



GREAT ART OF THE AGES

Painted in 1930, *American Gothic*, by Midwestern artist **Grant Wood**, would soon ascend into the rarified world of international art icons. But before that it was just another entry in a lousy art competition held by the **Art Institute of Chicago**, where the judges called it a “comic valentine.” Fortunately one of the museum’s savvy patrons not only persuaded them to award it a prize (a bronze!), but to buy the painting for the Institute, where it remains to this day. Nice move, **savvy patron!**

But what/who is it all about? Some say **Wood**—who in *his* self portrait looks a lot like **Bob Mould** from **Hüsker Dü**—had a new appreciation of his homeland after spending time in **Europe**, and wanted to capture its spirit in a painting. But whatevs, during the **Depression** the painting came to symbolize the steadfast American spirit in the face of adversity and well, depression. And the actual models were Wood’s sister and their dentist, who was much older. And though most think of it as husband/wife, his sister always claimed it was supposed to be a father/daughter portrayal.

One of the most interesting motifs of the painting, at least to this noted art critic, is the pitchfork, the shape of which is replicated in the man’s overalls, face, and the Gothic window. Clever indeed Mr. Mould, I mean Mr. Grant!