". Photography encouraged painters to exploit aspects of the painting medium, like colour, which photography then lacked; "the Impressionists were the first to consciously offer a subjective alternative to the photograph".

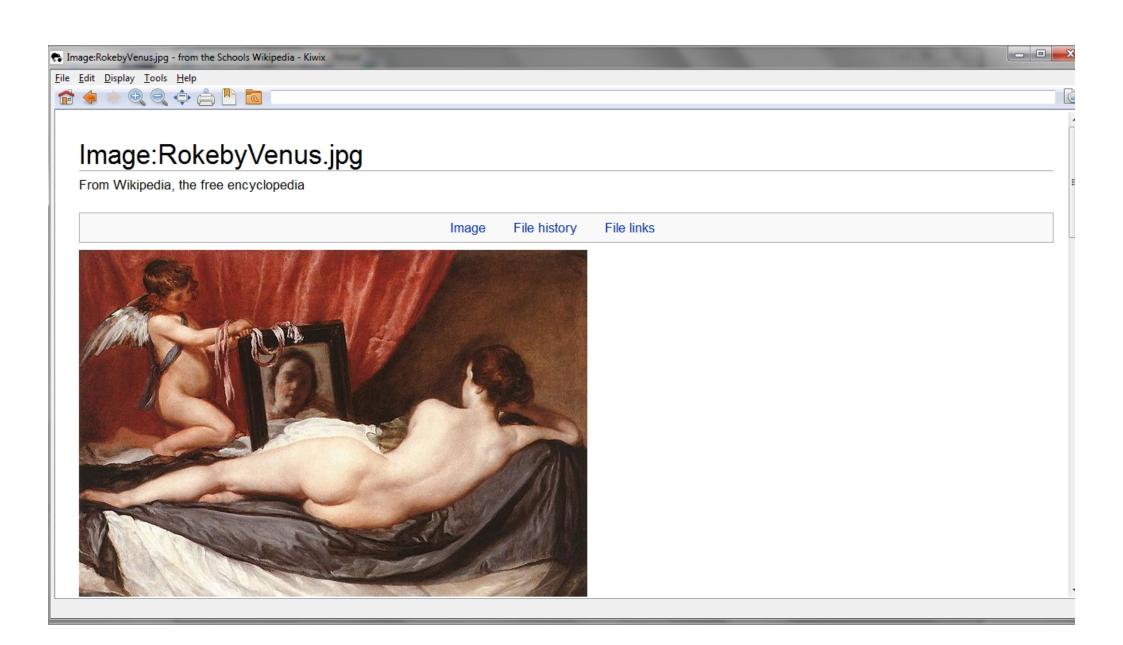
Another major influence was Japanese art prints (Japonism), which had originally come into France as wrapping paper for imported goods. The art of these prints contributed significantly to the "snapshot" angles and unconventional compositions

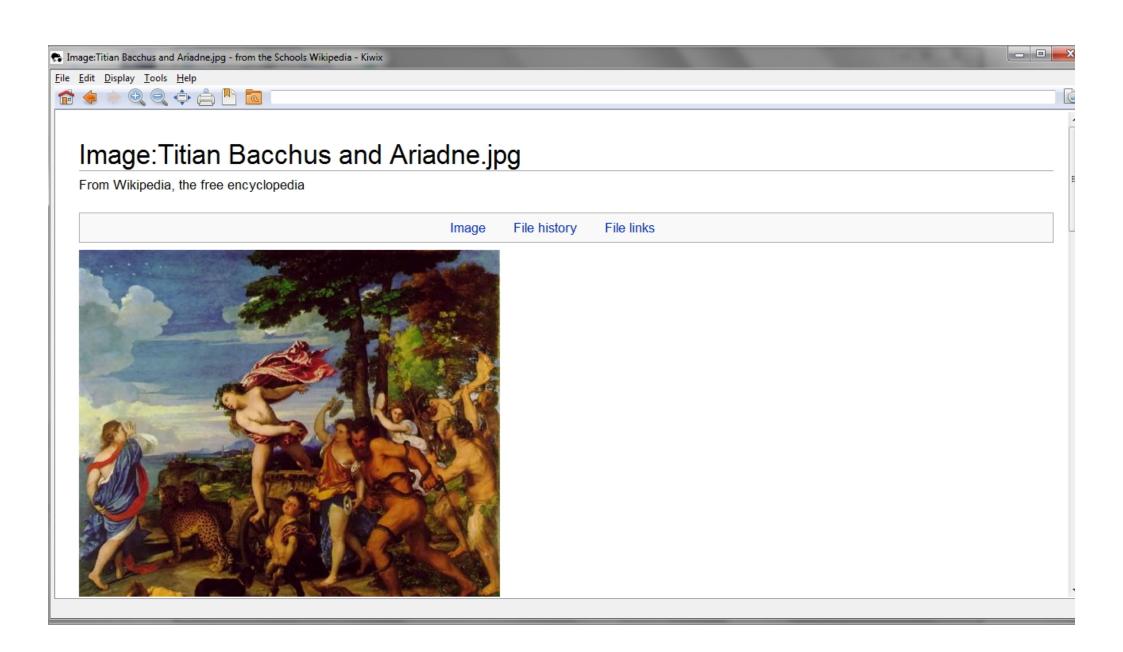


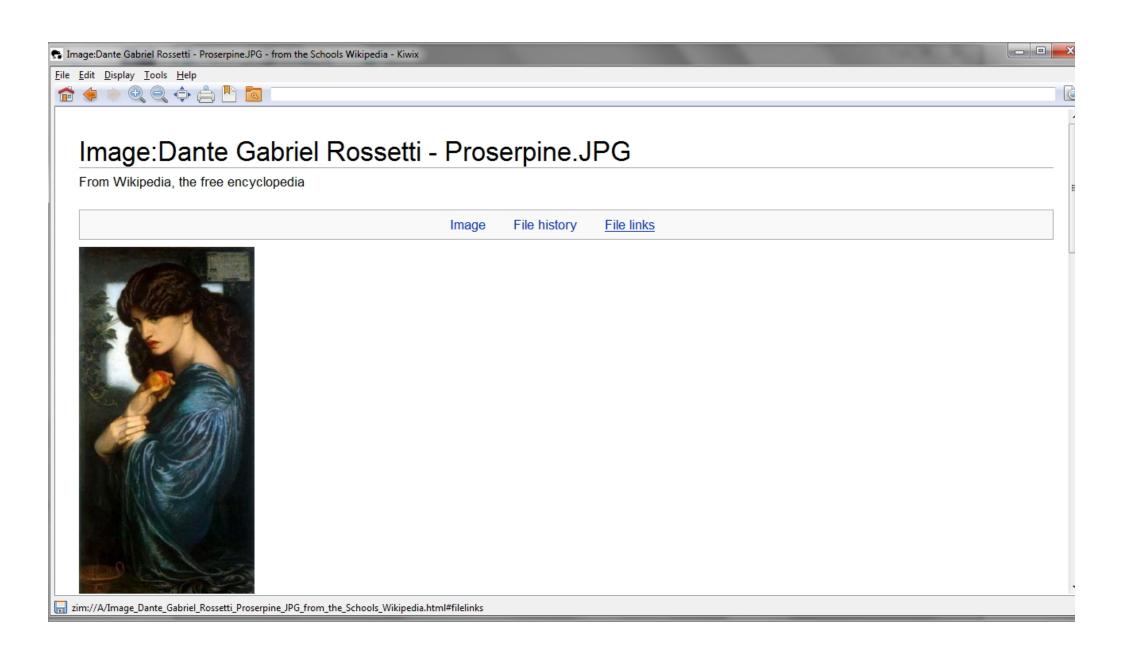


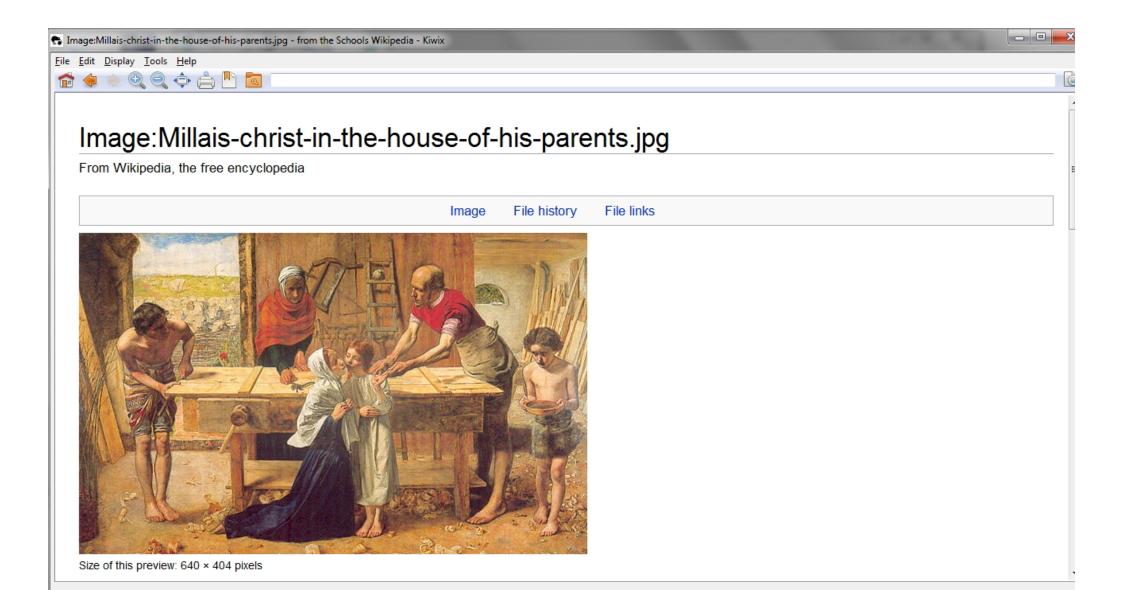


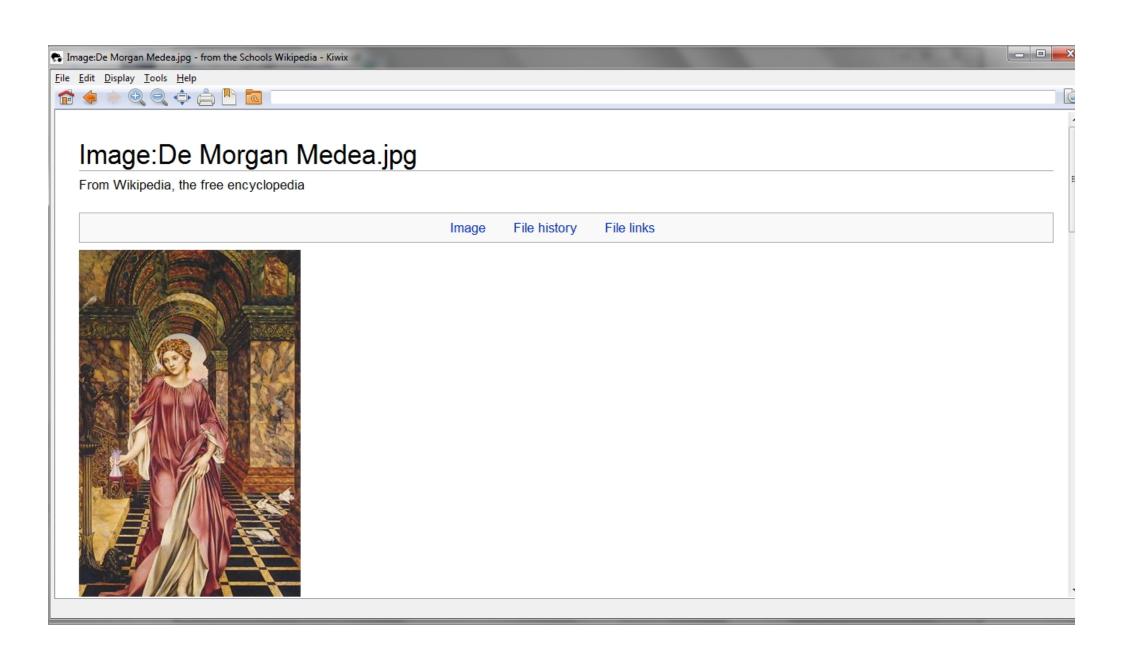


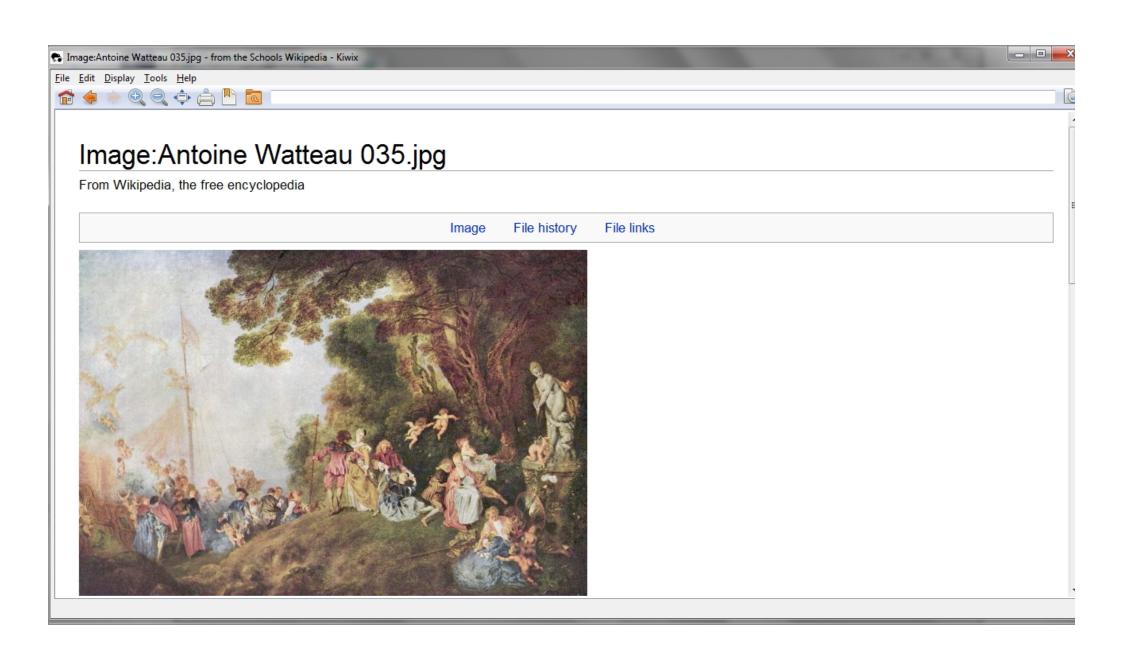




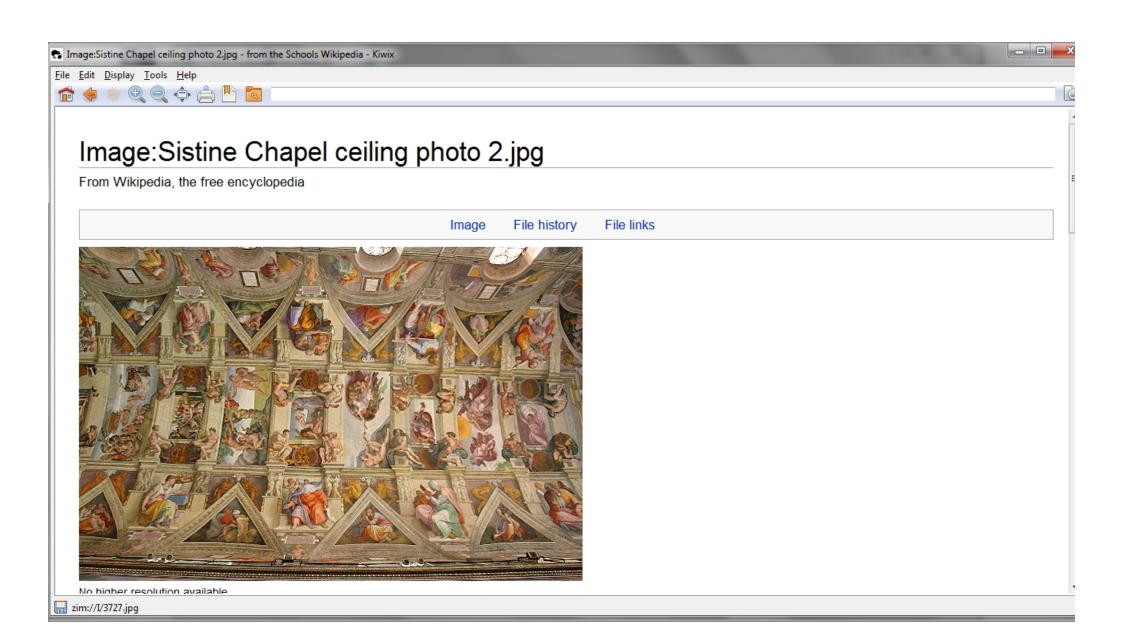


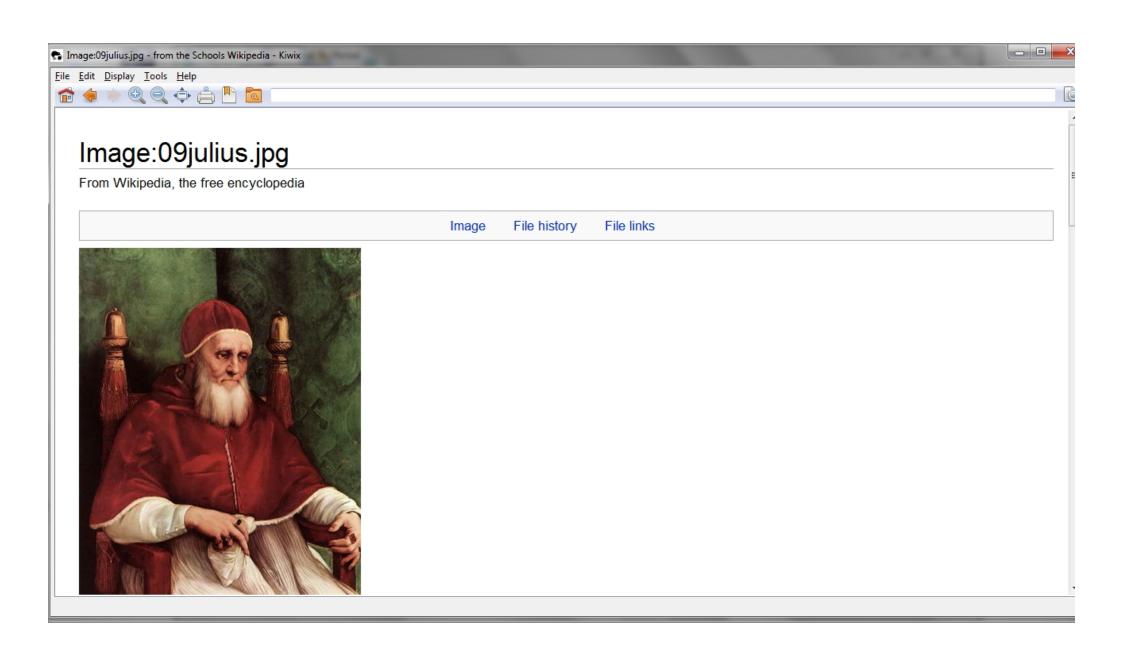


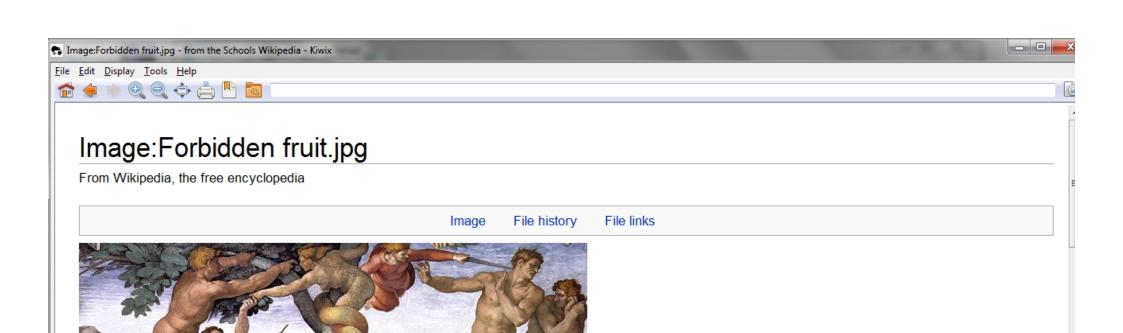












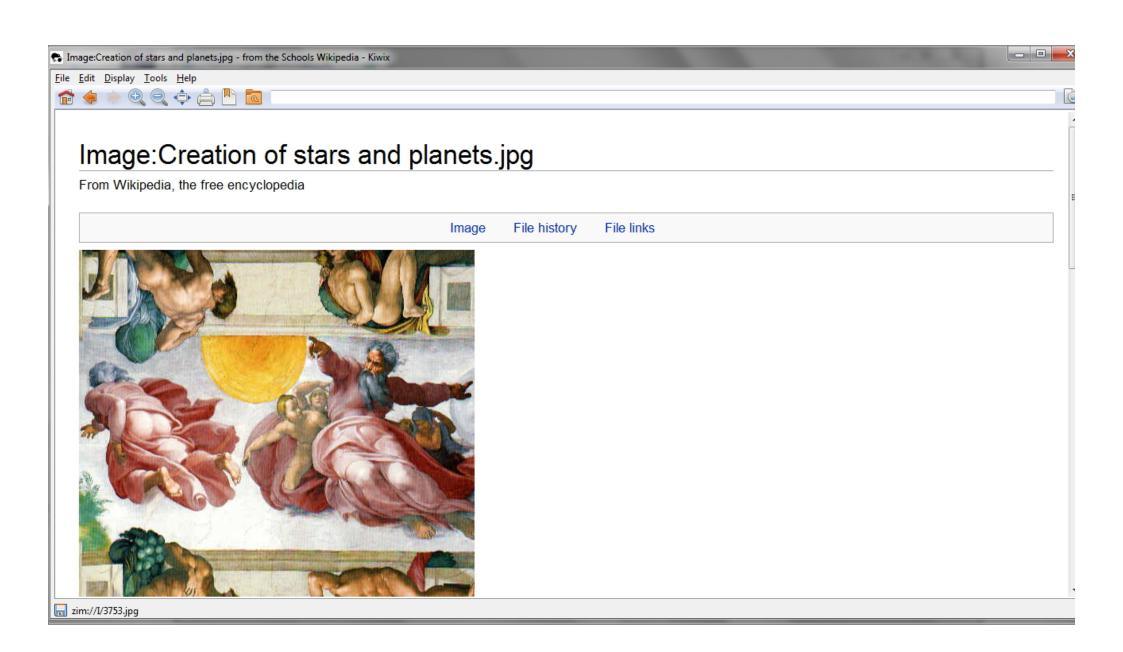
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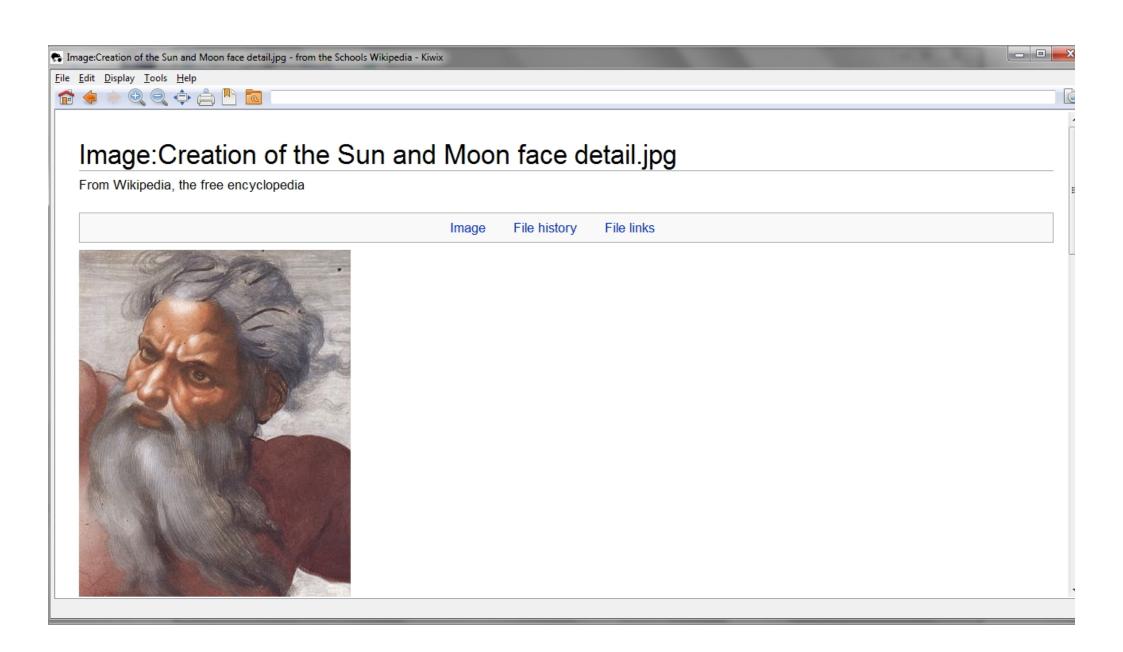
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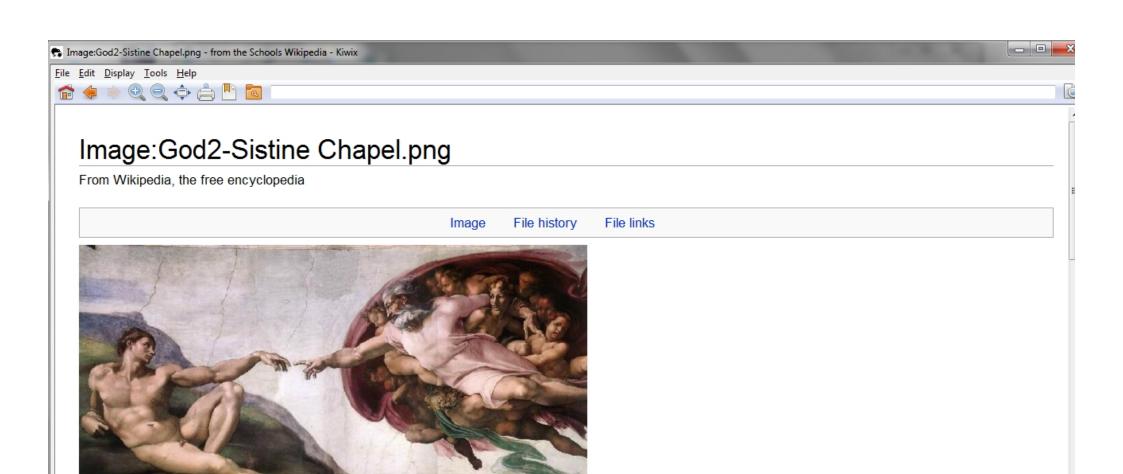
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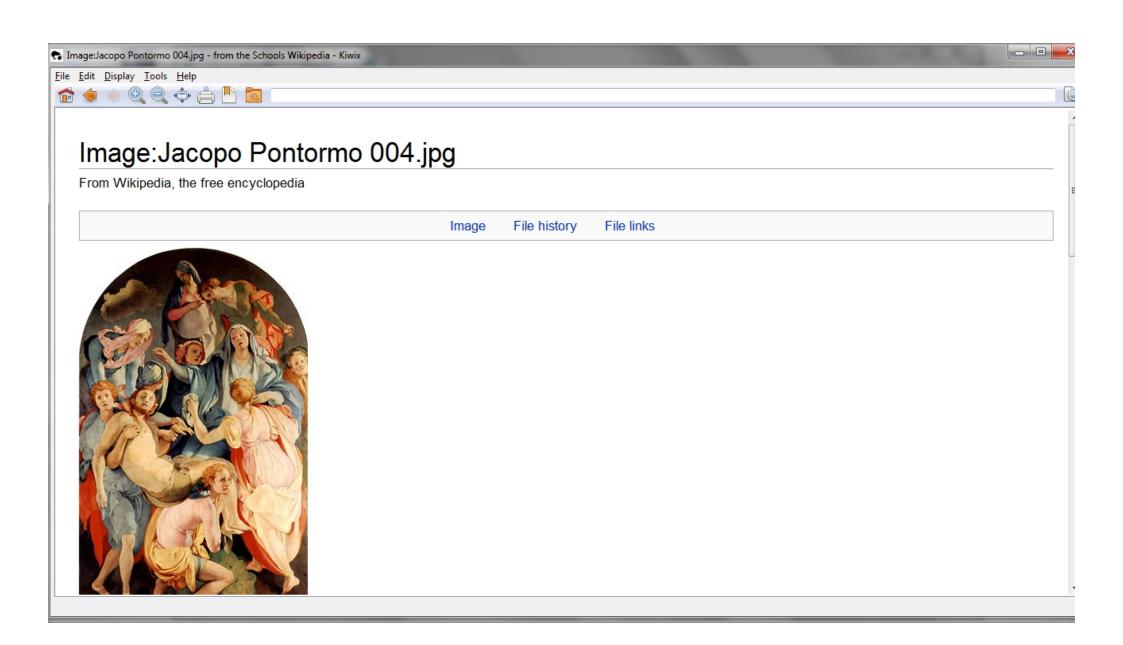


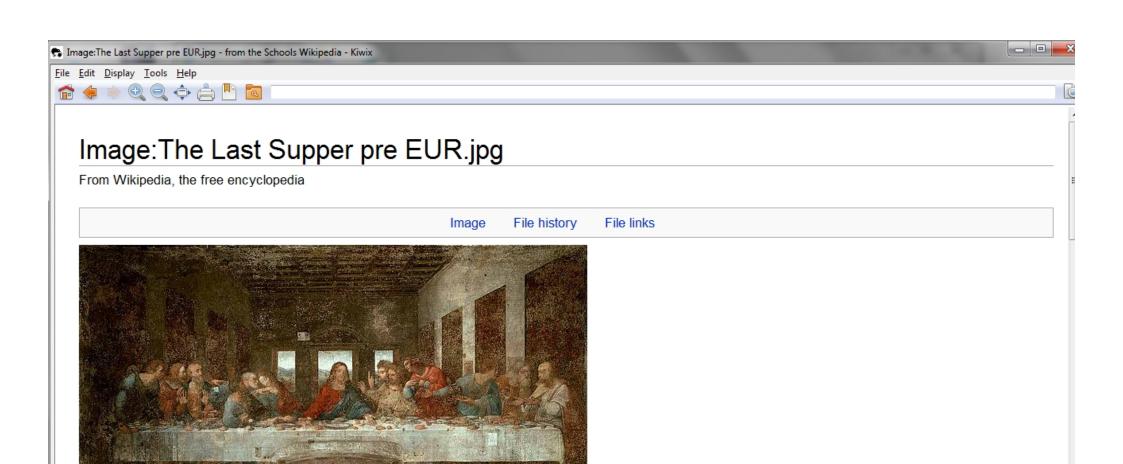
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